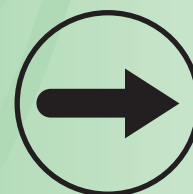


Guidance on the Welsh Assembly Government Community Focused Schools Grant

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**Guidance
Circular**



**School
Funding**

Title of Document:	Guidance on the Welsh Assembly Government Community Focused Schools Grant.
Audience:	Chief Executives of County and County Borough Councils in Wales; Directors of Education of County and County Borough Councils in Wales; WLGA; Wales Audit Commission; Community Safety Partnerships; WCVA, relevant national and local bodies in Wales.
Overview:	This document provides guidance on the criteria for the use of the Welsh Assembly Government grant for the development of community focused schools and on the arrangements for the administration of the grant by local education authorities.
Action required:	Local education authorities and schools to have regard to the guidance in the operation of the grant.
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Related Documents:	NAW Circular No.34/2003 Community Focused Schools published on 15 December 2003. Consultation on Welsh Assembly Government Community Focused Schools Grant published on 13 May 2005.
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GUIDANCE ON THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS GRANT

SUMMARY

This Circular provides guidance on the criteria for the use of the Welsh Assembly Government Community Focused Schools Grant in 2005/06 and subsequent years. Grant is available for projects that meet the following criteria.

They should have a clear and explicit link to the concept of a community focused school as set out in Circular 34/2003 'Community Focused Schools' and must meet one of the following specific criteria:

- i. be a project that will lead to further community focused developments not funded under this grant; or
- ii. be an exemplar project that is innovative and can be used as a model of good practice for other schools or LEAs; or
- iii. be a project that only involves 'start up' costs with any ongoing running costs being met from other funding or from charges.

The Circular sets out the arrangements for the distribution of grant to local authorities, the administration of the grant by local education authorities (LEAs) and the audit arrangements.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND LEGAL BACKGROUND

1.1 'The Learning Country', published in August 2001, set out the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to schools being at the heart of their communities and providing a range of services and facilities to help meet the needs of their pupils, their families and the wider community.

1.2 Sections 27 and 28 of the Education Act 2002 which came into effect on 1 September 2003 give school governing bodies powers to provide services for pupils, their families and the local community. Section 27:

- makes it easier for governing bodies to provide facilities and services that benefit pupils, families and the local community;
- provides flexibility for governing bodies to enter into agreements with other partners to provide services on school premises;
- enables governing bodies to charge for some services.

1.3 In December 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government issued Circular 34/2003 '*Community Focused Schools*' which gives guidance to schools to help them and their key partners to develop a community focus or extend the services and activities they currently provide. The Welsh Assembly Government's policy for community focused schools remains as set out in Circular 34/2003.

1.4 The grant to assist schools develop a community focus is being provided under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002, which gives powers to the National Assembly for Wales, delegated to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, to provide financial assistance for purposes related to education and childcare. LEAs have agreed to administer the funding on the Assembly Government's behalf under Section 17 of the Act.

SECTION 2: PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS GRANT

Grant Objectives

2.1 The aim of the grant is to assist LEAs and schools with the development of services, activities and facilities for the community. Circular 34/2003 '*Community Focused Schools*', sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's policy for community focused schools. The Circular indicates that the Assembly Government does not have a blueprint for the type of services that a school might provide or how they might be organised. The Welsh Assembly Government recognises the strategic role LEAs can and should play in the development of community focused schools and wishes to support this approach. Schools are encouraged to work with partners, particularly their LEAs, to develop approaches which are right for and meet the needs of pupils, their families and the local community and which fit with and support the LEA's strategy.

2.2 There is a strong link between this initiative and the Welsh Assembly Government's aim, set out in '*Better Wales*', to make communities safe places where people want to live, work and play. Many of the activities/facilities provided by community focused schools such as lifelong learning facilities for the community and after school activities for pupils help to tackle disadvantage and support crime reduction. Consequently, the grant arrangements reflect the scope for community focused schools to help tackle disadvantage and crime. In considering this, LEAs and schools should have regard to links with other relevant strategies, such as the local authority's Community Development Plan.

