

Subject:

KEY STAGE 4 FLEXIBILITY INITIATIVE - PHASE 4

Circular Number:
2003/4

Date of Issue:
28 February 2003

Audience:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided post-primary schools and special schools with secondary departments;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Institutions of Further Education;
- Northern Ireland Business Education Partnership;
- Training Organisations; and
- Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

Summary of Contents:

This Circular invites applications from schools wishing to discontinue part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum in favour of a 2 year work-related programme commencing September 2003.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

Mrs Jean Coulter
Qualifications and Business/Education Links Branch
Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
BANGOR
Co Down
BT19 7PR

Governor Awareness:
Essential

Status of Contents:
Advice
Information for schools

Related Documents:
Letter of 5 April 2000
(Phase 1)
Letter of 11 December 2000
(Phase 2)

Superseded Documents:
Circular 2002/3

Expiry Date:
Closing date for applications is
9 May 2003

DE Website:
This circular is available on
<http://www.deni.gov.uk>

Tel: 028 9127 9406
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Additional Copies:

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KEY STAGE 4 FLEXIBILITY INITIATIVE - PHASE 4

Introduction

1. The Department has decided that the arrangements for flexibility within the Key Stage 4 Curriculum should continue until the outcomes of the Curriculum Review for Key Stage 4 are implemented. This circular refers to the cohort of pupils commencing in September 2003.
2. The pilot was introduced in September 2000 and post-primary schools were invited to participate in a two year initiative for pupils in Year 11 and Year 12, with the aim of increasing flexibility and introducing work-related learning in the Key Stage 4 curriculum. The second phase of the pilot commenced in September 2001 and the third phase commenced in September 2002.
3. The arrangements and conditions relating to the initiative are set out below. Please note that the Department's written approval is required before a school may avail of these arrangements, regardless of whether approval has been given for an earlier phase of the initiative.
4. **Applications must be received in the Department by 9 May 2003**, and should include details of the work related programme you propose to offer and the Area of Study in the curriculum at Key Stage 4 you wish to discontinue. A checklist of information required by the Department is enclosed (at Appendix A) to assist with the completion of applications.
5. Exceptionally, the Department will be prepared to consider first-time applications in respect of pupils in Year 12, where it can be demonstrated that the programme has been designed to facilitate progress into further education or training post-16.
6. Schools previously participating in the initiative are reminded that pupils, and their parents where possible, should be involved in the development of these programmes, and that every effort should be made to relate any work experience to courses of further education or other training undertaken.
7. Applications on the enclosed form should be sent to the Department marked for the attention of Mrs Jean Coulter, QBEL Branch, copied to the Head of the Curriculum Advisory and Support Services (CASS) of your local Education and Library Board, and in the case of Catholic maintained schools, copied to CCMS. The Department will respond to applications as quickly as possible.
8. If you require any further information please contact Jean Coulter on 91 279406.

Arrangements for Key Stage 4 Flexibility - Phase 4

9. The Department is prepared to discontinue elements of the statutory curriculum requirements as indicated below, to allow schools to explore more creative and imaginative approaches to the curriculum at KS4. The experiences of these pupils will be monitored to inform the full curriculum review currently being carried out by CCEA.

