

Laois Education Centre

Annual Report 2004

Monday 7th March 2005

**Laois Education Centre
Annual Report 2004**

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH 2004**

In attendance:

Paddy Bates, Joan White, John Courtney, Michael Martin, Richard Conroy, Anne Buggie, John Mulhare, Des Sutton, Mary Mahon, Ann Young, Dinah Kingsley, Norma Booth, Liam O'Neill, Catherine Dwyer and Tony Mahon

Apologies were received from:

????

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS:

The meeting was chaired by Chairperson Des Sutton. Des thanked the committee for their help and support in the past year. He also thanked the staff of the Centre.

Des spoke of the very successful and exciting year, the progress being made and the wide range of courses being offered.

He wished the incoming committee a successful year.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Last year, similar to the previous number of years, has been a year of continuous change, challenge, learning, agony and ecstasy for us. This Centre has had notable achievement and success due to the commitment of teachers in this community. It is appropriate at our AGM to mention and celebrate the past, as it helps us have confidence in and inform the present, and it may, in some ways, help us to anticipate and create the future.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

This report, presented by the treasurer, Liam O'Neill, outlined the income and expenditure for the year as audited by Bardon Molumby and Company. The treasurer presented the report in detail, commenting on the further increase due to larger

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numbers of courses organised. He thanked the Committee for their help and advice during the year.

ELECTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2004:

Desmond Sutton Chairperson	St Paul's NS, Borris Raod, Portlaoise
Paddy Bates	Clonaslee, Co Laois
Joan White	Scoil Mhuire, Portlaoise
John Courtney	Mountmellick Community School
Michael Martin	Ballinakill N.S., Ballinakill
Anne Buggie	Scoil Mhuire, Portlaoise
John Mulhare	Clough N.S., Ballacolla
Mary Mahon	Scoil Christ Rí, Portlaoise
Ann Young	Scoil Christ Rí, Portlaoise
Dinah Kingsley	Camross N.S., Portlaoise
Norma Booth	Scoil Christ Rí, Portlaoise
Liam O'Neill	Trumera N.S., Mountrath
Catherine O'Dwyer	Ballyroan G.N.S. Ballyroan
Ann Marie Ryan	Sacred Heart N.S., Portlaoise

Des Sutton thanked the committee and said he was looking forward to working with them in the coming year.

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PROVISION FOR THE YEAR 2004 - DIRECTOR'S REPORT

During the year we organised a number of courses at Local, National, Island, EU and International level. Some of these provisions are listed below:

Approximately **6,330** teachers attended InService / Courses through this centre in the past year which a total contact hours of **42,683**.

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT:

The visit of the president Mary McAleese and Dr Martin McAleese in September was an honour for us and a celebration for all involved in teaching and learning. The president emphasised the contribution of teaching and learning to the development of a dynamic proactive culture in Ireland. We are grateful to all who were with us on the day and in particular to the pupils and teachers who exhibited their projects.

LOCAL LEVEL:

- Practical Psychology
- Diploma in Management Education
- Autism and IEP's
- Primary Science
- Write-A-Book Project
- Co-operation is Cool
- Our Environmental Heritage
- Traditional Irish Music, Song and Dance
- Life Skills for Teaching and Learning
- Arts and Crafts in Primary School
- Circle Time
- ICT Courses
- Learning Support
- SNA Certificate Course
- Pack a Punch – Eat a healthy lunch
- The Teacher and the Law
- Learning and Communicating
- Cant Read – Wont Read
- ILSA
- Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century in co-operation with St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL:

- Leaving Certificate Biology
- Leaving Certificate Physics
- Leaving Certificate Chemistry
- Leaving Certificate History
- Leaving Certificate Geography

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- Leaving Certificate Maths
- Leaving Certificate English
- New Primary Curriculum
- Home Economics
- Special Education Support Service
- Visiting Teachers for Travellers
- Dyslexia at Primary Level
- Dyslexia at Post Primary Level
- Challenging Behaviour
- Inclusion at Second Level
- Dyspraxia
- School Visits on Autism and Challenging Behaviour
- Child Protection Guidelines

ISLAND:

- Cross Border Project “Writing Together”

EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL:

- Leadership and Conflict Management, in the preparatory stage

PUPILS AND COMMUNITY

- Design a Christmas Card
- Write-A-Book Project
- Co-operation is Cool

CO-OPERATION AT LOCAL REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

We have co-operated with and assisted a number of programmes including:

- LCA, CSPE, SPHE, FETAC, LCVP, SLSS, JMB, JSSS, TESS, School Development Planning, Religious InService, , ILSA, CICE, CDC, NCTE, FIS, Transition Year, JCSP, Health promotion Unit, Association, IPPN, INTO, NCCA, Gender Equality, SDPI, Maynooth, PCSP, Laois County Council, Laois Leader, Laois County Development Board, Laois Enterprise Board, Glanbia, Trinity, Prison Education Unit, FETAC, Entrust, National Parents Council, Maths Teachers Association, Laois Principals Forum, NEPS,

BUILDING:

The entire centre got its first coat of paint this year. Some matters are still outstanding, e.g. Acoustics and Car Parking.

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THANK YOU

I wish to thank the Chairperson, Desmond Sutton, our officers, members of our Management Committee and our Sub-Committees for their commitment, team work and dedication in the past year.

I wish to thank Áine, Yvonne, Margaret Mary, Rosemary, Jim, Catherine and Louise, for their team work and unfailing good humour. I wish to welcome John Moran, Special Education Needs Officer to the Centre who shares the use of an office with Gerry Watchorn, S.D.P.I.