Eligibility Criteria

2.3 The grant eligibility criteria do not specify the type of community focused activity or facility eligible for grant funding. The eligibility criteria are broadly set so as to permit the funding of any type of community activity/facility provided it meets the criteria set in paragraph 2.4.

2.4 To be eligible for funding, projects should have a clear and explicit link to the concept of a community focused school as set out in Circular 34/2003 '*Community Focused Schools*' and must meet one of the following specific criteria:

- be a project that will lead to further community focused developments not funded from this grant; or
- be an exemplar project that is innovative and can be used as a model of good practice for other schools or LEAs; or
- be a project that only involves 'start up' costs with any on-going running costs being met from other funding or from charges.

Additional Links

2.5 In considering projects, LEAs should give particular consideration to funding those that:

- support area based initiatives such as the Heads of the Valleys Initiative, Communities First Programmes and Objective 1 Programmes; and/or
- involve youth work.

SECTION 3: GRANT ARRANGEMENTS

Grant Funding

3.1 Grant funding is set at £3m in 2005/06 and in each of the two following financial years.

3.2 Grant of £2m is for the generality of schools. Shares of the £2m are available for any eligible project, although LEAs are expected to place an emphasis on projects which help to build safer communities by tackling disadvantage and causes of crime such as lifelong learning facilities for the community and after school activities for pupils etc. LEAs and schools should have regard to links with other relevant strategies such as the local authority's Community Development Plan.

3.3 £1m is targeted for use in small and rural schools to help them develop as a focus for the communities they serve. Small schools are regarded as primary schools with less than 90 pupils. Rural schools are schools defined as such by reference to the Office for National Statistics Rural and Urban Classification 2004. However if an LEA cannot use all of this element of allocation on projects in small or rural schools, it may utilise the balance for other eligible projects.

Allocation of Grant to LEAs

3.4 £2m of the available grant is allocated to LEAs using a formula incorporating factors for youth population, crime and deprivation. The allocations, which are set out in Annex A, have been calculated on the following basis:

- i. 30% evenly split between LEAs;
- ii. 30% by reference to youth population;
- iii. 30% by reference to levels of recorded crime; and
- iv. 10% by reference to deprivation (based on free school meals entitlement).

3.5 £1m for small and rural schools is allocated to LEAs on the same basis as the former special grant for small and rural schools, that is using factors for rurality, school size and deprivation. The allocations, which are set out in Annex B, have been calculated on the following basis:

- i. 70% by reference to rurality (based on the population in each LEA outside settlements above the thresholds of a specified population from the 1991 Population Census);

- ii. 20% by reference to the number of (primary) schools maintained by the authority with fewer than 90 pupils; and
- iii. 10% by reference to deprivation (based on free school meals entitlement).

Allocation of Grant to Projects

3.6 Since the purpose of the funding is to assist schools develop a community focus, LEAs should allocate most of their shares of grant to schools. Schools can organise themselves in a cluster or group for the delivery of projects and may wish to put proposals to their LEA on that basis.

3.7 However, LEAs have a strategic role in taking forward this initiative and schools and LEAs need to work in partnership. In light of this, LEAs are permitted in 2005/06 to retain 30% of their total allocation or £50,000 if this is a greater amount to develop their strategic role. For 2006/07 and 2007/08, the maximum figure for retention by LEAs is £30,000 each year. LEAs should discuss their retention proposals with their Schools Budget Forum each year. Any LEA retained funding will need to support the development of projects that meet the agreed eligibility criteria (see paragraph 2.4). For example the LEA might need to undertake assessment work, employ a Community Focused Schools Co-ordinator or commission an external partner to take on a co-ordination or developmental role. It might also wish to fund a non-school organisation to take forward school based projects rather than the governing body - though such an arrangement should always be agreed with the governing body.

Administration of the Grant

3.8 The Assembly Government is issuing this guidance to LEAs, maintained schools and other key education organisations. LEAs need to ensure that local community service providers, voluntary organisations and other key partners in their area are made aware of the grant.

3.9 LEAs have responsibility for managing their grant allocations and administering the grant initiative in accordance with this guidance. LEAs are permitted to meet the costs of administering the grant from retained money to a maximum of £5,000 (within the overall figure specified in paragraph 3.7).

