



# County Cavan Vocational Education Committee



# ANNUAL REPORT 2008



Administrative Offices, Church View Square, Cavan, Co. Cavan

(049) 433 1044

[www.cavanvec.ie](http://www.cavanvec.ie)



## Mission Statement

Co. Cavan Vocational Education Committee is an educational authority providing a comprehensive range of full-time and part-time educational, training and support services.

It aims to provide education for life in an innovative, responsive, caring and flexible learning environment.

It is committed to providing the maximum access to people of all ages and backgrounds and to achieving quality and excellence in all aspects of its work.

It achieves this through its own schools, Cavan Institute, Learning Centres and in conjunction with other providers of education and training in the county to meet the changing technological, economic, social and cultural needs of the community.

### **Co. Cavan VEC Vision**

“To develop an education system that fosters lifelong learning in all VEC centres of education and training in a systematic approach that is inclusive, respects cultural diversity and implements legislative requirements.”

## Foreword

### CEO's Address

It gives me great pleasure to introduce Co. Cavan VEC's Annual Report for 2008.

During 2008, Co. Cavan VEC continued to adapt, enhance and expand its myriad education services. This year saw further growth in enrolments across education centres and the rollout of a whole range of new programmes and services.

The growth, expansion and development achieved this year was driven by the objectives and goals that were laid out in Co. Cavan VEC's Education Plan 2006-2010 under five thematic areas.

- Development and enhancement of education service provision
- Development of youth and sports services
- Achievement of public relations objectives
- Development and enhancement of partnerships
- Continued organisational development

It is against this master plan, that a number of very specific objectives were laid out for 2008 and these were identified in last year's annual report. As this report will show, virtually all of those objectives were achieved and many more besides. This report again sets out a diverse range of objectives for 2009, all aligned with the goals and themes identified in the Education Plan 2006-2010.

I wish to commend the Vocational Education Committee and all staff for their commitment and hard work during 2008 and for continuing to deliver high quality education and support services throughout the county. Finally, a special word of thanks to Finola Keogh for her assistance in compiling this report.