I wish to thank the SESS members, Joan Crowley O'Sullivan, Marie Therese Raftery, and Colman Motherway, for their work during the year.

Thanks are due to Shelagh Maher, Rosemount Catering and her staff for their services over the past year, to Kevin Delaney, Kleen Kare, for his cleaning services, Gerry Kerry for his outdoor care-taking services and to Todor for his care-taking services.

I wish to thank the Teacher Education Section, Department of Education and Science for their help and co-operation during the year.

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**THE FOLLOWING SUMMARISES THE PROGRAMMES, COURSES AND EVENTS FOR THE
YEAR 2003**

LOCAL COURSES 2004

COURSE TITLE	DATES	VENUE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
Practical Psychology	26 th February 11 th , 18 th , 25 th March, 1 st , 22 nd , 29 th April	Laois Education Centre	15	300
Primary Science	4 th , 11 th and 25 th February	Laois Education Centre	6	45
Autism and IEP's	Thursday 26 th February	Laois Education Centre	15	75
Circle Time	6 th , 13 th and 20 th October	Laois Education Centre	20	150
SNA Cert Course	8 weekends, February – May	Laois Education Centre	26	2080
Pack a Punch Eat a Health Lunch	10 th and 17 th November	Laois Education Centre	12	60
The Teacher and the Law	12 th , 19 th October and 4 th November	Laois Education Centre	14	126
Learning and Communicating	2 nd , 16 th and 30 th November	Laois Education Centre	8	60
Cant Read – Wont Read	18 th October	Laois Education Centre	34	51
ILSA Courses	3 evenings	Laois Education Centre	105	158
TOTAL LOCAL COURSES			255	3105

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SUMMER COURSES PROGRAMME 2004

COURSE TITLE	DATES	VENUE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
Environmental Heritage	1 st – 5 th July	Various outdoor venues	57	1140
Traditional Irish Music, Song and Dance	1 st to 5 th July	Laois Education Centre	22	440
Life Skills for Teaching and Learning	1 st to 5 th July	Laois Education Centre	24	480
Arts and Crafts	1 st to 5 th July	St Francis School	24	480
Circle Time	1 st to 5 th July	Grants Hotel, Roscrea	22	440
TOTAL			149	2980

PROGRAMMES / PROJECTS 2004

COURSE TITLE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
Write A Book	18 schools	600 entries
Co-operation is Cool	11 schools	11 entries
Design a Christmas Card	34 schools	1030
TOTAL		1641

DYSLEXIA EVENING SEMINARS – NOVEMBER 2004

Venue	Date	Facilitators	Participants	Male	Female	Contact Hours
11 Education Centres	24 & 25 November 04	Dyslexia Team 18 Seminars	424	33	391	848
Total			424			848

FOUR DAY DYSPRAXIA COURSES MARCH/APRIL 2004

Venue	Date	Facilitator	Participants	Male	Female	Contact Hours
Navan EC	1 – 4 March 04	Marie Raftery	27	1	26	540
Cork EC	26 – 29 April 04	Marie Raftery	26	3	23	520
Total		2 courses	53	4	49	1060

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SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE COURSES

SECOND LEVEL ONE DAY SEMINARS – NOVEMBER 2004

Venue	Date	Facilitators	Participants	M	F	Contact Hours
Carrick-on-Shannon EC	25 & 26 November 04	B McVeigh & L Dillon	22	3	19	132
Drumcondra EC	25 & 26 November 04	H Chadwick & M Hickey	37	12	25	222
Limerick EC	25 & 26 November 04	S McSweeney & C Motherway	35	13	22	210
Wexford EC	26 November 04	L Barnes & E Costello	23	10	13	138
Total		7 seminars	117	38	79	702

**CONFERENCE FOR PRINCIPALS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS: CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR
NOVEMBER 2004**

Venue	Date	Facilitators	Participants	Male	Female	Contact Hours
Portlaoise	24 November	Dr Sean Carey Dr Brian McClean	96	24	72	480
Total			96			480

PROFEXCEL ONLINE COURSES 2004

Dates	Participants
Spring 2004	145
Summer 2004	1168
Autumn 2004	171
Total	1484

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PRIMARY CURRICULUM

DATES	SUBJECT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
October – November	Music	90	534	2670
November	PE	49	350	1750
January	Learning Support Guidelines	5	85	425
March	Substance Use	20	29	58
TOTAL		164	998	4903

SECOND LEVEL SUPPORT SERVICE INSERVICE TRAINING

DATES	SUBJECT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
8th March	History	15	24	168
9th March	History	13	23	161
11th October	History	15	18	126
12th October	History	16	22	154
13th October	History	10	14	98
3rd February	Geography	8	15	105
10th February	Geography	9	14	98
23rd March	Geography	13	17	119
8th November	Geography	14	19	133
15th November	Geography	13	14	98
18th November	Geography	16	24	168
29th November	Biology	8	12	66
TOTAL		150	216	1494

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AUTISM

DATES	TUTOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
25 th and 26 th March	Hilda Hegarty		27	148
6 th and 7 th May	Hilda Hegarty		28	154
25 th and 26 th March	Tish Balfe		32	176
6 th and 7 th May	Tish Balfe		32	176
TOTAL			119	654

VISITING TEACHERS OF TRAVELLERS

DATES	TUTOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
10 th December	Rose Sullivan		19	95
9 th February	Roemarie Taylor		39	234
TOTAL			58	329

**20 HOUR INTRODUCTORY COURSE FOR
SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS**

DATES	TUTOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
20 th April – 15 th May	Roe Tully, Sadie Keating and Margaret O'Kelly		34	680
TOTAL			34	680

60 HOUR CERTIFICATE COURSE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS CICE

DATES	TUTOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	CONTACT HOURS
August 04 – February 05	Moira Proctor, Louise Grogan, Anita Dillon, Carthy Minnock, Joan White & Dinah Kingsley		24	1440
TOTAL			24	1440

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Special Education Support Service

Report January – December 2004

In 2004, the main strands of the work of the Special Education Support Service were as follows:

1. Local Initiatives Scheme

Schools and/or individual teachers identify their professional development needs in relation to special education and apply to the SESS for support: this may be financial or advisory.