3.10 LEAs need to invite schools to make proposals for the use of grant, to consider these proposals against the eligibility criteria and to decide which projects to support. How LEAs arrange this is a matter for them. LEAs may wish to invite formal bids from schools, using or adapting the application form at Annex C, or they may prefer to talk to their schools and identify proposals in a less formal way. The application form is available in interactive format on the Learning Wales website.

3.11 Schools are not necessarily expected to provide community services or deliver activities themselves. As stated in Circular 34/2003, schools are encouraged to work in partnership with other organisations both to develop a community focus and to deliver activities. Grant allocated to schools for projects may therefore be used by schools to engage partners or to pay partners. LEAs can pay the costs of approved school projects directly to partners if preferred by the school and LEA. Such payments do not count towards the total of funding retained by the LEA (see paragraph 3.7).

Involvement of Community Safety Partnerships

3.12 In view of the link between this grant and the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for safer communities, authorities should seek the endorsement of their Community Safety Partnership for the proposed allocation of their share of the £2m element of the grant so as to ensure appropriate links to building safer communities, crime reduction and tackling disadvantage.

Involvement of Other Partnerships

3.13 Partnerships with a particular interest in the use of the grant resources include Children and Young People's Partnerships and CCETs. Youth Services also have a key interest. Guidance on consultation and partnerships in relation to community focused schools is set out in Circular 34/2003. Any projects coming forward for funding should have been developed on the basis of that guidance.

Duration of Grant

3.14 Grant is available for the 3 year period 2005-06 to 2007-08. Amounts allocated to individual LEAs may vary each year with the updating of the formula factors, but LEAs' shares should not change significantly. LEAs are therefore able to approve grant for projects for periods of one to three years. No commitment to funding beyond 2007-08 can be given at this stage. LEAs are expected to ensure that a number of schools are able to benefit over the 3 year period so as to secure development of community focused activity by a range of schools.

Unused Grant

3.15 The Welsh Assembly Government is concerned to ensure that all available grant is spent. LEAs are required to notify the Welsh Assembly Government by 31 December each year of any grant that they are unable to award to eligible projects in that financial year.

3.16 LEAs should also notify the Assembly Government by 31 December each year of any problems with achieving full spend on approved projects (both LEA and school projects) before the end of the financial year.

3.17 The Welsh Assembly Government does not envisage a need to claw back unspent grant, but will consider what action is necessary in the light of information provided by LEAs as required in paragraphs 3.15 and 3.16. The level of grant available for retention by LEAs in 2005/06 should help authorities to achieve full spend in the first year of grant allocation.

Notification of Approved Projects to the Welsh Assembly Government

3.18 LEAs should submit to the Welsh Assembly Government by 31 December each year full details of all approved projects, the amount of the grant awarded, the duration of grant and the arrangements in place to evaluate the outcomes of each project.

3.19 If the Welsh Assembly Government has concerns that any of the projects do not meet the eligibility criteria, it will discuss this with the LEA with a view to modifying the project to bring it within the grant eligibility criteria.

Audit Arrangements

3.20 In view of the amount of grant involved for each LEA and the fact that the majority of it is to be passed to schools, the grant will not be separately audited by the Wales Audit Office, but will be subject to normal local authority internal and external audit arrangements.

3.21 In addition to the information to be provided as described in paragraph 3.18, as a condition of the grant LEAs will be required to review the initiative under their internal audit arrangements during 2005/06 and periodically thereafter. Accordingly each LEA will be required to confirm by 31 July 2006 that there has been an internal audit review, to give details of the outcome and to confirm the frequency of future audit reviews.

Distribution of £2m Community Focused School Grant

£s

Authority	30% Even Split	30% Youth Population	30% Crime	10% Deprivation ¹	Allocation
Isle of Anglesey	27,273	13,577	9,021	4,427	54,298.00
Gwynedd	27,273	21,912	15,498	5,404	70,087.00
Conwy	27,273	21,443	19,343	5,760	73,818.00
Denbighshire	27,273	19,114	19,745	4,864	70,996.00
Flintshire	27,273	30,527	20,716	6,606	85,122.00
Wrexham	27,273	25,637	28,421	6,096	87,427.00
Powys	27,273	25,593	13,501	4,567	70,933.00
Ceredigion	27,273	13,756	8,175	2,883	52,087.00
Pembrokeshire	27,273	23,729	14,032	6,754	71,787.00
Cardiganshire	27,273	35,282	24,499	10,649	97,703.00
Swansea	27,273	44,038	65,661	17,714	154,686.00
Neath & Port Talbot	27,273	27,640	24,844	11,003	90,759.00
Bridgend	27,273	26,854	24,168	9,588	87,883.00
Vale of Glamorgan	27,273	26,287	20,726	5,783	80,069.00
Rhondda Cynon Taff	27,273	49,018	44,755	23,721	144,767.00
Merthyr Tydfil	27,273	12,499	15,689	6,267	61,728.00
Caerphilly	27,273	36,654	35,249	14,246	113,421.00
Blaenau Gwent	27,273	15,426	17,949	6,400	67,049.00
Torfaen	27,273	19,887	18,992	7,558	73,709.00
Monmouthshire	27,273	17,901	12,721	2,907	60,802.00
Newport	27,273	30,518	47,882	12,169	117,842.00
Cardiff	27,273	62,709	98,412	24,633	213,027.00
Wales	600,000	600,000	600,000	200,000	2,000,000.00

1. Based on total of primary and secondary pupils entitled to free school meals

Distribution of £1m Community Focused Schools Grant for Small and Rural Schools

	Allocation*
Isle of Anglesey	44,927
Gwynedd	85,929
Conwy	47,667
Denbighshire	38,224
Flintshire	51,862
Wrexham	38,382
Powys	85,395
Ceredigion	57,667
Pembrokeshire	57,662
Carmarthenshire	98,583
Swansea	45,527
Neath Port Talbot	42,704
Bridgend	30,567
The Vale of Glamorgan	26,216
Rhondda Cynon Taff	70,364
Merthyr Tydfil	13,446
Caerphilly	50,057
Blaenau Gwent	19,317
Torfaen	16,505
Monmouthshire	32,810
Newport	20,924
Cardiff	25,265
Wales	1,000,000.00

* by reference to:
 70% rurality
 20% number of small schools
 10% deprivation

WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS GRANT

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

This form is for use by schools to apply to their local authority for the Welsh Assembly Government grant to develop a community focus. The form should be completed in light of NAW Circular No 31/2005 which sets out the criteria for the use of the grant, the arrangements for the administration of the grant and the audit arrangements.

Local education authorities are responsible for inviting proposals from schools and approving projects. This form should be returned to [insert LEA contact details] and NOT to the Welsh Assembly Government.

Name of School: _____

Address of School: _____

School contact name and contact details: _____

Is your school eligible for consideration under the small/rural schools element of the grant ie does the school have fewer than 90 pupils on roll or is it located in a rural area as defined for the purposes of the grant?

(please tick relevant box)

Yes

No

☐
☐

Description of scheme

Please provide details of how project meets the grant criteria and will contribute to the school developing a community focus as described in NAW Circular 34/2003 'Community Focused Schools'.

To be eligible for grant, projects should have a clear and explicit link to the concept of a community focused school as set out in Circular 34/2003 'Community Focused Schools' and must meet one of the following specific criteria:

- a) Is a project that will lead to further community focused developments not funded under this initiative; or
- b) Is an exemplar project that is innovative and can be used as a model of good practice for other schools or LEAs; or
- c) Is a project that only requires 'start-up' costs (with any on-going running costs being met from other funding or charges).

Please tick which of (a), (b) or (c) applies to your project

(a) ☐

(b) ☐

(c) ☐

Please describe how the project meets the grant criteria indicated

Does the project:

	Yes	No
a) support area based initiatives such as the Heads of the Valleys Initiative, Communities First and Objective 1;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) involve youth work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(please tick relevant boxes)

If Yes, please provide details

Details of project Objectives, Outputs and Performance Measures including
Timescales for Achievement

Details of relationship of project to any Community Focused Schools Strategy of the LEA

--

Indicate any links the project has with the local authority's Community Development Strategy

--

Identify partners involved in the project

--

Funding

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Amount of Welsh Assembly Government grant sought			
Amount and sources of any other funding (please list)			