### **Colm McEvoy**

*Chief Executive Officer*



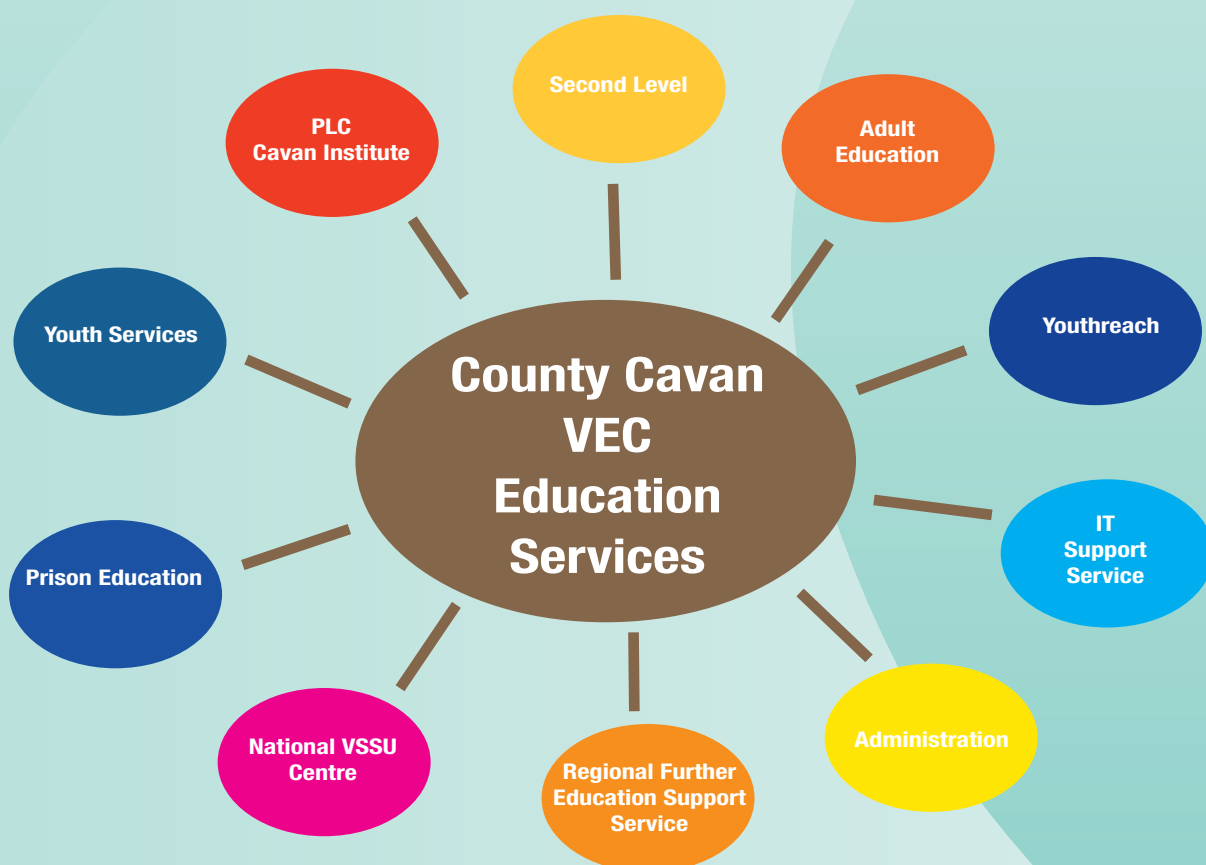
## Context

Co. Cavan Vocational Education Committee is funded by the Department of Education and Science. It was established following the enactment of the Vocational Education Act, 1930. The Vocational Education Act 1930 is the foundation act for VEC organisation and services and should be read in the light of amending acts, particularly the 1998 Education Act, which legislates for the entire education sector, and the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act 2001.

Section 29 of the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act 2001 requires VECs to prepare, adopt and submit to the Minister an annual report in relation to the performance of its functions for the preceding year. This report addresses this legal requirement and presents an overview of Co. Cavan VEC's education provision and other activities, its performance against plan for 2008 and a financial statement for 2008.