Other support for teachers

Four priority areas were identified:

- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Management of Challenging Behaviour in Special Education Settings
- Second-Level Schools and Special Educational Needs

Professional development and support was provided through part-time teams of teachers expert in each area (Associate Members of the Special Education Support Service). Interviews took place in May and June, and training in September, October and November. In November, the Autism and Challenging Behaviour teams visited schools in their area, and the Dyslexia and Second Level teams provided seminars through the Education Centre network.

Two seminars for teachers working with children with Dyspraxia also took place in March and April.

A Conference on Challenging Behaviour for Principals of Special Schools was organised in November.

Online courses (in Autism, Dyslexia, Inclusion, ABA, and ADHD) provided by Profexcel and part-funded by the SESS continued to be accessed by teachers in large numbers in three sessions – spring, summer and autumn. Eleven teachers completed the course in Applied Behaviour Analysis in Trinity College Dublin.

- 2.** A Cross-Border Professional Exchange programme for teachers which is based in Monaghan Education Centre has been initiated.

SESS

Joan Crowley O’Sullivan	National Coordinator
Colman Motherway	Assistant National Coordinator
Marie Raftery	Assistant National Coordinator
Rosemary Day	
Yvonne Nolan	

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SESS ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Autism Team

Tish Balfe	Wicklow
Doreen Friel	Donegal
Fiona Jennings	Mayo
Hilda Hegarty	Cork
Elizabeth O'Shea	Clare
D'arne O'Shiel	Tipperary
Nuala Shankey Smith	Donegal
Siobhan Whitehead	Waterford

Second Level Team

Lisa Barnes	Dublin
Hazel Chadwick	Monaghan
Eamonn Costello	Kilkenny
Lorraine Dillon	Donegal
Madeline Hickey	Dublin
Siobhan McSweeney	Clare
Bernie McVeigh	Meath
Mary O'Connor	Dublin

Dyslexia Team

Ann Marie Byrne	Sligo
Sarah Connolly Barnes	Dublin
Joan Doherty	Tipperary
Catherine Dwyer	Laois
Anna Griffiths	Dublin
Anne Lacey	Wicklow
Wyn McCormack	Wicklow
Michael McMullin	Donegal
Maureen Peters	Cork

Behaviour Management Team

Aine Donovan	Dublin
Mary Lillis	Galway
Ann Marie McMahon	Kildare
Moira Proctor	Laois

Second Level One Day Seminars – November 2004

Venue	Date	Facilitators	Participants	M	F	Contact Hours
Carrick-on-Shannon EC	25 & 26 November 04	B McVeigh & L Dillon	22	3	19	132
Drumcondra EC	25 & 26 November 04	H Chadwick & M Hickey	37	12	25	222
Limerick EC	25 & 26 November 04	S McSweeney & C Motherway	35	13	22	210
Wexford EC	26 November 04	L Barnes & E Costello	23	10	13	138
Total		7 seminars	117	38	79	702

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LEAVING CERTIFICATE HISTORY

Year 1- Phase 1 and 2 have been completed. Laois Education Centre is working in co-operation with Monaghan Education Centre to facilitate this in-service and all financial returns have been made to them. Year 2 – Phase 3 is due to commence.

- **Regional Development Officer is Ger O’Sullivan.**

Date	No of Schools	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
YEAR ONE – PHASE ONE						
8 th March	15	24	8	16	7	168
9 th March	13	23	10	13	7	161
YEAR ONE – PHASE TWO						
11 th October	15	18	6	12	7	126
12 th October	16	22	9	13	7	154
13 th October	10	14	7	7	7	98
TOTAL	69	101	40	61		707

LEAVING CERTIFICATE BIOLOGY

Laois Education is working in co-operation with Tralee Education to facilitate this in-service. Teachers were invited to attend in-service in March, covering second level schools in Laois.

- **Regional Development Officer was Alan Dunne**

Date	No of Schools	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
29 th March	8	12	4	8	5½	66
TOTAL	8	12	4	8		66

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LEAVING CERTIFICATE GEOGRAPHY

Year 1-Phase 1 and 2 has been completed. Year 2 – Phase 3 is due to commence in January 2005. Laois Education Centre is working in co-operation with Monaghan Education Centre to facilitate this in-service and all financial returns have been made to them. 30 second level schools in Laois, Offaly and Tipperary were invited to attend this in-service.

- Regional Development Officer for Year 1-Phase 1 was Tony Dunne.
- Regional Development Officer for Year 1-Phase 2 & 3 is Ute Duane.

Date	No of Schools	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
YEAR ONE – PHASE ONE						
3 rd February	8	15	2	13	7	105
10 th February	9	14	4	10	7	98
23 rd March	13	17	7	10	7	119
YEAR ONE – PHASE TWO						
8 th November	14	19	8	11	7	133
15 th November	13	14	6	8	7	98
18 th November	16	24	10	14	7	168
TOTAL	73	103	37	66		721

VISITING TEACHERS FOR TRAVELLERS

This programme has had a number of in-services in many parts of Ireland. Laois Education Centre administers the budgets, financial returns, in-service programmes and reports for this programme. No in-service has been administered in Laois Education Centre since February. We wish to thank Maugie Francis and the Visiting Teacher Service for their continued work and dedication.

Date	Tutor	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
10 th December	Rose Sullivan	19	4	15	5	95
9 th February	Rosemarie Taylor	39	3	36	6	234
TOTAL		58	7	51		329

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AUTISM

Hilda Hegarty has completed 4-Day course in West Cork Education Centre. Tish Balfe has completed 4-Day course in Blackrock Education Centre. We have now covered all the Centres.

Course Contents: * Triad of Impairments
 16 Behaviour and Classroom Management
 16 Sensory issues
 16 Methodologies
 16 Communication
 16 IT and Resources

Date	Tutor	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
West Cork	Hilda Hegarty					
25 th & 26 th March		27	2	25	5½	148½
6 th & 7 th May	Hilda Hegarty	28	2	26	5½	154
Blackrock	Tish Balfe					
25 th & 26 th March		32	4	28	5½	176
6 th & 7 th May		32	4	28	5½	176
TOTAL		119	12	107		654½

**20 HOUR INTRODUCTORY COURSE FOR
SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS**

Group 2 have completed their training.

Course Contents: * The Role of the SNA
 16 Understanding Special Educational Needs
 16 Enabling Access to the Curriculum
 16 Developing Good Communication Skills
 16 Health and Safety
 16 Understanding and Managing Behaviour
 16 Promoting Language Development

Date	Tutor	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
20 th April – 15 th May '04	Rose Tully Sadie Keating Margaret O'Kelly	34	-	34	20	680
TOTAL		34		34		680

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**80-HOUR CERTIFICATE COURSE FOR
SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS – CICE**

GROUP 1

The Church of Ireland College of Education is offering an outreach Certificate programme for Special Needs Assistants working in Mainstream Primary and Post-Primary schools and Special Schools in Laois Education Centre. This course is being run in co-operation with the In-Career Development Unit of the Department of Education and Science. Course participants will be provided with the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute effectively to the support of pupils with special educational needs. To this end the course content has been approved by the In-Career Development Unit of the Department of Education and Science.

Included in the course content for the Certificate course are:

- concepts and theories of SEN, holistic care of students with SEN,
- legislation and policies, health and safety, child protection,
- record keeping and confidentiality,
- development of collaborative skills,
- students with specific needs, categories of learning disability,
- language and communication,
- promoting independence,
- understanding and supporting the student with Special Educational Needs,
- enabling access to the curriculum,
- the role of the SNA in relation the transition from primary to second level.

Date	Tutor	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
6 th February – 29 th May	Moira Proctor Louise Grogan Anita Dillon Carthy Minnock Joan White Dinah Kinglsey	26		26	80	2080
Designers	As above & CICE					
TOTAL		26		26		2080

**60-HOUR CERTIFICATE COURSE FOR
SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS – CICE**

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GROUP 2

Details and contents as previous Course

Date	Tutor	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
August 04 – February 05	Moira Proctor Louise Grogan Anita Dillion Carthy Minnock Joan White Dinah Kinglsey	24		24	60	1440
Designers	As above & CICE					
TOTAL		24		24		1440

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January – June 2004

The fifth year of the Primary Curriculum continued in January 2004. The curriculum implementation period was extended and it was decided that an extra year would be allowed to provide a period for schools to consolidate and review their work to date. This meant that in-service seminars for curricular areas would be suspended during the school year 2003-2004.

Regional Support Service – Curriculum Cuiditheoiri

Schools were invited to apply for this service in June 2003 and it is being offered through individual school visits, drop-in clinics and evening meetings in Education Centres. The subjects being covered are Gaeilge, English, Visual arts, Mathematics, Science, SPHE and Learning Support.

Learning Support Guidelines

A 1-day information seminar for whole school staff took place in January for school with 16+ teachers.

Date	No. of Schools	No. of Seminars	Total attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact hours
January	5	5	85	12	73	5 hours per seminar	425

Substance Use

Support for Substance Use Policy Formulation was offered to all schools in March. This information seminar for a nominated member of staff and a parent took place in Laois Education Centre on 22nd March from 1 – 3 pm.

An evening seminar for Policy Committee members was also offered on 22nd March in Laois Education Centre from 7 – 9pm.

Both Seminars dealt with the formulation of the policy according to the guidelines that were issued to all schools in 2002.

Seminar	No of Schools	No Of Teachers	Male	Female	No of Parents	Duration	Contact Hours
1 – 3PM	14	13	2	11	10	2 hours	26
7 – 9PM	6	16	3	13		2 Hours	32
Total	20	29	5	24	10		58

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MUSIC – Day 1

We are currently making arrangements for the delivery of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme 2004 – 2005 for Music which will be two separate seminar days for all members of teaching staffs. These days may be reckoned as part of the 183 day minimum operational requirement for the current school year.