10. The arrangements are as follows:
- a) They apply to cohorts of pupils commencing Year 11 in September 2003, and are in relation only to schools (grammar and non-grammar) wishing to include or expand provision of **work-related learning** for their KS4 cohort.
 - b) Schools will be able to discontinue elements of the statutory curriculum, in relation to any pupil or group of pupils, **any Area of Study** (AoS) and any programme of study or any subject, other than Religious Education (which, although compulsory, is not a part of the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum).
 - c) Schools will be required to design appropriate 2 year learning programmes for each pupil (or aggregated group of pupils) which should be discussed and agreed with each pupil in the context of a careers interview, where the pupil is able to make an informed choice with, as far as possible, his/her parents before the end of this school year.
 - d) Learning programmes will be expected to demonstrate provision of reasonable breadth and balance of experience, cohesion and clear progression routes post-16.
 - e) Schools' proposed programmes should be prepared in collaboration with their Education and Library Board (see paragraph 14 below), and will be subject to the Department's prior approval in every case: this will enable the Department to ensure that in each case the programme which is being offered to pupils is appropriate when the statutory provisions are discontinued.
 - f) Where the learning programme proposed includes a work placement(s), the school will need to confirm in its proposal that the agreement of the firm(s) concerned has been secured, and that the arrangements meet their Education and Library Board's requirements for such placements. The proposal should also describe the nature of the work experience/training which it is proposed that the pupils will receive in their workplace, and how this fits into the overall learning programme for the pupils(s) concerned. The Northern Ireland Business Education Partnership (NIBEP) and local BEPs can provide useful contacts with business to facilitate such placements.
 - g) Although AoS requirements will not apply (and therefore no subject other than RE would be mandatory), the Department will expect to see a clear focus on the Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and ICT in the programme for every pupil, for example through GCSE English and Mathematics, or through the Key Skills qualification at Levels 1 or 2, or indeed through any of a range of courses currently available which lead to qualifications appropriate to pupils of differing abilities.
 - h) All courses must lead to a recognised and approved qualification. Should a course a school wishes to offer not appear in the Department's circulars 2002/9 or 2002/13 listing approved courses the school should highlight the course within their application to enable the Department to consider it for inclusion in the next circular – this may include courses of less than one year's duration. The 2003

qualifications circular will issue earlier (end of March/beginning of April) to facilitate the arrangements for the Key Stage 4 Initiative.

- i) Courses such as NVQ units, which are workplace-based qualifications, or other vocational courses delivered through a Training Organisation, together with any work experience involved, must comprise no more than 40% of an individual pupil's total programme for the 2 years (although this may involve clustered periods of attendance in the Training Organisation/workplace).
 - j) The arrangements will be monitored by the Inspectorate, and outcomes will inform CCEA's full Curriculum Review. There will be valuable lessons in how successfully schools can organise their provision, and the impact it has on pupil motivation, on opening up choice and opportunity for young people and in increasing their qualification base.
11. For the purposes of these arrangements, 'work-related learning' will be defined as GNVQs Part One or units, or other broad age-appropriate vocational courses which require learning in the workplace. This definition is extended to include the Vocational GCSE's offered for first teaching from September 2002 and new the CCEA qualifications available from September 2003. With the exception of GNVQ Part One in some vocational areas, **all work-related courses should be offered in partnership with a further education college or a training organisation** which can provide a broad range of programmes for pupils to sample and allow them to use equipment which is industry standard. *Study of additional modern languages, for example, or the 3 sciences instead of 'double award' science, will not be relevant for the purposes of these arrangements.* The focus will be solely on work-related learning; wider flexibility issues will be addressed in the context of the full Curriculum Review.
 12. Schools are encouraged to give particular attention to the opportunities offered by the creative and expressive professions when they are designing programmes and considering placements and courses for their pupils. A list of organisations which schools may find helpful in considering work-related opportunities in the creative arts is included at Appendix B.
 13. Initial experience of these arrangements has indicated that a significant majority of pupils involved have been boys. Schools should ensure that the arrangements are open to boys and girls equally; that participation is on the basis of choice by the pupil; and that suitable work placements, vocational courses or other training are available to suit the needs, aptitudes and interests of all the pupils to whom the arrangements will apply.
 14. Schools are reminded that under Article 83 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, it is the duty of their Education and Library Board to make arrangements for pupils to receive secondary education at an institution of further education. The Board concerned will consult with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools before any such arrangements are made for pupils attending a Catholic maintained school.
 15. Schools should ensure that all teachers who will be teaching any pupil or group of pupils to whom these arrangements apply are made aware of the nature of the work-related course(s) the pupil(s) will be following. This will enable the teachers

to consider how best their own in-school courses of study can complement the work-related elements, in order to maximise relevance and cohesion across the pupils' full educational programmes in Key Stage 4.

16. The Department intends to regard schools' proposals under these arrangements as development work, and to approve flexibility on a school-by-school basis by way of a Departmental direction under Article 14 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

Child Protection

17. Schools must ensure that appropriate child protection arrangements are in place for pupils whilst not in attendance at the school and information on how this is to be achieved should be included with the application. Further guidance may be obtained from the designated Child Protection Officer in your Education and Library Board and/or CCMS.

Resources

18. In previous years schools organised the provision for the Key Stage 4 Flexibility Initiative from within their normal budgets, however limited funding has now been made available over the next 3 years for schools participating in the initiative. It is not anticipated that the level of funding available will be sufficient to cover all associated costs. The funding be allocated on the basis of the number of pupils involved in the proposals approved for the 2003/04 school year. This allocation of funds will also include any existing pupils who are progressing into Year 12. In order for proposals to be considered in time, and to be included in the funding allocation arrangements, schools must ensure that their applications are received **NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY 9 MAY 2003**. Applications received after this date may be approved to participate in the initiative, but **WILL NOT** receive funding.

DAVID MANN

CHECKLIST

APPENDIX A

Section 1 - All applications

- | | Yes |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Have you specified which Area(s) of Study you wish to apply flexibility at Key Stage 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Are the pupils concerned covering a full course in the other Areas of Study? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Have you specified how many pupils will participate in the programme and what year they are in? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Have the pupils been consulted about the content of the programme and chosen to participate? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Have parents attended a careers interview or been consulted? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Does the programme demonstrate balance, cohesion and clear progression routes? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Does the proposed work-related course lead to a recognised and approved qualification? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Is there a clear focus on the Key Skills – Communication, Application of Number and ICT? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Has the programme been prepared in consultation with your ELB? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Have you planned how you will evaluate the programme? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section 2 - Where programmes include work placement or FE/TO involvement

- | | Yes | n/a |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11. Have you specified the length of time on work placement, eg days per week, weeks per term, etc? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Have you specified the length of time of FE/TO involvement, eg days per week, weeks per term, etc? Please note if you have ticked 'Yes' for 11 and/or 12 above, the time involved must comprise no more than 40% of an individual pupil's total programme for the 2 years. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Have child protection arrangements been put in place? The Department may at any time request a copy of the school's child protection policy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

CREATIVE ARTS CONTACTS

Arts and Disability

Adapt Northern Ireland
Albany House
73-75 Great Victoria Street
BELFAST
BT2 7AF

Tel: 9023 1211

Arts and Disability Projects

Aine Dolan
Dungannon Community Arts Studio
Unit T11, Dungannon Enterprise Centre
2 Coalisland Road
DUNGANNON
Co Tyrone
BT71 6JT

Tel: 8775 3626

Children's Festival/Performance

Rebecca Hunter
Young at Art
Central Building
Room D105
Stranmillis University College
BELFAST
BT9 5DY

Tel: 9066 0515

Drama/Dance/Theatre/Performance

Monica Callan
Old Museum Arts Centre
7 College Square North
BELFAST
BT1 6AR

Tel: 9023 5053

APPENDIX B

Arts and Disability

Isabel Kelly
Down Community Arts Ltd
33b St Patrick's Avenue
DOWNPATRICK
Co Down
BT30 6DW

Tel: 4461 6006

Arts Development

Dearbhal McQuillan
Bryson House
28 Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7FE

Tel: 9032 5835

Community/Film/Technology

Pearse Moore
The Nerve Centre
7-8 Magazine Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6HJ

Tel: 7126 0562

Drama/Dance/Visual/Community Programmes

Malcolm Murchison
Flowerfield Arts Centre
Cloonavon
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
Co Londonderry
BT52 1EY

Tel: 7034 7234

Drama/Dance/Exhibitions/Community Events

Cathie McKimm
Down Arts
2-6 Irish Street
DOWNPATRICK
BT30 6BN

Tel: 4461 5283

Drama/Dance/Exhibitions

Emma Wilson
Pinebank Community, Arts and Resource Centre
Tullygally Road
CRAIGAVON
BT65 5BY

Tel: 3834 1618

**Exhibitions/Community Events/
Drama Dance**

Philip Magennis
Clotworthy Arts Centre
Antrim Castle Gardens
Randalstown Road
ANTRIM
BT41 4LH

Tel: 9442 8000

Dance and Education Programme Workshops

Steve Batts
Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
The Playhouse
5/7 Artillery Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6RG

Tel: 7126 2152

Drama/Music/Festivals

Eamonn Bradley
Arthowen Theatre
Dublin Road
ENNISKILLEN
Co Fermanagh
BT74 6BR

Tel: 6632 3233

Exhibitions, Drama/Dance/Crafts

Robert Peters/Eilis O'Baoill
Ards Arts
Ards Arts Centre
Town Hall - Conway Square
NEWTOWNARDS
Co Down
BT23 4DB

Tel: 9181 0803

Film/Animation

Michael Fearon
Cinemagic
17-21 Donegall Place
BELFAST
BT1 5AB

Tel: 9031 1900

Film/Photography

Richard West
Source Magazine
PO Box 352
BELFAST
BT1 2WB

Tel: 9032 9691

Literature/Education

Zoe Reid
Verbal Arts Centre (NI) Ltd
Stable Lane
Bishops Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6PU

Tel: 7126 6946

Literature/Publications

Blackstaff Press
Blackstaff House
Wildflower Way
Apollo Road
BELFAST
BT12 6TA

Tel: 9066 8074

Music

Classical Music Society
Room MC210
University of Ulster
Magee Campus
LONDONDERRY
BT48 7JL

Tel: 7137 5550

Music and Disability

Drake Music Project Ireland
Unit 5 RDC WIN Business Park
Canal Quay
NEWRY
Co Down
BT35 6PH

Tel: 3026 4295

**Music/Drama/Dance
Workshops/Community Programme**

Kate Ingram
Open Arts
c/o Crescent Arts Centre
2-4 University Road
BELFAST
BT7 1HN

Music/Training Workshops

Petesy Burns
Belfast Youth and Community Group
1/5 Donegall Lane
BELFAST
BT1 2LZ

Tel: 9024 4640

Tel: 9024 2338

Contemporary Music

Brian Carson/Sharon Rollston
Moving on Music Ltd
7 University Road
BELFAST
BT7 1NA

Tel: 9024 8818

Performing Arts

Derek Nicholls
Grand Opera House
Great Victoria Street
BELFAST
BT2 7HR

Tel: 9024 0411

Performance/Education/Drama/Dance

Pauline Ross
The Playhouse
5-7 Artillery Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6RG

Tel: 7126 4481

Theatre

Tony McCance
Burnavon
Burn Road
COOKSTOWN
Co Tyrone
BT80 8DN

Tel: 8676 9949/8676 7994

Theatre/Drama/Performance

Riverside Theatre
University of Ulster at Coleraine
Cromore Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1SA

Tel: 7034 4141

Theatre/Education

John McCann
Tinderbax Theatre Company
Imperial Buildings
72 High Street
BELFAST
BT1 2BE

Tel: 9043 9313

Traditional Arts

Carol Jackson
Feile an Phobail
473 Falls Road
BELFAST
BT12 6DD

Tel: 9031 3440

Visual Arts

Cliff Brooks
East Belfast Arts Collective
Engine Room Gallery
Portview Trade Centre
310 Newtownards Road
BELFAST
BT4 1HE

Tel: 9045 5184

Theatre/Education

Sinead Coll
Kabosh
Old Museum Arts Centre
7 College Square North
BELFAST
BT1 6AR

Tel: 9024 3343

Theatre/Performance

Edele Magill
Prime Cut Productions
285a Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 3GG

Tel: 9064 5101

Traditional Arts/Community Festival

Eimear Ni Mhathuna
Culturlann MacAdam O Fiaich
216 Falls Road
BELFAST
BT12 6AH

Tel: 9023 9303

Visual Arts

Anne Kennedy
Flaxart Studios
5th Floor Edenderry Mill
298-330 Crumlin Road
BELFAST
BT14 7EE

Tel: 9074 0463

Visual Arts

Brendan McMenamin
Orchard Gallery
Orchard Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6EG

Tel: 7126 9675

Visual Arts/Exhibitions

Ursula Burke
Catalyst Arts
23 Donegall Street
BELFAST
BT1 2FF

Tel: 9031 3303

Visual Arts/Printmaking

Paula Gallagher
Belfast Print Workshop
Cotton Court
30-42 Waring Street
BELFAST
BT1 2ED

Tel: 9068 7223

Visual Arts

David Dubose
Seacourt Print Workshop
78 Hamilton Road
BANGOR
Co Down
BT20 4LG

Tel: 9146 0595

Visual Arts/Exhibitions

Declan Sheehan
Context Gallery
The Playhouse
5-7 Artillery Street
LONDONDERRY
BT48 6RG

Tel: 7137 3538

Visual/Education

Hugh Mulholland
Ormeau Baths Gallery
18a Ormeau Avenue
BELFAST
BT2 8HS

Tel: 9032 1402