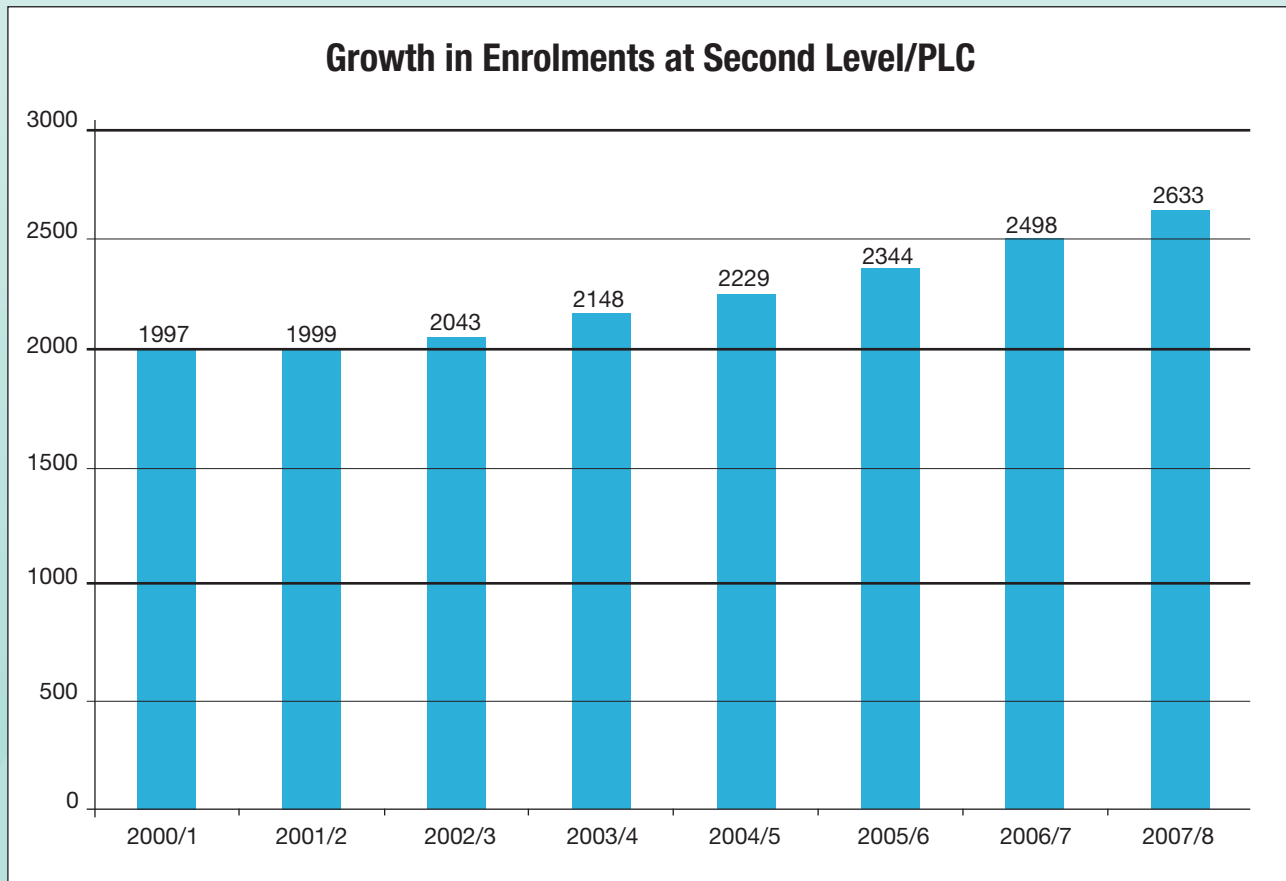
### Services Overview

Co. Cavan VEC provides myriad education, support and other services through head office, its four post-primary schools, three Youthreach centres, its PLC college Cavan Institute, Cavan Adult Learning Centre, Youth Services and numerous adult education centres throughout the county. It also provides education services to the prison population at Loughan House in West Cavan. A number of regional and national initiatives are also led by this VEC, including the regional Further Education Support Service and the national Vocational Services Support Unit (VSSU). This range of education and other services is illustrated below.



### Growth in Enrolments

Co. Cavan VEC has experienced steady growth in enrolments over the last number of years. This growth is a testament to the quality of education provided at our schools and PLC college, innovation at second level, the relevance of PLC courses to industry demands and the learner-centred approach taken by all of the staff, both in front-line teaching and support roles.



## Highlights of 2008

The Education Plan 2006-2010 informs the work of Co. Cavan VEC, and assists us in planning for the future and monitoring progress against planned activities. Objectives for 2008, aligned with the Education Plan, were identified in the 2007 Annual Report. Virtually all objectives were met and these are summarised overleaf in terms of highlights from the various schools and education centres.

### Post-Primary Schools

The four post-primary schools in Co. Cavan VEC continued to provide a wide range of education programmes, both academic and extra-curricular, during the 2007-2008 academic year. In addition, Co. Cavan VEC submitted a detailed proposal for the establishment of a fifth post-primary school in Kingscourt to serve the needs of young people from this catchment area. Some highlights from our schools during this year are as follows:



### Breifne College, Cavan

- Launch of ePortal administration system by Minister for Lifelong Learning.
- Transition year programme introduced. Design and Communications Graphics (DCG) introduced as a subject at Leaving Certificate.
- Staff participated in middle leadership CPD programme run by LDS (Leadership Development in Schools).
- A project entered by two students in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition achieved commendation.
- Students participate in the KEY Programme, a cross-border enterprise initiative.
- Cardinal Seán Brady visited the school and conducted a blessing commemorated by a tree-planting ceremony.
- Funding from the Department of Education and Science under the T4 Initiative was used to develop the DCG room.



### St. Bricin's College, Belturbet



- Introduction of Engineering and Art to the curriculum at Leaving Certificate and Religious Education offered as an exam subject at Junior Certificate.
- One of 8 schools in Ireland to participate in a televised Telethon activity through which funds were raised for charity by the school kayaking club.
- Multiple trips by students including a skiing trip to Bulgaria, school tour to Italy, geography field trip to the Geo Park and visit to Dáil Éireann by a CSPE 1st Year Class.
- LCVP students carried out a research project on Cavan sports personalities, past and present. Officially launched at the County Museum in February.
- Replacement of windows under the Emergency Fund and refurbishment of the home economics room under the Summer Works Scheme.