The first 1-Day Seminar will cover:

- Overview of the curriculum
- Approaches and methodologies for teaching Music

MUSIC – Day 2

The second 1-Day Seminar will cover:

- The three strands of the music curriculum
- Approaches and methodologies for teaching Music

This service will continue throughout 2005

Date	Subject	Schools	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
Oct – Dec	Music	90	534	87	447	5 hrs-each seminar	2670
TOTAL		90	534	87	447		2670

PE – Day 1

We are currently making arrangements for the delivery of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme 2004 – 2005 for PE which will be a one-day seminar for all members of teaching staffs. These days may be reckoned as part of the 183 day minimum operational requirement for the current school year.

The first 1-Day Seminar will cover

- Overview of the curriculum
- The strands Aquatics, Games and Outdoor Adventure
- School and classroom planning

This service will continue throughout 2005

Date	Subject	Schools	Total Attendance	Male	Female	Duration	Contact Hours
Nov	PE	49	350	58	292	5 hrs-each seminar	1750
TOTAL		49	350	58	292		1750

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REGIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE – CURRICULUM CUIDITHEOIRI

This service is continuing this year and is supporting Gaeilge, English, Maths, Visual Arts, SPHE, Science and Learning Support. This service is being offered through individual school visits, clusters of school-based visits and drop-in clinics.

Schools were invited to apply for this service in October and we received the following requests;

SUBJECT	PREFERENCE						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gaeilge	10	5	5	3	4	6	4
English	10	9	5	7	4	3	2
Maths	6	14	7	4	5	3	2
Visual Arts	5	4	5	5	1	7	5
SPHE	8	9	8	5	9	3	2
Science	13	11	10	4	2	2	1
Learning Support	11	7	3	7	2	3	8
TOTAL	63	59	43	35	27	27	24

RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Training Support for Schools

Support for the implementation of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is being offered to schools jointly by the RSE office and the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) through the Education Centres and is due to commence in January 2005.

This support will take the form of

- (a) Policy Committee Evening Meetings
- (b) Parent Information Evenings *and*
- (c) Teacher Training

Policy Committee Evening Meetings are being organised for these Policy Committees. Schools are asked to establish an RSE Policy Committee representative of parents, teachers and the school authorities. (*Ref. Policy Guidelines – Relationships and Sexuality Education, A Partnership Between Home and School*). These meetings will deal with the formulation of policy according to the Policy Guidelines that were issued to all schools.

Parent Information Evenings and Training for Teachers will be delivered on an individual school basis and trainers can be contacted through the Education Centre.

LEARNING SUPPORT GUIDELINES

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The Learning-Support Guidelines were published and issued to schools in 2001. To date, a 1-day Information Seminar on the guidelines has been facilitated for Principals, Learning-Support and Resource Teachers. Also, a 2-day Seminar has been facilitated for Learning-Support and Resource Teachers which concentrated on Screening, Diagnostic Testing, Collaboration and the IPLPs (Individual Profile and Programme Planning). Following this, schools designated as disadvantaged and school with 16+ teachers were prioritised for whole-staff seminars. The next phase of seminar support is concentrating on the remaining number of schools.

The staff of all 10-15 teacher schools in our catchment area have been invited to a 1-Day Information Seminar on the Learning-Support Guidelines for which school closure is allowed. This day may be reckoned as part of the 183 minimum operational requirements for the current school year. The seminar for your teaching staff will be facilitated by a Learning-Support Trainer from the Primary Curriculum Support Programme and commenced in January 2005.

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This InService aimed to:

- Introduce DES Child Protection Guidelines
- Introduce Designated Liaison (DLP's) persons to their role in the school
- Assist the DLP's to be able to brief all personnel in their own school

Date: 10th November
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Time: 9.15 – 3.30
Facilitators: Members of the SPHE Support Service

Attendance	
Primary Female	0
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	12
Post Primary Male	8
Other	0
Total Participants	20
Contact Hours	100

LOCAL COURSES

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PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

This eight week (20 hour) course aimed to introduce participants to some practical application of psychological study to the area of education.

Content included:

- Psychology in Education
- The Behaviourist approach
- The Cognitive approach
- Psychometric testing
- The RepGrid and Grid analysis –usefulness
- The Physiological approach
- The Psychodynamic approach
- Client-centred therapy
- Personal Construct Theory and Ed.

Dates: 26th Feb, 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th March, 1st 22nd and 29th April
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.00 – 9.30
Facilitator: Niamh O'Connor

Attendance	
Primary Female	8
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	7
Post Primary Male	0
Others	0
Total Participants	15
Contact Hours	225

PRIMARY SCIENCE EVENING COURSES

A series of three evening courses was available to primary teachers.

Content included:

- Light
- Sound
- Myself/human life

Dates: 4th, 11th and 25th February
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.30 – 9.30

Attendance	
Primary Female	5
Primary Male	1
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	6
Contact Hours	45

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AUTISM AND I.E.P.'S

This workshop was aimed at class teachers in Primary and Post Primary Schools who were teaching pupils with Autism for the first time

Date: Thursday 26th February
Times: 9.30am – 3.00pm
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Facilitators: John McC Dermott and colleagues from NEPS

Attendance	
Primary Female	10
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	5
Post Primary Male	0
Others	0
Total Participants	15
Contact Hours	75

CIRCLE TIME

Jenny Mosley's unique Circle Time Model helps children to work out positive solutions to behaviour and relationship problems and to feel a sense of belonging to a large group they respect and trust. This positive experience enhances their self-esteem which in turn boosts their social and academic achievements.

Content included:

- Self-esteem for adults / children
- Use of Circle Time Forum
- Learning
- Morale values / ethos
- Evaluating and developing incentives, sanctions
- Listening systems
- SPHE
- Anit-bullying
- Lunch time policy

Dates: 6th, 13th and 20th October
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.30 – 9.30
Facilitator: Shirley Mahon

Attendance	
Primary Female	18
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	2
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	20
Contact Hours	150

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PACK A PUNCH – EAT A HEALTHY LUNCH

The incidence of obesity in primary school age children is growing. The food eaten and the fluid consumed, by children in the primary school setting has an affect on their ability to learn. This coursed aimed to enable to empower school representatives to facilitate the development of school food policy in their school using a whole school approach.

Content included:

- Principals of nutrition and hydration
- Steps to developing food policy
- Outline of good practice in a school setting
- Students/staff/parents needs
- Resource for policy production

Dates: 10th and 17th November
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.30 – 9.30
Facilitator: Charlotte Johnston, Midland Health Board

Attendance	
Primary Female	12
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	12
Contact Hours	60

TEACHER AND THE LAW

This course aimed to provide insights into the implications of the following Acts for Principals and Teachers

Content included:

- Teaching Council Act
- Ombudsman for Children Act
- Education Welfare Act

Dates: 12th, 14th October and 4th November
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.00 – 10.00
Facilitator: Oliver Mahon, Barrister-at-Law

Attendance	
Primary Female	11
Primary Male	3
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	14
Contact Hours	126

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**LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION
LEARNING HOW TO LEARN**

This course was aimed at teachers who wish to enhance their ability to evoke positive change and learning for themselves and their students. These seminars aimed to utilise some of the key aspects of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, the principles of learning, tools and techniques we apply and teach our students in order to achieve excellence and success when learning. One of the training objectives is to create 'generative learning' without our students.

Content included:

- The learning context
- Teaching skills
- Learning as a skill

Dates: 2nd, 16th and 23rd November
Venue: Laois Education Centre
Times: 7.00 – 9.30
Facilitator: Jo Sayers, Results Partnerships

Attendance	
Primary Female	2
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	6
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	8
Contact Hours	60

SUMMER COURSES

LIFE SKILLS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Content included:

- Enhancing self esteem of teachers and pupils
- Workplace bullying and its identification
- Coping and prevention of pupil bullying
- Effective relationships and good communication skills
- School structures awareness
- Conflict resolution
- Management of change
- Stress plenary session

Venue: Laois Education Centre
Dates: 1st – 7th July
Times: 9.30 – 2.00
Facilitator: Marian Flanagan

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Attendance	
Primary Female	22
Primary Male	2
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	24
Contact Hours	480

ARTS AND CRAFTS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Content included

- To enable children to understand the creative process that children experience in visual art
- To develop a positive response from teacher using their imagination in visual arts
- To allow participants to use their own experience to develop their imagination, curiosity and to develop thematic outcomes
- To develop the safe use of materials in an imaginative way

Venue: St Francis School
Dates: 1st – 7th July
Times: 9.30 – 2.00
Facilitator: Redmond Burke

Attendance	
Primary Female	24
Primary Male	2
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	24
Contact Hours	480

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE

Content included

- Cadamstown , Ballyboy
- Kinnitty Village and Castle
- Birr Castle, Gardens and Science Centre
- Errill
- Glenkit

Venue: Various outdoor venues
Dates: 1st – 7th July
Times: 9.30 – 2.00
Organisers: Catherine Dwyer and John Mulhare

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Attendance	
Primary Female	43
Primary Male	14
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	57
Contact Hours	1140

TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE IN THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

Content included:

- Introduction to traditional music, song and dance
- Overview of Comhaltas Lessons
- Instruments in traditional music lessons
- Work on repertoire for use in schools
- Introduction to Irish dancing
- The Bodhrán
- Linking the three elements – music, song and dance to the primary curriculum

Venue: Laois Education Centre
Dates: 1st – 7th July
Times: 9.30 – 2.00
Facilitator: Attracta Brady and Adrian Ó Brádaigh

Attendance	
Primary Female	22
Primary Male	0
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	22
Contact Hours	480

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR THROUGH THE CIRCLE TIME MODEL

Content includes:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ➤ Overview of the Circle Time Model | ➤ Golden Rules |
| ➤ Self-esteem for adults and children | ➤ Use of Circle Time Forum |
| ➤ Review of Circle Time | ➤ Demo with group of children |
| ➤ Children with special needs | ➤ Moral values |
| ➤ Morale and health of staff | ➤ Parents as partners |
| ➤ Listening systems | ➤ Lunch time policy |

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Venue: St Brendan's School, Birr
Dates: 1st – 7th July
Times: 9.30 – 2.00
Facilitator: Shirley Mahon

Attendance	
Primary Female	21
Primary Male	1
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	0
Other	0
Total Participants	22
Contact Hours	440

NEPS
NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (NEPS)

The purpose of this presentation was to give a short overview of NEPS roll out in the Midland and presentations on

- **Model of Service:** The Model of Service presentation outlines the way of working with schools and gave an overview of the staged process of assessment.
- **Critical Incidents Packs:** NEPS has produced a book for schools dealing with critical incidents. An over view was given. Copies were distributed to all schools in Spring 2004.

Cluster 1:

Venue: Laois Education Centre
Date: 17th November
Times: 9.30 – 12.00

Attendance	
Primary Female	13
Primary Male	2
Post Primary Female	0
Post Primary Male	2
Other	0
Total Participants	17
Contact Hours	42.5

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Cluster 2

Venue: Laois Education Centre
Date: 17th November
Times: 1.00 – 3.30

Attendance	
Primary Female	12
Primary Male	3
Post Primary Female	1
Post Primary Male	1
Other	0
Total Participants	17
Contact Hours	42.5

Cluster 3:

Venue: Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore
Date: 24th November
Times: 9.30 – 12.00

Attendance	
Primary Female	12
Primary Male	2
Post Primary Female	2
Post Primary Male	2
Other	0
Total Participants	18
Contact Hours	45

CROSS BORDER PROJECT: “ WRITING TOGETHER”

LAOIS EDUCATION CENTRE AND THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

This project is a collaboration between Laois Education Centre and the SELB which was initiated at a conference in Portlaoise in October 2003. During the winter and spring 2003/2004, pupils and teachers communicated in writing, usually by email, with the final common production in book form. Software used included Keeboo, Pawprints and Slideshow. Some classes also met together, either in one of the schools or in a mutually convenient venue. The teachers met in conference in Newry in May 2004. At this conference, a display was mounted of the varied and splendid work produced by all the participating pupils in each of the schools.

Participants were keen to continue the partnership links with each other, by emailing, through visits to each other, through developing friendships, by video-conferencing and by making increased contact through future projects. It is hoped that links will be strengthened in the near future through a continuation of collaborative work.

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OBJECTIVES:

- To foster and promote contacts between schools and teachers across the border
- To promote the professional development of teachers
- To provide an opportunity to develop the written language skills of pupils, to raise awareness of language differences, and to examine the opportunity for language enrichment
- To investigate gender differences in relation to language use
- To reduce psychological and academic isolation
- To involve parents and raise awareness
- To impact on the wider community
- To provide opportunities for professional development for cross-border teams

The objectives of this project were met with resounding success, and comments from participating teachers included “an enriching experience”, “(the project) encouraged more use of email and computers and greater IT competence”, and “a great opportunity to learn from each other as they worked collaboratively” - to sum up: “a pleasure to work, converse and socialise with friends across the border”.

PARTICIPANTS

16 schools participated, 8 from the Laois/Offaly/Tipperary area, and 8 from the SELB. There were 34 participants, of whom 9 were principals and 9 were members of the Education Centre and Library Board team.

LAOIS EDUCATION CENTRE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:

Trumera NS	Mountrath	Co Laois
Convent of Mercy GNS	Birr	Co Offaly
Clonaghadoo NS	Geashill	Co Offaly
Scoil Bhride Senior	Rathdowney	Co Laois
St Cronan’s NS	Roscrea	Co Tipperary
Scoil Mhuire, Kilcruttin	Tullamore	Co Offaly
Killenard NS	Portarlinton	Co Laois
Killeigh NS	Tullamore	Co Offaly

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD:

Kilbroney School	Rostrevor	Co Down
Saints and Scholars PS	Armagh	Co Armagh
Dromore Rd PS	Warrenpoint	Co Down
Windsor Hill PS	Newry	Co Down
Clea PS	Keady	Co Armagh
Mount St Catherine’s PS	Armagh	Co Armagh
St Patrick’s PS	Crossmaglen	Co Armagh
St Colman’s Abbey PS	Newry	Co Down

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ICT ADVISOR REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In keeping with the aims and objectives as outlined in the ICT Advisor Workplan for the year 2003-2004, the ICT Advisory Service in Laois Education Centre prioritised the following during the last year:

- Providing local schools with a range of ICT advice and supports.
- Visiting schools on a request basis.
- Providing school principals with information of the DES Initiatives on Broadband and Networking schools.
- Promoting project-based learning in local schools.
- Matching schools with suitable projects and eliciting support for these projects from software and or hardware companies.
- Helping schools with ICT planning / integration and with Internet safety planning particularly in the area of the development of a schools internet acceptable usage policy (AUP).
- Organising and running ICT courses to suit local needs.
- Providing the NCTE with the necessary returns, reports and feedback on a range of ICT activities and actions.

There were seven main areas outlined in the Workplan 2004 and it proposed to give a short report on each of these areas.

1. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ICT 2004

- Teacher professional development courses were offered as whole-school activities and/or centre-based with content tailored to suit the participants.
- Modular courses, using a mix and match of content/materials from existing programmes
- Professional development in a whole-school context, where the provision was tailored to target topics that have been determined by the school in consultation with the ICT Advisor and tutor
- Grouping and clustering of small schools to provide tailored courses
- Working with ICT co-ordinating teachers to tailor courses responsible for staff professional development
- Using the occasion of a school visit to promote ICT professional development

Teacher participation in these courses has continued to remain high and feedback has generally been very positive. During the year, we ran 27 courses and support groups in areas such as Laois Education Centre, Sacred Heart School Tullamore, Scoil Mhuire Tullamore, Sacred Heart School Portlaoise and in schools in Stradbally and Portarlinton.

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Attendance	2004
Primary (Male Teachers)	32
Primary (Female Teachers)	243
Post Primary (Male Teachers)	33
Post Primary (Female Teachers)	47
Total Participants	355
Total contact Hours	4654.5

2. TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION PRIORITY ACTIONS - PROVISION OF INTERNET ACCESS AND BROADBAND SUPPORT

- Provided schools with advice and support on Internet connectivity, for both Broadband and Dial up access
- Promoted broadband where available, and where not available promoted flat rate dial up access instead of usage based alternatives.
- Delivered in total seven seminars for principals as part of the preparation for the installation of Broadband Internet and other network services in their schools, outlining DES/NCTE policy and implementation strategy on Broadband, Networking, Planning and Procurement, and Technical Support. Seminars were delivered in the towns of Portlaoise, Roscrea and Tullamore.
- Assisted schools in taking an integrated best practice technology infrastructural approach.

3. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE THE USE OF INTERNET RESOURCES INCLUDING SCOILNET

- Organised support groups on the topics of the Internet, Scoilnet and school websites.
- Through school visits promoted the use of the Internet and particularly Scoilnet.
- Through schools visits directed teachers to the NCTE website for information on ICT in Education.
- Communicated with schools the importance of School websites as educational resources
- Supported schools in developing and maintaining schools website (including the organising of website professional development courses as previously mentioned.
- Emphasised the fact that every school must develop an **Acceptable Use Policy** in partnership with the relevant parties and offered templates of same to schools.
- Ran school in-house workshops on Internet Safety and AUPs.
- Provided advice and support on purchasing and installation of antivirus and filtering software paying particular attention to the new agreement in operation with Symantec and the NCTE

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4. DIGITAL CONTENT (ONLINE AND OFFLINE RESOURCES)

Continued to add to the existing library of software in the Education Centre.

Continued to advise schools on software licensing.

New software application programmes were evaluated and reported on by tutors in the Laois Education Centre region.

5. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND ICT

The main priority in the area of SEN & ICT continued to be the professional development of teachers. During 2004, the ICT advisory service focused on special schools in the area and identified one special school which could be considered as a progressive/exemplary in relation their ICT and special needs activity which may ultimately form an essential resource in the development of a local support network for ICT & SEN. The ICT Advisor worked in conjunction with Ann Jackson from the Central Remedial Clinic in providing support to this particular school and it is proposed to do an evaluation of the approach during this year.

6. INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Continued to support schools previously involved in innovative projects such as:

- Laptops Initiative (one post-primary school)
- Kidsmart Project (three primary schools - one additional kidsmart unit acquired for a school in the region during this year).
- Write a Book (North/South) Project
- Glanbia – Cooperation is Cool Project
- ECDL Project with local post-primary schools
- Pilot project involving Microsoft, and Prodigy and the IT specialist programme.

Promoted, supported and facilitated the development of specific projects such as the

- Leargas Netdays Project (in association with Athlone Education Centre) and eSchola.
- Renault Project (in association with Athlone Education Centre) which focused on The Irish European Union Presidency as seen through the eyes of 6th class students and/or Transition Year students.

Promoted and supported the development of the 'ICT – a whole school approach' project in the Sacred Heart Primary School, Portlaoise. The aim of this pilot programme (which is about developing a programme for a new learning culture for primary schools) is to ensure that all children will have an opportunity to enhance their curriculum learning with the support of technology. Students are engaging in active and authentic learning through computer use.

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FÍS (FILM IN SCHOOLS) PROJECT.

Five schools in our region have been selected to participate in this project which involves introducing the medium of film as a support to the Revised Primary School Curriculum. This project is being run in conjunction with the NCTE and the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology. The project involves a three year commitment from each selected school who will be required to create and complete a number of short films, which will be entered into the Fís regional film awards and regional winners will participate in the national awards. Participating schools were obliged to attend three days of training in the skills of film scripting, producing and film editing. These three days were delivered by the ICT Advisor and have just been completed.

7. ICT ADVISOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Regional cluster meetings of ICT Advisors (Region 4) were held on three occasions during the year.
- NCTE national meetings (eight) were attended covering topics including Broadband Training/Issues, Training on new course updates, network advice and internet security.
- Attended the BETT Show in London in January so as to be updated on current best ICT practice and to assist in the building of a knowledge base on the usage of ICT in teaching and learning.
- Attended a one-day training session on Clicker 5 as organised by Crick software in the Heritage Hotel in Portlaoise
- Attended a 3 day conference in Iceland on establishing joint projects during November.

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude by saying 'thank you' to the many people who have been supportive during the year particularly, the team of tutors who work tirelessly, the Board of Management and in particular the ICT sub-committee, all the staff at the centre, the Director Tony whose support and advice is invaluable as always and finally Catherine for her 'dedication to the cause'.

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ICT COURSES 2004

Course Code	Course Title	Contact Hours
04LS097	Access in the Classroom	120
04LS099	Webdesign & Development for Learning Course	260
04LS100	Skills Enhancement Course	180
04LS101	Ict & Special Learning Support Course	100
04LS102	Word in the Classroom Course	150
04LS108	Internet & email for Learning	220
04LS115	IT Training Initiative Course	35
04LS137	Formatting your PC	130
04LS145	Support Group Workshop	32
04LS131	Introduction to Networking	160
04LS130	Introduction to IT	100
04LS127	Internet & e-mail Course	180
04LS111	Absolute Beginners	240
04LS103	User Scanners & Digital Cameras	520
04LS144	Internet & e-mail Course	400
04LS140	Intel Teach to the Future Course	200
04LS125	Multimedia Course	100
04LS124	Digital Cameras using a Photo Editing Package	160
04LS121	Microsoft Powerpoint in the Classroom	110
04LS118	Website Design for Learning	260
04LS143	ICT's in the Classroom	200
04LS113	ICT's in the Classroom	420
04LS142	ICT's in the Classroom	160
04LS133	Support Group	67.5
04LS132	Support Group	30
04LS129	IT in Subjects Specific	40
04LS122	Microsoft Word in the Classroom	80
Total		4654.5

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