### St. Mogue's College, Bawnboy

- Curriculum expansion with the introduction of Spanish, Art, IT and PE.
- Successful implementation of transition year programme, with students completing a television media training course, participating in the cross-border KEY programme.
- U-16 football team wins the first two matches in the Ulster championship and the U-16 and U-14 camogie teams are unbeaten after winning three tournaments.
- First Annual Student Awards ceremony held to recognise outstanding achievements by students at the school. One student also received an award at the Bank of Ireland Regional Student Awards Presentation in Kells.
- Study Skills Talk, Cura Workshops, Mental Health Talk, Drive for Life Programme and cookery demonstration.
- LET Programme cultural visit to the Ulster American Folk Park, agricultural science field trip to Ballyhaise Agricultural College, sports visit to the Share Centre in Lisnaskea and school trip to Barcelona.



### Virginia College, Virginia

- Virginia College students participate in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition.
- Two new subjects added to the curriculum: Agricultural Science and Spanish.
- Students and staff raised funds for Down Syndrome Ireland through a fancy-dress day.
- Hosted first annual careers fair at which universities, institutes of technology and others provided careers information to students.
- Second year students visited the European Space Centre in Brussels as part of a science tour.
- One classroom was upgraded with T4 computers as part of the new DCG curriculum and repairs to the roof were carried out under the Summer Works Scheme.
- Maths, Science and IT project launched.





## Cavan Institute

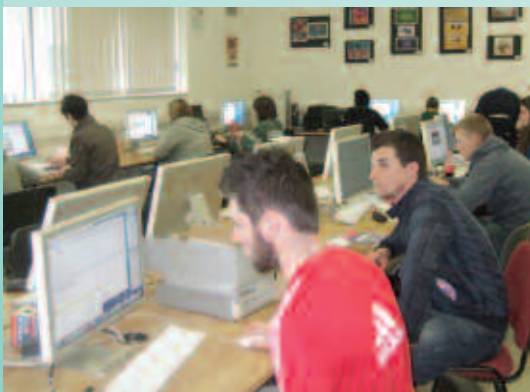
Cavan Institute's enrolments continued to grow with demand for places on our courses far outstripping supply. In the 2007-2008 academic year, 1234 students were enrolled on full-time courses and 705 students were enrolled through the night school. Course provision expanded, administrative functions were streamlined, and further milestones were achieved in the monitoring and enhancement of academic processes, including the introduction of interim exam board meetings and a student progress feedback mechanism. Some highlights from our year are as follows:

### Enhancements in Education Provision

- Courses were restructured into five schools: Business and Humanities; Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing; Computing, Engineering and Science; Design, Performing Arts and Services; Health Care, Sports and Education
- New courses were launched in fashion, design and media make-up, travel management, pharmacy assistant, science and laboratory techniques, security operations and administration, youth work, computer and network technician, electronic technology, architectural technology and design
- New partnership established with Fáilte Ireland to run catering and cookery courses at Cavan Institute
- Delivery of FÁS childcare course
- Links established with Quinn Direct Insurance to provide specialised staff training
- Awarded SKILLVEC contract to deliver FETAC-certified courses/awards to HSE staff
- "Mind Yourself", a mental health promotion and suicide prevention programme, was rolled out at Cavan Institute
- A smoking cessation programme was introduced
- A student exchange programme with Germany was initiated

### Students' Achievements

- First sports scholarships awarded to five students
- A student won the All-Ireland handball third level intervarsity championship
- The men's Gaelic football team reach the All-Ireland final of the FE championship
- A student in the School of Business and Humanities came first in Ireland in the CPA exams
- A production of the musical "Joseph" by students and staff had a sell-out run for four nights in the Town Hall Theatre, Cavan
- Students participated in the National Telethon fundraising charity event and also held a Lenten fast in aid of Trocaire
- An exhibition of work was staged by students from the School of Design, Performing Arts and Services and an art exhibition was presented by students from the Art, Craft and Design course
- A performance by music students was staged in the Town Hall Theatre, Cavan



### Staff Developments

- Staff mentor training carried out by the University of Ulster

### Facilities Enhancements

- New high specification Music Recording Studio established
- A fourth hairdressing salon was set up and a commercial salon was launched enabling students of Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing to raise funds for charitable causes
- E-Portal electronic student attendance system implemented
- Share Point introduced to allow staff to share information electronically
- Video-conferencing facilities introduced to allow for remote delivery of courses from Cavan Institute to other centres in the county
- New defibrillators purchased and training for staff completed

### Communications, Alliances and Visits

- New supplement called “Cavan Institute Life” launched in The Anglo Celt newspaper
- Cavan Institute was instrumental in the establishment of the North Eastern Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA), an alliance of five further education colleges and Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Visit of Minister for Lifelong Learning, Sean Haughey TD, to Cavan Institute and other learning centres and schools within Co. Cavan VEC
- Visit and presentation from representatives of the Marie Keating Foundation



## Adult Education Services

Record numbers of adult learners participated in the programmes offered through Co. Cavan VEC's Adult Education Services and a number of new initiatives were launched. The numbers participating on fee-paying classes showed a slight decline on previous years' enrolments, but learners turned in greater numbers to the one-to-one tuition and small group classes delivering training in topics as diverse as computers, childcare and communications. A new administration database and reporting facility called "SalesPulse" was installed and rolled out within the Adult Education Service and it is now used to maintain learner records for the literacy service, community education, the adult education guidance and information service, as well as for BTEI-funded courses. Some of the highlights of the services encompassed under this function are as follows:

### Cavan Adult Learning Centre (CALC)

- Adult learners from CALC took part in a student development day, as part of which they joined learners from Longford literacy service on a visit to Áras an Uachtaráin. The two groups also met learners from Ballymun's "Read and Write" scheme and shared experiences of their learning journey.
- Staff at CALC provided input into a learning resource called "The Developing World", which is designed for use in adult basic education nationwide.
- Granted additional funding under the DEIS scheme to run tailored family learning programmes
- CALC delivered a short adult basic education 'taster' programme specifically for women from the travelling community, with a focus on the theme of Christmas. This resulted in the production by learners of cards, wreaths, logs and decorations, while developing basic literacy skills. Many learners continued after the programme had ended and are now studying for FETAC awards.

### Community Education

- Co. Cavan VEC participated in a multi-agency research study into Barriers to the Labour Market for Lone Parents in Cavan. This study was awarded a commendation at the National AONTAS Star Awards.
- A Health and Social Care Supplement outlining education options was provided with the local newspaper, The Anglo Celt, in April 2008.
- Two new courses were introduced, Advanced ECDL and FETAC Level 5 Healthcare Support, the latter delivered through videoconferencing.
- The service participated in Mental Health Awareness Week.

### Adult Education Guidance and Information Service

- Two new appointments were made to the service in 2008.
- Priority was given to establishing working relationships with different services within the VEC and with other agencies based in the county.
- All VTOS applicants were invited to meet the Adult Education Guidance Counsellor, enhancing applications' knowledge of their course choices and funding options.

### Youth Service

- Created and launched the first directory of local youth clubs and groups in County Cavan.
- Distributed funding to youth groups and clubs as part of the Local Youth Club Grants Scheme.
- A Youth Information Day focusing on drug education and awareness was held.
- Rolled out youth leadership and child protection training to youth leaders.



### Cavan Youthreach

- The number of trainee places increased.
- Seven new modules were introduced: Beauty Care, Crime Awareness, Hairdressing, Horticulture, Geography, Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Work Experience offering the opportunity to achieve certification at FETAC Level 3 and 4.
- Trainees received General Learning Certificates at FETAC Level 3 and Component Certificates at FETAC Levels 3 and 4.
- Fundraising included a Christmas Shoe Box Appeal and a barbeque in aid of Childline.

### Cootehill Youthreach

- Completed woodwork project to up-grade entrance hallway and landing.
- Designed murals for the new playground in a local housing estate.
- Quality Framework Initiative (phase 1) completed and Phase 2 started.
- Displayed craft pieces in Arts Roadshow, Carrick-On-Shannon.
- Whole centre evaluation by the Department of Education and Science published.
- Alcoholics Anonymous gave talk to learners about the dangers of alcohol addiction.
- Handmade Christmas Cards delivered to all the local businesses.

### Kingscourt Youthreach

- Learners successfully presented portfolios for FETAC accreditation in May at both Level 3 and Level 4.
- Learners received Bronze Gaisce Award medals
- 120 shoe-boxes filled and distributed to needy children under the Samaritans Christmas Child appeal.
- Learners completed a cross-border Intercultural & Diversity training programme
- Trip to the South of England with visits to Stonehenge, Thorpe Park in London, Longleat Safari park, the University town of Bath and the seaside resort of Poole.



## Prison Education

Co. Cavan VEC provides education to prisoners in Loughan House Open Detention Centre in Blacklion. Some of the notable developments which took place at the Education Centre were:

- The prison population increased, which presented new challenges for the Education Centre.
- Adult Guidance initiatives saw increased number of activities aimed at helping the men to prepare for their release
- Introduction of Safepass, Forklift Operation, Abrasive Wheels, and Start Your Own Business courses
- Art students exhibited their work in the national Kilmainham Gaol Art Exhibition
- The new all-weather astro-turf pitch increased the number of sporting activities on the timetable
- Education Links with a local community group led to the setting up of a volunteering project, where prisoners were released to work on a gardening project on the community premises.
- The extended summer programme included classroom activities, outdoor pursuits, educational outings and evening P.E. classes. It was greatly appreciated by prison management who acknowledged the VEC's commitment to prison education, especially in the light of increased prisoner numbers.
- Information sessions were arranged for schools who visited Loughan House in preparation for the Junior Certificate exam in Civil, Social and Political Education. More mature students were interested in finding out more about the Irish Prison Service as a possible career path.
- The Governor, Chief Officer and Head Teacher attended an awards ceremony in Craigavon where certificates were presented to the young men who completed an intensive course aimed at 18-25 year olds, the only one of its kind on offer to this age group nationally.
- The Governor and teaching staff hosted a reception for newly appointed Minister for Justice, Mr. Brian Lenihan TD.



## Financial Report

Co. Cavan VEC is statutorily required to prepare an annual statement of accounts under the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act 2001. The financial statement is presented on a V15 form and this acts as the basis for the audit process conducted each year by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The following table represents the payments and receipts (audited) for the year ending 31st December 2008.

<b>Treasurer Account for the Year Ended 31/12/2008</b>			
	Ordinary Account	Capital Account	Total
Cash at Bank (Bank Overdraft) at 01/01/2008	€2,834,288	€535,637	€3,369,925
Adjustment for School Bank Accounts	€587		€587
Receipts in 2008	€27,373,636	€545,623	€27,919,259
Transfer of Funds	€46,000	(€46,000)	—
Payments in 2008	(€27,137,958)	(€959,897)	(€28,097,855)
Cash at Bank (Bank Overdraft) at 31/12/2008	€3,116,553	€75,363	€3,191,916

## Objectives for 2009

The following objectives have been identified as priority areas for development in 2009. Objectives are categorised under the five themes that were established as part of Co. Cavan VEC's Education Plan 2006-2010.

### Goal 1: Development & Enhancement of Education Service Provision

- Develop programmes at the new FETAC Levels 1 & 2 on the National Framework of Qualifications
- Introduction of mobile education facility - The Learning Bus
- Continued review and expansion of courses at Cavan Institute
- Provide local Education Guidance Services on an outreach basis
- Feasibility study on need for a new Youthreach Centre in West Cavan (Dowra)
- Pursue funding for establishment of Adult Education facility in Ballyjamesduff
- Provide National Certificate in Exercise & Fitness Programme in association with the University of Limerick
- Secure planning permission and funding to develop an Outdoor Education Facility at Corrad House, Dowra
- Provide enhanced library, sports and other ancillary facilities for learners at Cavan Institute
- Expand provision of in-company training to staff at local businesses in Cavan
- Establish text-based communications facility between schools and parents.
- Pursue new multi-purpose education centre
- Enhanced accommodation at all VEC schools and Cavan Institute
- Review accommodation needs of Cootehill Youthreach Centre
- Enhance Car Parking Facilities at Cavan Institute

### Goal 2: Development of Youth & Sports Services

- Develop and deliver training programmes to voluntary youth leaders throughout the county
- Publication of Local Sports Partnership Strategic Plan in association with other partners

### Goal 3: Achievement of Public Relations Objectives

- Planning and development of an organisation-wide Equality Policy and establish an Equality Working Group
- Planning and consultation for new VEC website, new websites for schools and a new Adult Education Website
- Continued promotion of Co. Cavan VEC services, development plans, successes and achievements
- Publish Annual Report for submission to Department of Education and Science and wider circulation

**Goal 4: Development and Enhancement of Partnership**

- Roll out PEACE III-funded programmes for young people in partnership with Cavan County Council
- Expand provision of family learning programmes in partnership with Home School Liaison
- Develop and roll out a “Guidance Information Roadshow” in partnership with DSFA, Citizen’s Information and HSE
- Deliver training programmes in partnership with FÁS and Fáilte Ireland

**Goal 5: Continued Organisational Development**

- Initiate consultation and planning process to develop a five-year Strategic Plan for Cavan Institute
- Continued roll out of CPD programme
- Host an all staff “Organisational Cohesiveness & Training” day
- Ongoing review of quality standards
- Relocate to new Head Office accommodation
- Establish an organisation-wide ICT committee to research, plan and implement new IT standards and to develop Co. Cavan VEC’s IT Strategy 2010-2015
- Launch of pilot programme to provide IT support to non-VEC schools on an outsourced service basis
- Introduce online recruitment system using [www.vecjobs.ie](http://www.vecjobs.ie) website

## List of Schools, Centres & Programmes

School/Centre/Programme	Telephone	Principal/Manager/Director
Administrative Offices, Cavan	049 433 1044	Colm McEvoy (CEO)
St. Mogue's College, Bawnboy	049 952 3112	Anne Conaghan
St. Bricin's College, Belturbet	049 952 2170	Mary Sheridan
Breifne College, Cavan	049 433 1735	John Kearney
Virginia College	049 854 7050	Karen Fitzpatrick
Cavan Institute	049 433 2633	Ann Marie Lacey
Adult Education Services	049 436 1881	Fiona Maloney (AEO)
Cavan Adult Learning Centre	049 436 1881	Regina Clarke
Adult Education Guidance and Information Service	049 437 7001	Jason Donohue
Community Education	049 437 7562	Gemma Brady
Loughan House, Blacklion	071 983 6000	Brenda McMullen
VTOS	049 436 1881	Fiona Maloney
Back to Education Initiative	049 436 1881	Fiona Maloney
Adult Education and Evening Courses	049 436 1881	Fiona Maloney
Youth Services	049 436 1881	Maureen McIntyre
Youthreach Cavan	049 436 1573	Diarmuid Wilson
Youthreach Cootehill	049 555 2561	June Neylon
Youthreach Kingscourt	042 966 8355	Sean Corcoran
Further Education Support Service	049 433 1044	Siobhan Magee

## Members of Co. Cavan Vocational Education Committee (2008)

Cllr. Clifford Kelly (Chairperson)	Francie Fitzsimons
Cllr. Madeleine Argue (Vice-Chairperson)	Cllr. Anthony Vesey
Cllr. Paddy Conaty	Cllr. Maura Maguire Lynch
Niamh Smyth	Niall Lynch
Cllr. Mary Brady	Edel Myles
Cllr. Pauline McCauley	Peter Brady
Sinead Donohoe	Cllr. Shane P. O'Reilly
Cllr. Patricia Walsh	Cllr. Freddie Kettyle
Pauline O'Brien	Dessie Boylan
Cllr. T.P. Smith	

## Glossary

AEO	Adult Education Officer
AONTAS	National Adult Learning Organisation
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CALC	Cavan Adult Learning Centre
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSPE	Civic, Social and Political Education
DCG	Design and Communication Graphics
DEIS	Delivering Equality of opportunity In Schools
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
FAS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair
FE	Further Education
FETAC	Further Education Training and Awards Council
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
MIS/DSS	Management Information System/Decision Support System
NEFHEA	North Eastern Further and Higher Education Alliance
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VSSU	Vocational Services Support Unit
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme