

Annual Report 2020



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DONEGAL ETB ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Foreword from Donegal ETB Chairperson	4
Introduction from Chief Executive	6
Chief Executive and Members of Donegal ETB 2020	7
Composition of Board	8
Attendance Records for Board Members 2020	9-10
How the Board operates	11
Risk Management and Internal Control	12
What we do, where we are	13
Service Map	14

2020 - 'Lean ar Aghaidh'

Moving forward with our three key themes	15
--	----

Some key figures for 2020

Student numbers by sector	16
Student enrolment in our post-primary schools	17
FET enrolment	18

Key Theme I | Teaching and Learning

Priority 1 Programmes and Support Services	19
Priority 2 New initiatives	23
Priority 3 New concepts within the Junior Cycle programme	26
Priority 4 Generic skill development within all education and training programmes	28
Priority 5 Maintain and enhance quality standards across all education programmes	30
Priority 6 Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme	33

Key Theme 2 | A Progressive, Accountable Organisation

Priority 7 New organisational structures	35
Priority 8 Legislative and governance requirements	37
Priority 9 Integration of Education and Training, and Shared Services	40
Priority 10 Staff learning opportunities and supports	45
Priority 11 Use of new technologies to enhance organisational support and development	47
Priority 12 Communications strategy	49

Key Theme 3 | Working with Partners

Priority 13 Building on relationships to work towards shared goals	60
Priority 14 Support for youth work activities across the county	64
Gartan Outdoor Education Training Centre	66
Donegal Music Education Partnership	67

Corporate

COVID 19	69
Corporate Services	70
Procurement	70
Capital Development Programme	71
Protected Disclosures	73
Freedom of Information	73
GDPR	73
Health, Safety and Welfare	74
Policies and Procedures	74

Committees

Audit and Risk Committee	75
Finance Committee	76
Youth Work Committee	77
Abbreviations	78
Appendices	79



Our Vision

Excellence in the delivery of a quality, student-centred education and training service.

Our Mission Statement

To promote, provide and support accessible and inclusive education and training in a safe and caring environment which enables young people and adults to empower themselves to reach their full potential.



#WeAreDonegalETB

FOREWORD

Mr Geoffrey Browne, Chairperson



I was delighted to be elected to the Office of Chairperson of Donegal ETB for 2020. It was indeed an honour to have been selected and supported by my fellow Board Members and to receive the confidence that they have placed in me to discharge the duties of Chairperson.

Donegal ETB is the largest education and training provider in Donegal. It manages fifteen of the county's twenty-seven post-primary schools and is a Trustee Partner for the eight Community and Comprehensive schools in the county. It is the largest provider of Further Education and Training (FET) in the county, manages Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre, the Donegal Music Education Partnership and has legal responsibilities for Youth Work. In 2020, over 19,960 students availed of education and training through the schools, centres, programmes and services of the Board.

It is my pleasure on behalf of the Board to present the Annual Report for 2020 and to showcase and reflect upon the work achieved during 2020. Our targets are included in our Strategy Statement, "Lean ar Aghaidh" and in our Service Plan for 2020.

2020 was a difficult year for all but for our Board we had the extra difficulty of losing a dear and valued member with the sad passing of Noel Rodden in November. Noel's commitment and dedication to Donegal ETB as a Board member and as a staff member was exemplary and he is truly missed by all who knew him.

2020 also saw the retirement of the Director of OSD Jim McGlynn following a long and distinguished career with Donegal ETB. We wish Jim and indeed all retirees much happiness for their retirement and thank them sincerely for their outstanding contribution to our organisation and to the public service.

As Chairperson, my attendance at a variety of events was curtailed due to the pandemic and this was disappointing but I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend some of the FET presentation ceremonies before restrictions were introduced and I enjoyed evenings in An Clochán Liath, Ballybofey and Burt during January and February where I joined with students from a range of programme areas to celebrate their achievements.

I was equally fortunate to have had the chance to gather with our CE, Directors and Senior Managers in January. The seminar included sessions on Governance and Team Building and was very well received by all who attended.

A key challenge for Donegal ETB has been to progress the process to acquire a site for the Three School Campus for Crana College, Coláiste Chineál Eoghain and Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha and this work continued during 2020 with the announcement by the Department of Education on 03.11.20 that a CPO was being pursued in respect of a site in Bunrana by Donegal County Council. The news was warmly welcomed and we look forward to the timely completion of the process and the start of the design and planning stages.

I am delighted to see that our communication and branding are continuing to be much enhanced and our reach on social and other media channels is improving all the time. This is so vitally important as we must continually seek to connect with the citizens of County Donegal, particularly during these times when connecting with each other has never been more important.

It has been a most rewarding year in the role of Chairperson. The interaction and work with our wide range of partner organisations, Cllr Rena Donaghey, Deputy Chairperson, Board Members, the Chief Executive and her dedicated team has made for a very productive year despite the difficulties encountered due to the pandemic.

The Board had to hold all but one of its meetings during 2020 online and while this was not how we envisioned the new Board bedding in, it is a wonderful testament to all involved that the business of the Board continued during 2020 with all key milestones reached with constructive and engaging debate and discussion on Google Meet. I would also acknowledge the positive fashion with which Donegal ETB staff have embraced the changes in work practices necessitated by the onset of the Covid19 pandemic. It is testament to the dedication of our very fine staff to Donegal ETB and to the citizens of Donegal.

I confirm that Donegal ETB is progressing the implementation of the up to date requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs in its governance practices and procedures across the organisation.

I acknowledge the responsibility of Donegal ETB to prepare this Annual Report and the Annual Financial Statements. Based on the information available to the Board, I consider, on behalf of the Board that the Annual Financial Statements properly present the income and expenditure of the Board and the state of affairs of the Board. I further confirm that Donegal ETB has complied with its obligations under tax law.

I affirm our adherence to the Donegal ETB Procurement Policy and Procedures and I confirm that a three year Corporate Procurement Plan has been developed and implemented.

As Chairperson of the Board, I confirm that the appropriate requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) Public Spending Code are being adhered to.

Finally, I confirm that a Confidential Chairperson's Report has been submitted to the Minister / Department of Education.

Introduction - Ms Anne McHugh, Chief Executive



2020 was a year like no other and the pandemic has, without doubt, impacted upon Donegal ETB in a myriad of ways. Our key focus was at all times the continuation of services and the well being of our staff and learning communities. We welcomed a number of new staff during 2020 and while this could have been challenging, all new staff received a high level of support to assist them with settling into their new roles. We followed all Government and HSE advice as we navigated and grappled with the ever changing and unprecedented situation created by the pandemic. Emergency Remote Teaching continued for most of 2020 although our schools were open from September to December. Our Leaving Certificate students participated in the Calculated Grades Model and the Junior Cycle examinations were cancelled with school-based assessment taking place instead. Progress in many areas had to take a back seat during 2020 as we reacted to COVID 19 but many positive outcomes did emerge from this difficult time: much upskilling has taken place among staff members in the area of Technology Enhanced Learning and cloud based IT solutions for

administrative services.

COVID 19 undoubtedly exacerbated existing inequalities in our society but we are happy to report that the staff of Donegal ETB went above and beyond as they worked tirelessly to mitigate those inequalities. I extend a heartfelt thanks to all for the manner in which you dealt with the extremely difficult circumstances during 2020. Your concern for students and the communities you serve was uplifting indeed.

When life moved online we were delighted to be able to host a number of events. These included our annual Community Education Seminar on 11 December and our DMEP Christmas Concerts on 21 December as well as school awards and LC graduation ceremonies. National Workplace Wellbeing Day on 1 May was never more ironically relevant as our homes continued to be our workplaces.

Donegal ETB was delighted to continue to work in partnership with a number of organisations during 2020 not least of these LyIT with whom we have a close and mutually beneficial relationship which enhances opportunities for our students and staff. The Cross Border Further and Higher Education Cluster continues to make progress on it's programme of work which aims to elevate the status of the North West City Region to one of economic stability and innovation where our young people can opt to remain for all of their education and working lives.

A significant body of work on the ethos and core values of our schools has been undertaken by ETBI and Donegal ETB has been participating in this work which will contribute enormously to the standing and understanding of what our schools are about: state, co educational and multi denominational operating with the following core values: excellence in education, care, equality, respect and community.

I would like to sincerely thank the members of the Annual Report Committee for their excellent, detailed and exacting work during the production of this document. Andy McGovern, Cróna Gallagher, Martin Gormley, Brenda Boyle, Sandra Buchanan, Martin McGinley, Eileen Dennison and Liz Potter.

Finally I extend my thanks to our Chairperson, Mr Geoffrey Browne and the members of the Board of Donegal ETB for their continued support and interest in all that we undertake in order to serve the communities of Co Donegal.

Donegal ETB Chief Executive

Chief Executive: Ms Anne McHugh

Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson of Donegal ETB Board

Donegal ETB Board		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Geoffrey Browne	Chairperson	National Parents Association
Cllr Rena Donaghey	Deputy Chairperson	Local Authority

Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson of Board Committees

Audit and Risk Committee		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Kevin Huston	Chairperson	External Member

Finance Committee		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Patsy McVicar	Chairperson	NAPD

Youth Work Committee		
Name	Designation	Nominating Body
Mr Geoffrey Browne	Chairperson	National Parents Association
Ms Lorraine Thompson	Deputy Chairperson	Youth Work Ireland

Representation and Meetings

- The term of office of Donegal ETB is five years (2019-2024).
- The Board meets regularly - around once every six weeks. In 2020, the Board met eight times.
- The chairperson and deputy chairperson are usually elected annually.
- Donegal ETB appoints 4 of its board members or representatives to each board of management of Donegal ETB schools and colleges for the term of office of the board.
- 4 board members are appointed to the LYIT Governing Body.
- Members also sit on various committees of the Board, mainly the Youth, Audit and Risk, and Finance Committees.

Composition of the Board

The Board is comprised of 21 members elected under the provisions of Section 30 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 as follows:-

Donegal ETB Members					
	TITLE	NAME	SURNAME	Category	Nominating Body
12 Members elected by Local Authority Elections under Donegal County Council Section 30 (I) (a) Donegal Education and Training Boards, Act 2013					
1	Cllr	Albert	Doherty		Donegal County Council
2	Cllr	Barry	Sweeny		Donegal County Council
3	Cllr	Donal	Coyle		Donegal County Council
4	Cllr	Gary	Doherty		Donegal County Council
5	Cllr	Ian	McGarvey		Donegal County Council
6	Cllr	John Sheamais	O'Fearraigh		Donegal County Council
7	Cllr	Martin	Harley		Donegal County Council
8	Cllr	Martin	Farren		Donegal County Council
9	Cllr	Michael	McBride		Donegal County Council
10	Cllr	Noel	Jordan		Donegal County Council
11	Cllr	Noreen	McGarvey		Donegal County Council
12	Cllr	Rena	Donaghey		Donegal County Council
2 Members who are members of staff. Section 30 (I) (b) Members of Staff elected					
13	Ms	Joanne	Donaghy	Staff Rep	Elected by Staff
14	Mr	Noel	Rodden*	Staff Rep	Elected by Staff
2 Members of Parent Representatives. Section 30 (I) (c) nominated by Parents Association					
15	Mr	Geoffrey	Browne	Parent Rep	National Parents Association
16	Ms	Lorraine	Doherty	Parent Rep	National Parents Association
5 Members appointed in accordance with Section 30 (I) (d) subsection (II) From Nominated Bodies with specialist interests/areas as specified by the Minister					
17	Ms	Lorraine	Thompson	Youth Work Ireland	nominating bodies/Special Interest
18	Mr	Patsy	McVicar	NAPD	nominating bodies/Special Interest
19	Mr	Gerard	Grant	IBEC	nominating bodies/Special Interest
20	Ms	Regina	Grant	Disability Federation of Ireland	nominating bodies/Special Interest
21	Mr	Brian	McDermott	Irish Hospitality Institute	nominating bodies/Special Interest

Attendance Records for ETB Board Members 2020

The following are the names of the Members of the Board together with the record of the number of Board meetings held and details of the attendance records at each meeting.

	17/02/20	27/03/20	11/05/2020	13 /07/2020	21/09/2020	21/09/2020 Oireachtas	19/10/2020	07/12/2020	Total
Clr Albert Doherty		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7
Clr Barry Sweeny	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Clr Donal Coyle	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Clr Gary Doherty	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	7
Clr Ian McGarvey	•						•	•	3
Clr John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Clr Martin Harley	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Clr Martin Farren	•								1
Clr Michael McBride	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Clr Noel Jordan	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	7
Clr Noreen McGarvey		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7
Clr Rena Donaghey	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Lorraine Doherty	•	•	•	•			•	•	6
Geoffrey Browne	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Joanne Donaghy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Noel Rodden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	*	7

Lorraine Thompson	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Patsy McVicar	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	7
Gerard Grant	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	7
Regina Grant	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
Brian McDermott		•	•				•		3
Total	18	19	17	16	17	17	20	18	

*Noel Rodden RIP 17/11/20



Noel Rodden – An Appreciation

Donegal ETB Board member and Youthreach teacher passed away suddenly on 17 November 2020.

Noel was employed as a teacher, initially in the Letterkenny Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centres and subsequently, until his untimely passing, in our Lifford Youthreach Centre. Noel was equally popular with both staff and students and was held in very high regard by all who had the pleasure of meeting or working with him. He was devoted to his work and always strived to do his best for the students and staff. Noel went above the call of duty by also representing staff as an active member of the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) where he served as Secretary and Chairperson of the Donegal Branch which represents members of the teaching staff in all our second-level schools and Further Education and Training (FET) centres. Noel was the unanimous choice of staff to become a Member of the Board of Donegal ETB from 2014 until 2019 and was unanimously re-elected to serve for a second term in 2019.

Noel also served as a Member on the Boards of Management of Deelee College, Raphoe; Pobalscoil Chloich Cheannfhaola, An Fál Carrach; Loreto Community School, Milford and the Rosses Community School, Dungloe.

Noel brought enthusiasm, positivity, dedication and commitment to each area of his work, representations and dealings with colleagues, students and parents and was held in the highest regard by all; he will be sadly missed by all of us.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

How the Board operates

Donegal ETB was established on 1 July 2013 under the provisions of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 and operates in accordance with the following:

- Education and Training Boards Act 2013
- Further Education and Training Act 2013
- The Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards (CL 0002/2019)
- Donegal ETB Standing Orders (October 2013)
- Department of Education Circular Letters and Guidance
- Other Government Department and SOLAS Directives and Guidance

The functions of the Board are either executive or reserved. Executive functions are carried out by the Chief Executive and reserved functions are carried out by the Board. Reserved functions are set out in Section 12 (2) of the ETB Act 2013. Every function of the ETB that is not a Reserved Function is deemed an Executive Function under Section 13 of the Act.

The Board met eight times during the calendar year, and adheres to its Reserved Functions as prescribed in Section 12 in the conduct of its business. These functions include, inter alia, the adoption of an Annual Service Plan and Annual Report, the approval of the Annual Accounts, the appointment of a Finance Committee and an Audit and Risk Committee together with the approval of a five year Strategy Statement in accordance with Section 27 of the Act. Schedule 3 of the ETB Act sets out further details on the functions of the Board and how it conducts its business. The Board has not delegated any of its decision-making to the Chief Executive and ETB Executive.

Section 51 of the ETB Act requires the ETB to keep in such form and in respect of such accounting periods as may be approved by the Minister for Education with the consent of the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of the monies received or expended by it.

In preparing those accounts, the Board is required to:

- (a) apply the standard accounting policies for the preparation of ETB financial statements
- (b) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- (c) disclose and explain any material departures from the standard accounting policies.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Board and which enable it to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with section 51 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Board considers that the Annual Financial Statements properly present the income and expenditure of the Board and the state of affairs of the Board.

Risk Management and Internal Control

The Board's oversight of Risk Management and Internal Control is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and the Board is supported and assisted in this area of responsibility by the ETB Executive, led by the Chief Executive, the Audit and Risk Committee and the Finance Committee respectively.

The Board also relies on the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) and its reports, on the C&AG annual audit and any external Audit such as an ESF Audit and / or Revenue Audit. In addition, there is a review of Internal Controls performed on an annual basis.

The Board carried out an assessment of its risks and, in this regard, received and considered reports from the Audit and Risk Committee and the ETB Executive. This consideration included the independent review by the Audit and Risk Committee of the various Risk Registers presented and the associated mitigation measures currently in place together with reports from the ETB Executive, the draft Statement on Internal Control (SIC), the draft Letter of Representation (LoR) and the draft Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister. The Board accepted the formal advice of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) that the system of internal control was adequate and the Board approved of the draft SIC, LoR and Chairperson's Comprehensive Statement to the Minister for the 2020 year.

A confidential comprehensive Chairperson's Report has been submitted to the Minister for Education in accordance with the provisions of Sections 6.8 and 6.9 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs.

In 2020, the impact of COVID-19 resulted in changes to established work practices, including a move to a significant amount of remote working. It was important to assess the impact that this may have had on the operation of the system of internal controls in place during the year. Compliance with existing policies, procedures and workflows continued in the remote working environment. Daily and weekly update, monitoring and review meetings were held to ensure full compliance with existing operational and legislative requirements. Risk registers were updated to include an identification and assessment of the impact on risk associated with COVID-19.

The Board confirms that there has been a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and that the Statement on Internal Control, which is subject to change until the external audit is completed, has been included in the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for the year ended 31 December 2020 which will be published within one month of receipt from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and as an appendix to the Chairperson's Comprehensive Report that has been submitted to the Minister.

What we do



Donegal ETB manages fifteen post primary schools. As part of the fifteen schools, two are Gaelcholáistí and there are four Gaeltacht schools, two of which are Island schools, on Áranmór and Toraih.

The Further Education and Training (FET) service has seventeen dedicated centres located in Gort a' Choirce, Gaoth Dobhair, Bunrana, Glengad, Donegal Town (Ardscoil and Drumcliff), Letterkenny (Ballyraine, Kilmacrennan Road and Ard O'Donnell), Ballyshannon, Milford, Lifford Youthreach, Bunrana Youthreach and Finn Valley. Post Leaving Certificate courses are delivered in three ETB schools: Errigal College; St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs; and Finn Valley College. The FET service also works collaboratively with 140+ community, voluntary, statutory and private bodies to deliver its programmes across the County.

The Adult Guidance and Information Service offers impartial and confidential information and advice to adults on the education and training options available from Donegal ETB and elsewhere.

The Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre has a wonderful setting for its work - an 87-acre estate with extensive facilities and accommodation on the shores of Lough Gartan, 15 kms from Letterkenny.

The Donegal Music Education Partnership provides music tuition for a wide range of instruments and voice to primary and post-primary students throughout the county, and some adults. The DMEP has ten performing groups, including the Donegal Youth Orchestra.

A range of courses on Drugs and Alcohol Studies is provided across Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo by a co-ordinator based at the Donegal ETB's administrative offices in Letterkenny.

Donegal ETB also provides School Completion Programmes under the aegis of TUSLA, National Education Welfare Board and the Home School Liaison Programme.

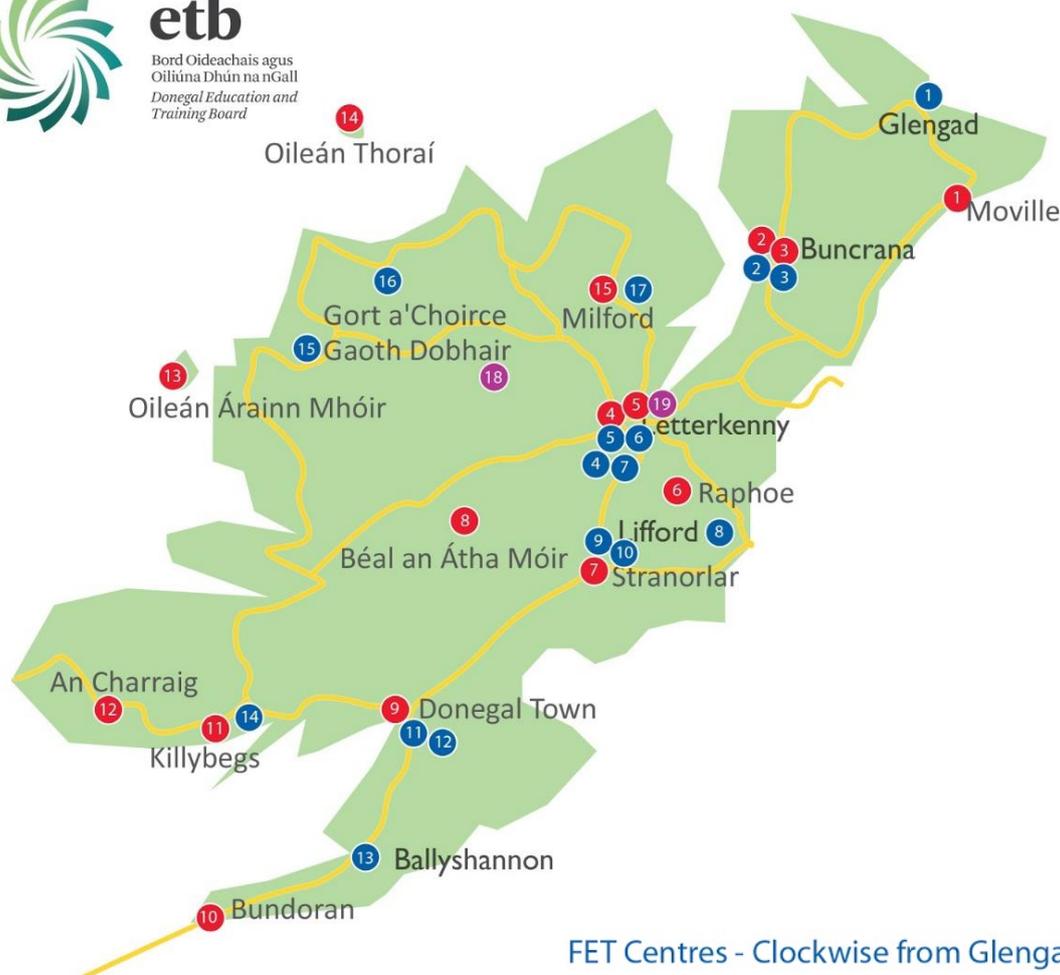
Donegal ETB provides a youth work services programme throughout the county under the direction of a Youth Officer.

Donegal ETB works with partners such as the Donegal Sports Partnership, the Donegal Children and Young People's Services Committee, the Donegal Local Community Development Committee, and the Council to help produce strategies for the county.



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhúna na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board



School Map – Clockwise from Merville

1.	Merville Community College	Merville
2.	Crana College	Buncrana
3.	Coláiste Chineál Eoghain	Buncrana
4.	Coláiste Ailigh	Letterkenny
5.	Errigal College	Letterkenny
6.	Deele College	Raphoe
7.	Finn Valley College	Stranorlar
8.	Gairmscoil Chú Uladh	Béal an Átha Móir
9.	Abbey Vocational School	Donegal Town
10.	Magh Éne College	Bundoran
11.	St. Catherine's Vocational School	Killybegs
12.	Coláiste na Carraige	An Charraig
13.	Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada	Oileán Árainn Mhóir
14.	Coláiste Phobail Cholmcille	Oileán Thoraí
15.	Mulroy College	Milford

FET Centres - Clockwise from Glengad

1.	Youthreach Centre	Glengad
2.	FET Centre Buncrana	Buncrana
3.	Youthreach Centre	Buncrana
4.	FET Centre Letterkenny	Letterkenny
5.	Errigal College (PLCs)	Letterkenny
6.	Training Centre Letterkenny	Letterkenny
7.	Youthreach Centre	Letterkenny
8.	Youthreach Centre	Lifford
9.	FET Centre Finn Valley	Stranorlar
10.	Finn Valley College (PLCs)	Stranorlar
11.	FET Centre Donegal Town	Donegal Town
12.	FET Centre (Ard Scoil na gCeithre Máistir)	Donegal Town
13.	FET Centre Ballyshannon	Ballyshannon
14.	St Catherine's Vocational School (PLCs)	Killybegs
15.	Training Centre Gaoth Dobhair	Gaoth Dobhair
16.	FET Centre Gort a'Choirce	Gort a'Choirce
17.	FET Centre Milford	Milford

Outdoor/Music Education

18.	Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre
19.	Donegal Music Education Partnership

'Lean ar Aghaidh' - moving forward in 2020

Donegal ETB has been guided throughout 2020 by the key themes of its five year plan covering 2017-2022 and called 'Lean ar Aghaidh', or 'Keep Moving Forward'. The plan has three key themes.

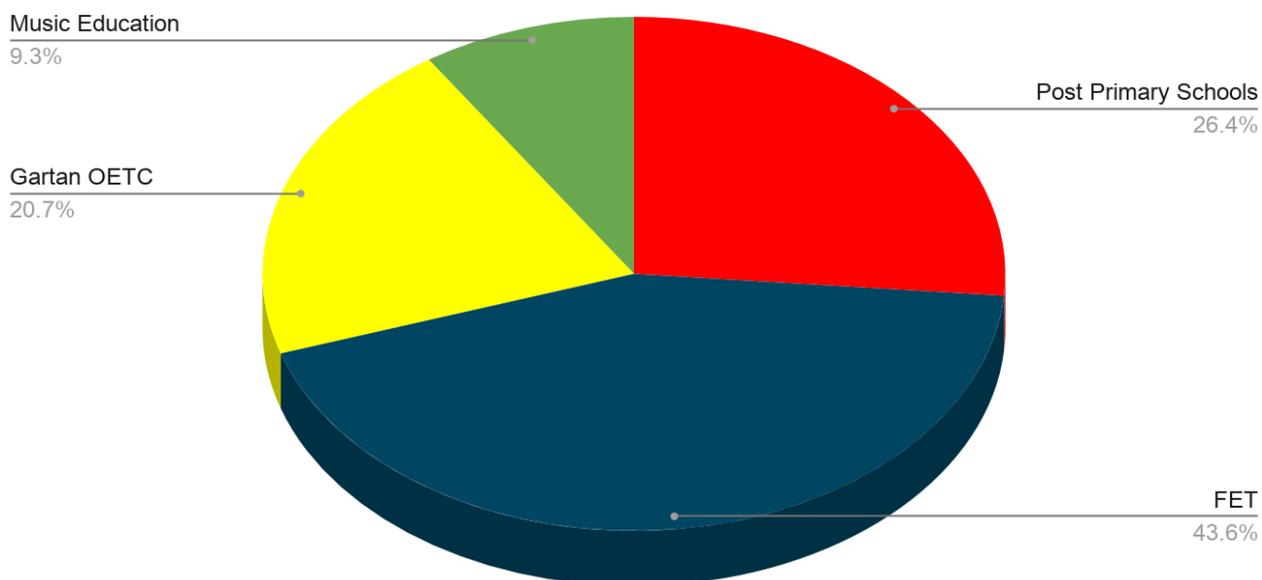
Key Themes:

- 1. Teaching and Learning**
- 2. A Progressive, Accountable Organisation**
- 3. Working with Partners**

Making an impact - the figures

Total number of students in 2020 by sector

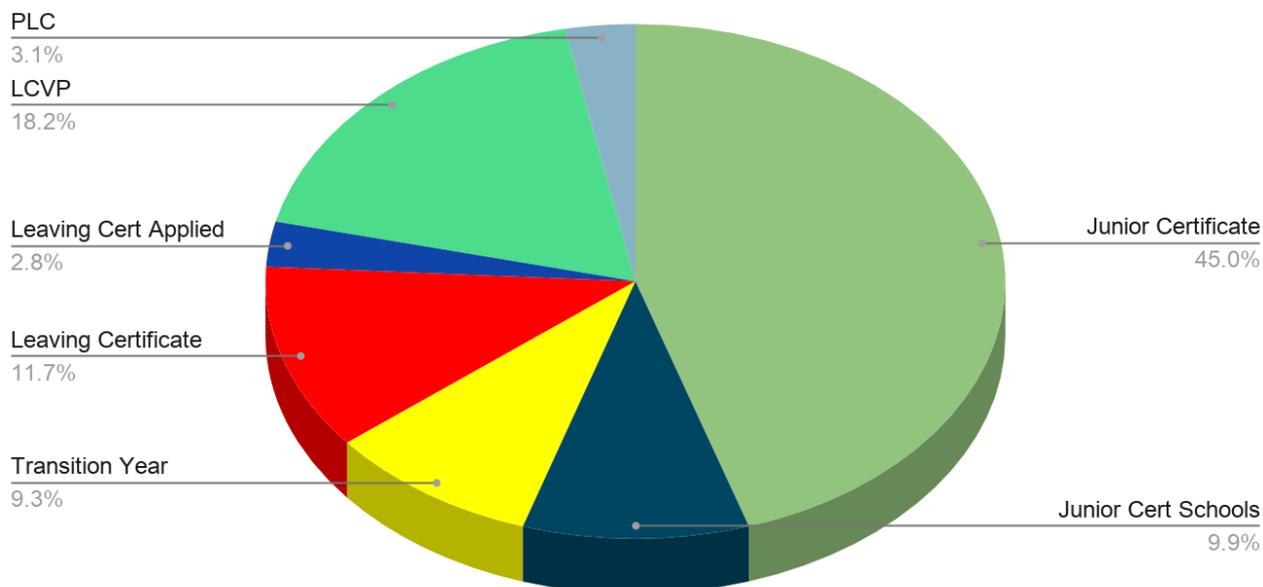
Post Primary Schools & Colleges	5,262
Further Education & Training	8,707
Gartan OETC	4,131
Music Education Partnership	1,860
TOTAL	19,960



Student enrolment in post primary schools and colleges 2020

Junior Certificate	2370
Junior Certificate Schools Programme	520
Transition Year Programme	489
Leaving Certificate	615
Leaving Certificate Applied Programme	149
Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme	958
Post Leaving Certificate	161

TOTAL **5,262**



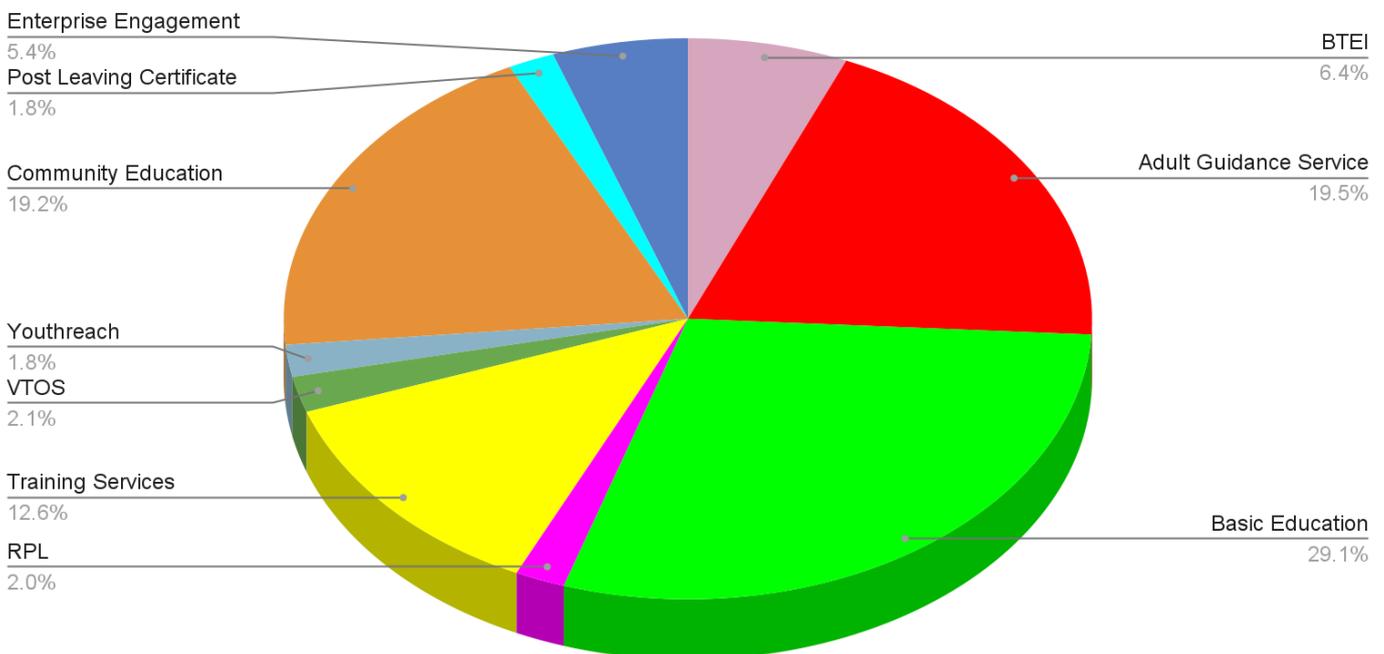
Further Education and Training enrolment 2020

Back to Education Initiative	558
Adult Guidance Service	1,697
Basic Education	2,531
Recognition of Prior Learning	174
Training Services*	1,101
Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme	180
Youthreach	160
Community Education	1,673
Night Class programmes	0**
Post Leaving Certificate	161***
Enterprise Engagement	472
TOTAL	8,707

* Apprenticeships, Evening Classes, Traineeships, Specialist Training Specific Skills,

** Did not take place due to COVID-19 restrictions.

***Also listed under school figures.



KEY THEME I

TEACHING AND LEARNING

PRIORITY I

Offer educational and training programmes with support services within quality teaching and learning environments and ensure that these programmes meet the rapidly changing needs of individuals, society and the economy.

OUTCOME

Responsive education programmes are provided in all schools, colleges and centres within quality teaching and learning environments.

On the 12th of March 2020, the announcement of the closure of schools, preschools, further and higher education settings for a period until 29th of March 2020 was made to support efforts to contain the spread of COVID 19. This closure extended to the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. The suddenness of the closure caused an emergency transformation from traditional to online teaching and learning. While some teachers had good skills in the online teaching and learning space, there was a considerable amount of upskilling necessary. The circumstances were unpredictable and unusual for teachers, students and parents, as opposed to a well-planned online learning experience. Arising from the school closures, teaching and learning will definitely change when the pandemic is over, and the situation has been a wake-up call about the need to further integrate digital technologies into educational processes. Staff members responded proactively to the challenge of online learning and ensured there was a successful remote teaching and learning experience.

There were significant changes in the area of accreditation for Leaving certificate students in 2020. Calculated Grades were introduced as a result of the rescheduling of the Leaving Certificate examinations until November 2020. These were grades that were provided to students following the combination of school information about a student's expected performance in an examination and national data available in relation to the performance of students in examinations over a period of time. There was a significant amount of time invested by school management and staff in ensuring a successful calculated grades process.

On 10th April, after it was announced that schools would remain closed until further notice, the Minister for Education also announced that the June Junior Cycle state examinations would be replaced with school-based exams and assessments to be held early in the new school year. Following representations from schools, this position was changed and schools were able to provide assessment opportunities for 3rd Year students in May 2020 and reported on these through the main school report.

During the pandemic and while schools and centres were closed it was important that staff gave attention to and took proactive steps to promote their own wellbeing and self-care. Staff consistently reported that relationships with colleagues were essential to their wellbeing and self-care. Staff continued to stay in touch with colleagues and friends and this was essential to supporting wellbeing during the COVID 19 crisis. Similarly the relationships that staff had with their students has been shown to contribute positively to the wellbeing of both teachers and students.

In March 2020 and throughout the rest of the year, the FET service introduced a range of modified arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment in response to COVID 19 related restrictions. Central to all adaptations was the recognition that students needed to be supported to the maximum extent possible to continue with and/or complete their learning while the COVID 19 response was underway and that they should not be unduly disadvantaged, slowed down or stopped in their progress. All teaching and learning moved online in March 2020 and continued in various iterations throughout the rest of the year. Among the contingency plans put in place were: development and implementation of a communications strategy to ensure that students and staff were informed of and kept up to date with alternative arrangements, particularly in relation to delivery and assessment; extensive range of online professional development programmes for staff to enable them to move to teaching in a virtual environment using a variety of learning platforms; development and sharing of appropriate new resources by teaching and instruction staff; additional supports for vulnerable students who were unable to engage remotely, including preparation and distribution of learning packs and regular telephone contact; risk assessments of all FET facilities and subsequent adaptations to meet health and safety requirements; provision of ICT devices for staff, students and apprentices who needed them; development and delivery of new online guidance interventions; and maintenance of contacts and support for external partners including employers and community groups. At all times due regard was given to the maintenance of transparent governance and oversight in the development of new processes. The *FET Contingency Plan for Alternative Assessment* was approved by the Quality Council on 16th April 2020 and updated during the year, ensuring the fundamental proposition that qualifications are only awarded on the basis of validity and reliably assessed learning outcomes, even in exceptional circumstances.

Apprenticeship training was moved to remote delivery in March 2020, with no onsite delivery until September. Additional temporary instruction staff were engaged to work alongside existing instructors to allow for the creation of two small instruction “bubbles” within each group, one engaged in classroom-based tuition and one in practical training at any given time. Later, workshops were repurposed to provide additional delivery spaces, to allow for both 'bubbles' to continue working on the practical aspects of their course simultaneously but within separate isolated areas. These adaptations allowed for the maintenance of full capacity on all Phase 2 apprenticeship courses between September and December 2020 and beyond.

The LATCH-ON programme for eight adults with Down Syndrome continued in 2020 with a programme that focused on life and transversal skills. The course was impacted by COVID 19 as online delivery did not suit the needs of the group particularly well. Refugee Resettlement Programme continued in two locations, Donegal Town and Stranorlar. The programme supported language and literacy acquisition and also integrated key aspects of Irish culture for Syrian refugee families who have settled in Donegal.

During 2020, 558 students took part in 34 Back to Education (BTEI) courses offered on a modular basis with mostly online delivery. The course range included QQI Level 5 ECCE (Childcare) and QQI Level 6 ECCE (Childcare)-12 courses; QQI Level 5 Health Service Skills (Modules)-6 courses; ECDL, IC3, and Manual and Computerised Bookkeeping-8 courses; Graphic Design-2 courses (finished September 2020); General Learning Level 4-Science Skills, A2A and Leaving Certificate-4 courses; Horticulture -1 course. A new modular Information, Advice and Advocacy course was delivered in conjunction with the Congress Resource Centre in Letterkenny to help potential information officers progress in their careers and will be presented for assessment in May 2021.

In 2020, 3721 awards were issued by QQI to FET students in 17 centres. 581 students received Major awards, 3,027 received Minor awards and 113 received Special Purpose awards. Top awards

were in Business, Computer and Health Service Skills. Significant numbers of students also received other awarding bodies, industry and vendor-certified awards.

Donegal ETB psychological service provides collaborative support to students, staff and parents in the schools, Youthreach programmes and Adult Education programmes. The primary areas of practice involve the provision of support to young people and older students in relation to special educational needs, challenging behaviour and social and emotional difficulties. A substantial amount of consultative work is undertaken with an emphasis on developing and reviewing education plans, engaging in group work and facilitating policy development in areas such as critical incident contingency planning and structured assessment for learning. Much of the work requires extended networking with health and other services and a close and successful collaborative working approach has been developed with agencies who have a presence in schools. Where individual assessment work is undertaken, it aims to support parents, both formally and informally, by providing professional pre-assessment briefings and post-assessment feedback together with recommendations regarding the needs of referred young people. Formal professional development and informal support is also offered directly to staff within the centres and schools. These supports include:

1. Developing procedures for formal assessment;
2. Providing training in literacy and numeracy test batteries;
3. Developing whole-school approaches to discipline;
4. Developing Individualised Education Plans;
5. Developing strategies for working with young persons who have additional learning needs;
6. Undertaking psychological assessments where they will benefit the ongoing social, emotional and academic development of students;
7. Facilitating integration of students with special educational needs;
8. Developing Critical Incident Plans;
9. Undertaking additional assessment for the purposes of transfer to further education or training programmes.



PRIORITY 2

Integrate the new initiatives relating to Instructional Leadership, Restorative Practices, Teacher Collaboration, Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), Induction and Mentoring into key programmes.

OUTCOME

Improved standards in teaching and learning in schools, colleges and centres.

Instructional Leadership Programme

Some of our schools in Donegal ETB were involved in the Instructional Leadership Programme and the NCCA in looking at Student Voice. The project helped to identify how schools are involved in the journey of facilitating the voice of the student to be heard. The aim was to meaningfully inform classroom practice and place the student at the centre of learning, a cornerstone of the Junior Cycle programme. Teachers are sharing their instructional language with students to facilitate conversations around e.g., the co-creation of success criteria, meaningful assessment, learning styles etc.

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) & FET

The implementation of the FET TEL Action Plan 2020 by the TEL Coordinator and TEL Working Group enabled the development and mentoring of staff in using technology in the classroom to ensure the successful implementation of TEL initiatives within the FET service. A quarterly e-newsletter was issued promoting TEL initiatives and outlining good practice. A TEL seminar (a week-long series of interactive webinars) delivered by Donegal ETB staff and external experts and leaders in the field of technology in the classroom was a huge success and was attended by 376 FET practitioners over 5 days. It clearly demonstrated the possibilities of virtual learning, particularly important in a large rural county like Donegal.

Tutor collaboration and the development of Communities of Practice have helped develop content for Digital Citizenship, Communications, Maths, and Work Experience modules. Google Sites has been used as a Platform to host content, with the ability to embed quizzes, YouTube videos and link to Google drive and Google classroom. This has enabled staff to connect and share digital practices and resources across programmes and work collaboratively on an innovative teaching and learning initiative. The successful roll out of TEL Mentoring Support ensures that all FET Centres have a designated TEL Mentor to provide support and guidance to other practitioners. TEL Mentors are available to offer guidance and support to colleagues in a non- judgemental manner. Feedback from staff is excellent. This is a successful initiative for sharing ideas and good practice among colleagues.

Building on the successes in the use of TEL approaches to support teaching and learning during COVID 19, workshops were held across the FET service (including with FET SMT, TEL Working Group, TEL Subcommittee, FET practitioners, external stakeholders and students) to develop a framework for Blended Learning into the future.

Since March 2020 both staff and students in the FET service have been engaged in 'Emergency Remote Teaching' (ERT) and this approach has been primarily underpinned by TEL practices. Looking to the future, it will be important to adopt these approaches and harness the potential to further develop and support our staff and student population, as appropriate, through the use of blended learning. The service has embarked (in consultation with H2 Learning) on the development of a framework for Blended Learning in response to the opportunities and challenges that had been presented for teaching and learning by the ERT that took place during COVID 19.

ICT Infrastructure

A suite of Chromebooks for all Youthreach Centres were purchased following an identified lack of devices within the provision in the SELFIE Digital Survey 2019/2020. 250 Laptops & 300 Chromebooks were procured under the *Devices for Disadvantaged Students Loan Scheme*. The allocation of devices provided students with access enabling them to engage with Emergency Remote Teaching & Learning. Funding from the TEL budget along with funding approved from the Mitigating Educational Disadvantage Fund equipped digital hubs in 4 FET centres to assist and support students and tutors to engage fully in teaching and learning by providing fully accessible learning spaces. Each FET Centre was equipped with a C-Pen reader to provide assistive technology to Dyslexic students. To enable staff to engage students in a diverse range of TEL tools to enhance teaching and learning and support engagement of students, various subscription software licences such as Mentimeter, Padlet, Wordwall and Survey Monkey were purchased. Increasing numbers of schools are now using mobile devices in classrooms in preference to desktop PCs. Also chromebooks proved a cost effective option in preference to laptops as they provided schools with alternative options to support mobile learning. Staff have requested that increased resources be deployed to ensure staff members have access to the necessary equipment to integrate ICT into teaching and learning.

Restorative Practices

Donegal ETB continued its work on a major restorative practices project, which focused on new ways of managing relationships and dealing with conflicts in schools and Youthreach centres. The project secured €200,000 of EU PEACE IV funding in December 2018 supported by the European Union's Peace IV Programme and managed for the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) by Donegal County Council. It ran from 2019 until early March 2020 when it had to close early because of COVID 19 containment measures.



The project sought to improve positive relationships between and for young people, staff and volunteers, train participants in accredited and non-accredited approaches in using restorative practices and to develop an understanding of alternative ways of dealing with conflict. In total, the project involved over 1,600 young people and adults across the county in developing skills to support them in resolving conflict in their lives.

Pictured are Deelee College students undertaking circle time.

Nineteen ETB and non-ETB post-primary schools, Youthreach centres and one youth work organisation (Foróige) from across the county were involved in the project (see Appendix II).



Specialised trainers provided training to students, staff and volunteers, with additional training carried out by staff with their students and young people.

Examples of work included, the students attending the Buncrana and Glengad Youthreach centres developing artwork that they incorporated into pop-up banners to display in their centres. Students at Deele College developed posters and pop-up banners to display around their school long after the project has been completed. The young people from Foróige who participated in the project used the new skills they had learned to produce a short animated video to

explain restorative practices to other young people:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oyhh7znxAbw&list=UUNtb-UtxX5m4SbCDEA4ER7g&index=55>.



In addition, twenty-eight staff (pictured) from nine of the participating post-primary schools and two of the Youthreach centres also undertook and completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Restorative Practices with Ulster University. The staff were from Crana College, Buncrana (4); Deele College, Raphoe (3); Errigal College, Letterkenny (3); Finn Valley College, Stranorlar (1); Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir (1); Loreto Community School, Milford (1); Moville Community College (3); Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe (4); Scoil Mhuire Secondary School, Buncrana (5); Ballyshannon (2) and Gortahork (1) Youthreach centres.

PRIORITY 3

Embrace the new concepts within the new Junior Cycle Programme in our schools, colleges and centres.

OUTCOME

Student Voice

Three schools participated in an NCCA/ETBI project promoting collaborative work in Student Voice. The objective of the project was to share the experiences of teachers and students pursuing more authentic student voice in the school and in the classroom. It also helped to illuminate the impact a collaborative approach has on teacher professional development and the effect this has on students' experiences in the classroom.

Abbey Vocational School:

Developing a 'Learning to Learn Programme' to enhance student confidence and enable Student Voice.

Crana College:

Focussing on Framing Questions to facilitate Student Voice.

Mulroy College:

Focussing on the 'Co-creation of Success Criteria'

Donegal ETB's Teacher Collaboration Initiative Supports Remote Teaching During COVID 19 Containment helped by DE Digital School Excellence Fund

A number of teachers in schools across Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB) have been working on an innovative teaching and learning initiative titled 'Teacher Collaboration – Junior Cycle Curriculum Planning, Content Creation and Resource Sharing'.

The initiative has developed over the past five years and a short video has been developed that illustrates the work to date.

This initiative is part of the Department of Education (DE) Digital School Excellence Fund which highlights the opportunities that present themselves when teachers collaborate.

It involves working groups of teachers from across ten of Donegal ETB's fifteen post-primary schools, who have come together to collaborate on creative and student-centred teaching content and is now expanding to include teaching and instruction staff from the ETB's Further Education and Training (FET) Service.

This recent development has been widely welcomed and has resulted in further enrichment of the expertise within the organisation. The project has availed of the support and advanced ICT infrastructure in use within Donegal ETB, namely G Suite for Education which uses Google Classroom, Sites, Docs and Drive.

The recent closure of schools and FET centres due to the COVID 19 containment measures, has led to an increased emphasis on innovative online approaches to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning across the county. The work of the project has ensured many of Donegal ETB's teachers were best placed to lead out on various approaches in reaching out to students at this difficult time. This has meant that Donegal ETB schools are leading the way in the county in the delivery of innovative teaching to ETB students in its fifteen post-primary schools. This forward-thinking was originally enabled by the introduction of recent educational reforms namely the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) and the publication of the quality framework for post-primary schools – 'Looking at Our Schools 2016'.

Within Donegal ETB it was recognised that the integration of technology, aligned with modern instructional practices, could significantly enhance the teaching and learning in its classrooms and subsequently improve student outcomes for students in the classroom. This created the potential to devise learning opportunities for students across and beyond the curriculum.

As the subject specifications were introduced in the new Junior Cycle, a group of interested teachers, initially from seven ETB schools, were arranged in subject teams to create a series of student learning units within a platform for educational content creation. These student learning units were developed and delivered in the classroom, where the student's feedback was collated, ensuring their voice was central to the process of informing future best practice.

The new units created on the G Suite platform for education demonstrates the integration of Google Sites as the instructional platform and Google Classroom as the assessment platform. Google Classroom also allows for parent/guardian supervision of assignment deadlines and encourages a conversation around accountability. It is also the primary driver of assessment for these new units of work.

TAKE I Programme

During 2020, four of our schools participated in the Take I Programme which was developed to support senior leaders, teachers, and students in Education and Training Board (ETB) schools, to embed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in teaching and learning.

The Take I Programme provided two separate training opportunities. These training days provided a background to the SDGs and support resource materials for each subject in the new Junior Cycle curriculum. Following the first training, participants had an opportunity to showcase the learning in their respective schools by participating in Take I Week.

The key to the success of the Take I Programme is that the information about the 17 goals is available and understandable. Resources for the programme demonstrate the potential for all Junior Cycle subjects to engage with the Goals in a formal setting, and subsequently translate that engagement into action. The schools involved in the project during 2020 were: The Abbey Vocational School; Errigal College; Mulroy College and Deelee College.

PRIORITY 4

Integrate generic skill development (literacy, numeracy, interpersonal skills, digital skills etc.) within all education and training programmes.

OUTCOME

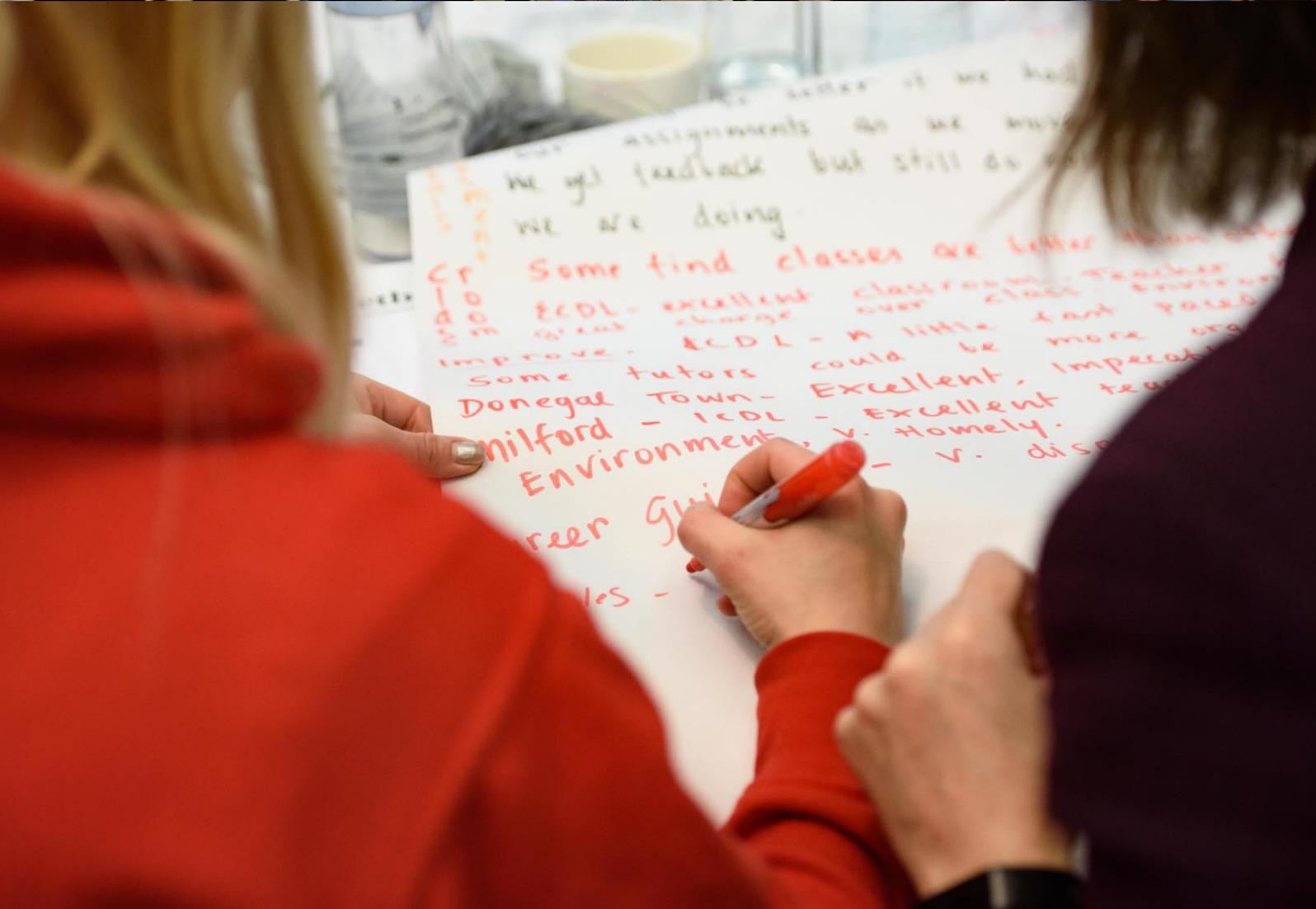
An introductory Digital Skills programme was provided through EXPLORE, a collaborative initiative between the FET service and the NW Regional Skills Forum. 25 Employees from six companies engaged with the programme and progression options to other programmes were offered at the conclusion of the programme.

Integration of generic skills through themed provision continued in a number of programmes offered in FET, including Communication for the Workplace (NFQ L2). Childcare and Communications (NFQ L3) improved access opportunities for level 4 and 5 childcare provision programmes. Culture and heritage continues to motivate engagement and the integration of history with communications at NFQ L3 supported further development of generic skills in an accessible manner.

Adults with disabilities were enabled to access provision through tailored programmes where teachers implemented the universal design for learning (UDL) approach and assistive technologies were provided. The FET service has engaged with the Deaf-Hear Association, Irish Wheelchair Association and Donegal Down Syndrome Association. In 2020 the Latch-on programme for adults with Downs Syndrome continued, and was delivered by trained tutors who integrated life and literacy skills' development. Specialist Training Providers continued to deliver tuition at NFQ levels 3, 4 and 5, supporting the integration of transversal skills and establishing networks in the community through engagement with employers; this approach widens the support network for students as well as providing them with an opportunity to test skills gained in the classroom in a different (real life) setting. This important aspect of provision establishes supports that continue for the participant after they have completed their programme of learning.

In 2020, the FET Guidance Service continued to reach out to students and clients through online and phone support. *Tick that Box*, the resource used by Guidance practitioners was available as a support pack to all clients and proved to be a valuable support to supporting online engagement and in assisting with integration of personal skills' development and interview preparation skills.

A number of teachers in schools across Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB) have been working on an innovative teaching and learning initiative titled 'Teacher Collaboration – Junior Cycle Curriculum Planning, Content Creation and Resource Sharing'.



PRIORITY 5

Maintain and enhance quality standards across all our education programmes.

OUTCOME

FET Quality Assurance and COVID 19

In response to COVID 19-related social restrictions, a Contingency Policy and associated procedures for modified arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment in FET was developed and approved by the Quality Council in April 2020. The purpose of the policy was to ensure contingency assessment arrangements to support students to complete their course / programme of learning were transparent, fair, reliable and valid. The policy was continuously reviewed and updated during 2020 in accordance with QQI recommendations. At QQI's request, research on the impact of COVID 19 on teaching, learning and assessment modifications within the FET service was carried out and published in June 2020. 494 survey responses were received. Staff and students reported how lack of access to ICT equipment, varying levels of digital literacy and poor internet connectivity had limited their ability to engage with remote teaching, learning and assessment and all had felt the loss of face-to-face interaction. However positive findings indicated that students had felt well supported during a difficult period; staff reported increased collegiality in meeting the exceptional needs generated by the crisis; and both groups reported increased self-confidence in the use of technology for online teaching and learning. There was an overall feeling of achievement that, while not perfect, a good job was done in difficult circumstances. A copy of the research report, *Providing Quality Further Education & Training in a Crisis Situation* is available [here](#)

Strategic Performance Agreement

A midpoint review of the *Strategic Performance Agreement (2018-2020)* between SOLAS and Donegal ETB took place in February 2020. In its subsequent report, SOLAS indicated its satisfaction with advancement made in a number of areas, including the FET service's progress in meeting the targets outlined in the Agreement; engagement with employers; networking and collaboration with other educational institutions and agencies; approach to meeting the needs of students in relation to digital skills' development; and new programme development.

Student Support Services

A research project *Student Support Services within Donegal ETB's FET service (Report)* was completed in April 2020. The research was carried out by DMH Associates and included surveys and interviews with students, staff and external stakeholders, with the overall aim of documenting existing student supports, identifying gaps and guiding the consistent delivery of support for all FET students. Gaps in professional development identified by staff will inform the development of CPD for the service and contribute to building the organisation's capacity.

Inaugural FET Quality Assurance Review

Extensive work was carried out during 2020 by the FET Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS) in preparation for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance of the FET service in 2021. A Steering Group for the project was established in January and activities included countywide student, staff and external stakeholder briefings, surveys and consultation events; undertaking of Baseline Activity data gathering and analysis for all programmes and support services; a Student Forum (February); and submission of a Provider Profile report (November). Integrated FET Policies on Public Information and Communications and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) were developed and approved by the Quality Council.

Programme Development and Validation

In 2020 significant progress was made in integrating programme approval and validation within the FET Quality Assurance governance structures. The development, approval and submission of new programmes, courses and qualifications are prepared and submitted through the Programme Sub Committee who in turn review them and recommend new or changed programmes to the Quality Council. As a result of increased employer engagement activity and the progression of initiatives commenced in 2019, several new programmes were finalised through this QA process. These included the development of qualifications with new awarding bodies, such as the Level 6 (NFQ L5) Scottish Qualification Authority accredited Donegal Weaving, which will commence in 2021. As a result of Occupational Skills Profiling with client companies, new programmes with awarding bodies with whom Donegal ETB has an existing relationship were also developed and approved through the QA governance structures. The City & Guilds L2 (NFQ L4) Traineeship in Communication Systems Installation combines recognised accreditation with a range of industry certification to meet a gap in training skills for the telecoms installation sector. As a traineeship, the significant element of work placement provides opportunities for direct progression to employment as well as gaining a qualification at a level that enables participants to progress to higher level digital standard qualifications. This programme is due for recruitment in 2021. Other new programmes include a course for the textile and fashion industry for upskilling existing staff, Advanced Outdoor Instructor Traineeship, QQI L5 Construction Technology for the PLC provision and L2 (NFQ L4) City & Guilds Barbering for part-time and evening provision.

FET Student Forum

As Donegal ETB's Vision and Mission statements make clear, the needs and experiences of students must be at the heart of service provision. Informing and consulting students across programmes of education and training are necessary for the planning, evaluation and review phases of the quality cycle in the developing integrated QA system. In this context, a FET Student Voice Forum event was held in February 2020, building on previous events organised in 2018 and 2019. Over one hundred students attended the Forum, which was designed to gather information from them about their experience of the FET service. Most of the students' comments were very positive, with many referencing the excellent or very good standard of teaching and learning in their centres and the high standard of resources available. The teachers/tutors/instructors were regarded as friendly and supportive by a majority of students. Among the negative comments were the lack of feedback, unclear direction around assessment briefs, work placement concerns, and some modules/courses being too long in duration. Data gathered was used as part of the preparation for the inaugural QQI FET Quality Review (2021) and also formed part of DMH research report, the findings of which will be implemented to support the delivery of consistent services to students. It is evident that students value opportunities to make their voices heard and the FET Service's ability to communicate with and listen to its students at every level will be critical in implementing a strong, integrated Quality Assurance system and delivering the high-quality learning experience that students desire. [Executive summary of findings](#)

Ethos and Core Values

During 2020 each ETB appointed an Ethos Coordinator who, in conjunction with the Director of Schools, has responsibility for the implementation of the Patrons' Framework across ETB schools. The Framework will be piloted in a small number of schools in each ETB from 2021. Based on learning from the pilot, the Framework will be finalised in June 2022 and rolled out to all ETB schools (primary and post-primary) from September 2022. Mr Eamonn Ryan, the former Deputy Principal in Moville Community College, is leading the work as Ethos Coordinator.

Department of Education Inspections in 2020:

Arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no subject inspections or Management, Leadership and Learning inspections during 2020 in Donegal ETB. The focus of the inspections that did take place was the safe return to school.

The Department of Education conducted a series of supporting the Safe Reopening of Schools (SSRS) visits to Donegal ETB schools that were specifically designed to:

- support school leaders and staffs as they implement the COVID 19 Response Plan
- provide an assurance to the public that schools are a safe working and learning environment for teachers, other school staff and for students

School	Date
Finn Valley College	20th October 2020
Errigal College	16th December 2020
Moville Community College	15th December 2020



PRIORITY 6

Participation in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme (four schools) by contributing to the use and maintenance of Irish in the school and local Gaeltacht community.

OUTCOME

Mr Patrick Queenan was appointed Principal (Acting) of Coláiste Phobail Cholmcille, Oileán Thoraí during 2020. Mr Gareth Doherty was appointed Deputy Principal (Acting) for the school year 2020/21.

There have been ongoing developments in the four schools in promoting the Irish language. There has been a very positive response from teachers, students and parents to plans to develop the use of Irish in the four schools - Coláiste Phobail Cholmcille, Oileán Thoraí, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Arainn Mhóir, Gairmscoil Chu Uladh, Béal an Atha Móir agus Coláiste na Carraige.

There were some initial fears in the schools that they would not have the full support of parents and students. However, the schools, despite some challenges, were very satisfied with the positive reactions to more use of Irish in classrooms and in communication generally.

ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge

Many of our schools participated in ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge events during 2020. This event was a celebration of Irish language and culture for all students. Creativity and inclusion were at the centre of the programme, from song-writing to rapping, filmmaking to radio production, storytelling to sports commentary, for the entire school-community to engage with. Bliain na Gaeilge offered ETB schools the opportunity to engage in a very flexible way, with students actively encouraged to lead and drive the programme in their school. The programme commenced at the start of the 2020/21 school year and was running for the duration of the school year. There was a new competition/initiative featured every month and prizes awarded.



Saor

'Saor' was created for 'Creative Company' by staff from across Donegal ETB namely, Schools, Further Education and Training (FET) and Organisation Support and Development (OSD), as a visual representation of our mission statement:

"To promote, offer and support accessible, inclusive and holistic learning opportunities which will enable young people and adults to empower themselves to reach their full potential in Society"

The team set out to create and reflect the theme of progression and pathways available within Donegal ETB. Saor is supported by a solid base reflecting the solid structures supporting the ETB while the three joined wood pieces, inspired by time, spent in the outdoors at our centre at Gartan reflect the three pillars of the organisation and their interconnectedness together with the different pathways for our students to reach their full potential. The spheres mounted on the wood form a human representation of our staff and students progressing upwards.

Saor is an Irish word which means 'free' so some of the team members viewed the piece as a bird flying, while others viewed it as a swimmer. Ultimately however, the

team wanted those who view the art piece to interpret it for themselves.

The overall piece reflects the freedom of expression that exists for students and staff within Donegal ETB.

Further details on this initiative and the staff members involved in it are contained in Priority 12 (Communications).

KEY THEME 2

A PROGRESSIVE, ACCOUNTABLE ORGANISATION

PRIORITY 7

Implement the new organisational structures to enable Donegal ETB to carry out new and enhanced functions.

OUTCOME

An organisation which is able to provide a service relating to new and enhanced functions for ETBs relating to education, training and administration.

Organisational Structure

A business case has been presented to the Department of Education (DE) seeking additional staff and resources that Donegal ETB believes are necessary to carry out its work and meet all its statutory obligations. The business case sets out the challenges the ETB is facing, proposed solutions, and sets out the risks of continuing to operate without the requested resources. Donegal ETB continues to work with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), which represents ETBs, to engage with the DE to try to progress this matter under phase two of the new Organisational Design Structures for ETBs. Unfortunately no progress on this has been achieved to date.

The three (3) Directors Forums hosted under ETBI - Organisation Support and Development (OSD); Schools; and Further Education and Training (FET), which report to the Chief Executive's Forum, continued to meet regularly throughout the year and agreed strategies and network reporting structures for the various categories of ETB functions. These fora worked on a number of initiatives with a view to continuing to develop best practice throughout the organisation and the sector.

Within Donegal ETB, regular meetings of several in-house committees were held including: The Chief Executive and Directors Group; The Executive Forum under the Director of OSD, the groups for Principals and Deputy Principals under the Director of Schools; the FET senior managers and coordinators teams under the FET Director; and the FET Funding and Planning group, which is comprised of senior management from OSD and FET to address cross-functional issues relating to SOLAS funding and other matters. A COVID 19 Response Team was set up and worked collaboratively with Lead Worker Representatives to implement the Workplace Safety Response Plan (see Corporate section later in this report).

A central body, Education Shared Business Services (ESBS) has been set up by the DE, which in future will oversee the payment of both payroll and student payments. The transition to ESBS is underway, and in 2020 ESBS took over responsibility for payments to Apprentices under Phase one of the transfer of student payments. A staff member has been assigned as transition lead for the student payments transition, and engagement with ESBS is ongoing in relation to the payroll transition, which is currently scheduled to take place in 2023.

Enhancements to FET operational structures

Operational structures within FET continued to be refined with the establishment of FET Integrated Provision Planning Working Group and FET Student Support and Welfare Working Group. The groups

are chaired by FET senior managers and have representation from all relevant programmes and services. Their remit is to minimise duplication and improve consistency in planning and delivery.

The FET service recognises the importance of gathering data and statistics both internally and externally and appreciates how it can inform planning and continuous improvements within the service. There are also increased data reporting requirements from SOLAS and other stakeholders. To this end, a FET Systems and Data Management Reporting Officer was appointed in late 2020. Her appointment is a very positive addition to the team and will allow us to be better informed by using both qualitative and quantitative outcomes to generate statistical data to inform the management, staff, students and stakeholders as well as the general public. Her responsibilities will include the management of the MIS within the FET service.

Irish Language Developments

The Official Languages Act of 2003 is to promote the Irish language for official purposes in the state, in communicating with and providing services to the public. Every public body named under the Act has a duty to prepare a language scheme when requested to do so by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht under section 11 of the Act.

Donegal ETB's current Irish language scheme was confirmed in 2007-2020. The purpose of the language scheme is to increase, over a period of time the volume and standard of services available in Irish. Donegal ETB is very proud of the progress made this year and within the Coiste na Gaeilge working group worked hard on preparing an updated Irish language scheme for 2021-2023. The developments for 2020 were as follows:

- Donegal ETB delivered a number of Irish language classes at beginner and intermediate level, as well as Irish for Parents as part of our Family Learning programme. We also supported the delivery of informal conversational classes with our partners in a number of local communities through our Community Education Support Service.
- On the 25th August 2020 Donegal ETB ran a Virtual Induction day for Newly Appointed teachers which included a module on teaching through Irish.
- Coláiste na Carraige, now in their second year as part of the Post-primary schools participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme are now teaching Mathematics and Physical Education through the medium of Irish.
- Donegal ETB had 6 staff members form a team in an exciting arts-based entertainment television series for TG4 called 'Creative Company' which endeavoured to find Ireland's most creative company. The program was aired several times throughout the year.
- A cohort of staff members from the administrative offices took part in Irish language courses, some undertaking accredited courses and which are still ongoing.
- 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' was celebrated in March throughout the organisation.
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada's pilot physics scheme is going from strength to strength. The subject is being taught through Irish but in a virtual capacity and began just last year. This year it is now being taught as a Transition Year module and also in both 5th and 6th year.
- Many of our schools participated in ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge events during 2020. This event was a celebration of Irish language and culture for all students and was enjoyed by all.
- A number of teachers throughout the organization joined the ETBI's Fóram Feasa, the aim of which is to establish a network of teachers grouped by subject from Gaelcholáistí, Scoileanna Gaeltachta and Irish language Units, to create links between teachers and and create an additional support network to support each other in teaching and learning.

PRIORITY 8

Continuous review of the legislative/governance requirements of Donegal ETB operations and ensure implementation of outcomes.

OUTCOME

Full compliance with all legislative and governance requirements relating to Donegal ETB.

Compliance

Donegal ETB continued to be mindful of its obligations in terms of legislation and governance in 2020. The Department of Education issued a new Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (CL 0002/2019) which was considered by the Board and the ETB executive. All the required actions were implemented at Board meetings and at meetings of its Audit and Risk committee, Finance committee, School Boards of Management, and Youth Work committee. The ETB also ensured that it complied with the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013, and other legislation, as well as with the requirements of the Revenue Commissioners.

Various policies and procedures have also been developed and circulated to ETB management and staff (See Corporate section later in this document for further details).

Audit and Risk Committee

2020 was the first full calendar year of the new Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) with its revised composition of three ETB Board members and five external members.

ARC is responsible for monitoring the Executive in how it carries out its functions. During the year, ARC provided reassurances to the ETB Board about the effectiveness of the internal control processes. ARC had access to: Reports from management; an external audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General; and internal audits by the Internal Audit Unit – ETBs. In turn, the ETB Board received reports of the meetings of ARC. The Board took ARC's findings and recommendations into account when approving the Annual Financial Statements and adopting a Statement on Internal Control.

Finance Committee

2020 was also the first full calendar year of the new Finance Committee with its composition of three Board members and four external members. The Committee continued to have responsibility for reviewing the income and expenditure of the Board, performance against budget, and the financial aspects of both the Education plan and the Training Service plan. The ETB Board received the minutes of the Finance Committee meetings for consideration and to help assure Board members that these plans were being implemented.

The Committee also reviews annually the financial aspects of the Annual Service Plan and recommends them to the ETB Board for inclusion as part of the overall Annual Service Plan which is required to be submitted to the Department of Education (DE) by March 1st each year. A joint meeting with the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is also held annually in March to review and recommend approval of the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) by the ETB Board in advance of the deadline for submission of the draft AFS to the DE by April 1st.

Risk Management

Work continued throughout 2020 on the review and update of the Corporate, Schools and FET Risk Registers, which are considered by the Audit and Risk Committee. Individual Risk Registers for ETB areas including Finance, Procurement, ICT, HR, Corporate Services, Building Services and Estates Management and Health and Safety have been developed and are updated regularly. This work continues to heighten awareness around the whole area of risk management. Risk registers were also updated in 2020 to identify and assess the impact of COVID-19 on risk management.

Internal Control

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the ETB is well run. In 2020 Board members, with the assistance of the Finance committee reviewed how the ETB's programmes performed in relation to targets and budgets. They also looked at how well the systems, procedures and job roles are adapted to deal successfully with the challenging workload.

During 2020 account was also taken of the potential impact on the system of internal control of changes to work practices arising from the impact of COVID 19. The Board carried out its annual review of internal controls and considered a report from the Audit and Risk Committee.

The following audits were dealt with during 2020:

- The Comptroller & Auditor General (C & AG): audit of accounts for the year ended 31st December 2019
- Internal Audit Unit (IAU) - ETBs: Contracted Training (Commenced 2019)
- (IAU) ETBs: Health & Safety (commenced 2019)
- (IAU) ETBs: Procurement
- (IAU): Review of Previous Internal Audits
- YR YEI 2017 - ESF Audit Authority Audit.
- Training for the Unemployed - ESF Article 125.
- ESF Verification Audit - BTEI, Adult Literacy and YR 2019.

Training for Board of Management Training

There was an online training session for Chairpersons and Secretaries to the Boards of Management on Monday 19th October 2020. The session focussed on the role of the Chairperson and the relationship between the Principal as Secretary to the Board.

Child Protection

The Department of Education (DE) has an important oversight role to play in ensuring that all our children receive the highest quality of care and protection in our schools. In January 2019, the DE Inspectorate published details on how they were going to implement Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections (CPSIs). These inspections focus in an in-depth way on how schools are complying with key aspects of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017. There was online child protection training provided on Monday 28th September 2020 for all Board of Manager members and Principals in their role as Secretary to the Board.

Financial Statements 2020

Please note that the Donegal ETB Annual Financial Statements for the year ended the 31st of December 2020 is subject to audit by the C&AG at the time of publication of the Donegal ETB Annual Report for 2020. Donegal ETB will publish the audited financial statements within one month of receipt from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

[Financial data in relation to the following is included in the Annual Financial Statement:](#)

- Non Salary-related fees paid in respect of Committee members;
- Salaries and short-term employee benefits;
- Post-employment benefits;
- Termination benefits;
- Key management compensation if any;
- The number of employees whose total employee benefits were between €0 to €59,999;
- The number of employees whose total employee benefits were between €60,000 to €69,999 and within each pay band of €10,000;



PRIORITY 9

Arising from the on-going integration of education and training services and the implementation of the Shared Services Project to redefine organisational priorities and corresponding job roles.

OUTCOME

Clear evidence of effective systems, working relationships and job roles within Donegal ETB.

The Human Resources (HR) department of Donegal ETB provides support in a number of areas, including:

- HR staffing resources/allocation
- Recruitment and selection
- HR operations incorporating CoreHR and part-time teachers online claim system
- Pensions/Superannuation
- Employee health and wellbeing
- Contract management
- Training and development
- Industrial Relations

HR Staffing Resources/Allocation

Teaching staff allocation:

Donegal ETB's final Teacher Allocation for 2020 (for academic year 2020/2021) was 503.26 whole time equivalents in accordance with circulars from the Department of Education (DE).

Administrative staff allocation:

Administrative staff allocations are approved by the DE on the basis of:

- agreed formulae in relation to school-based administrators
- agreements between the DE and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- FET programmes

Maintenance staff allocation

The Department of Education review maintenance staff allocation on the basis of student enrolment. The DE review the allocation and inform HR of changes in allocation.

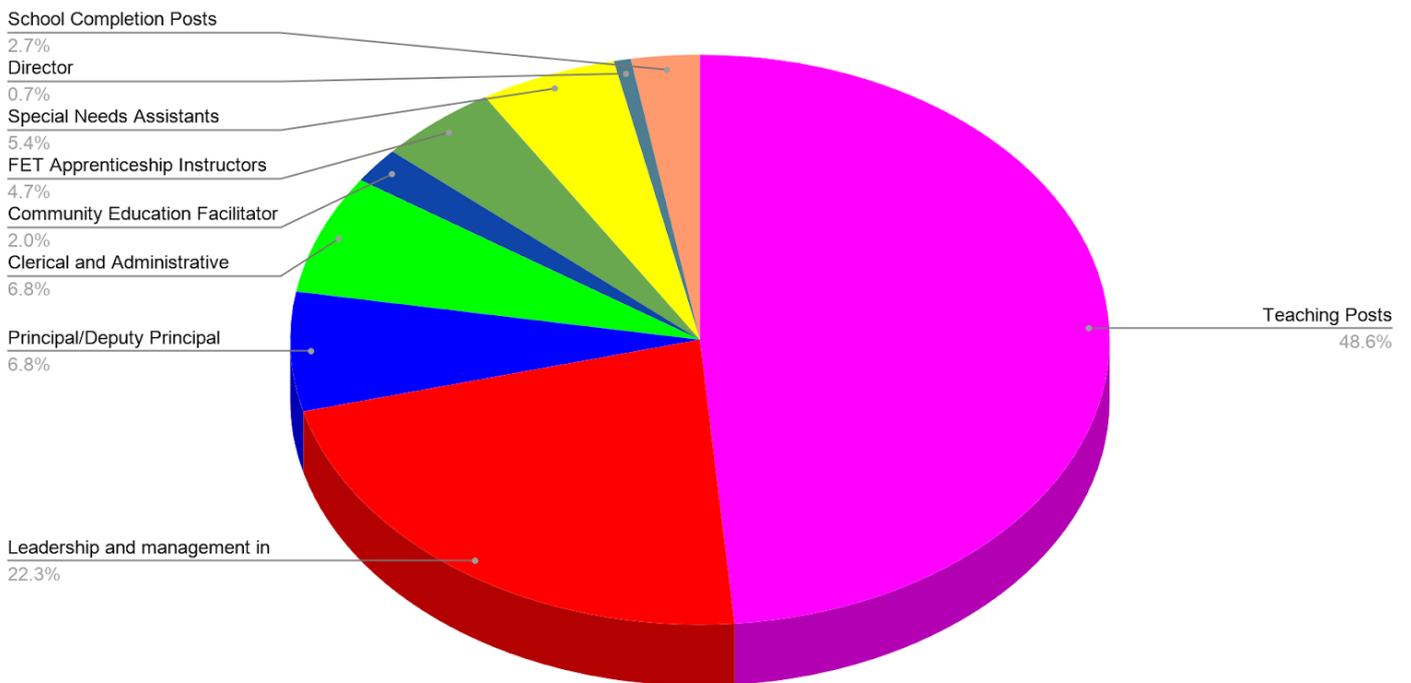
Staff for FET programmes

The DE advises on the number of maintenance staff based on the student enrolment, and advises HR of changes. In terms of non-teaching staff generally, the ETB has approved staffing levels. HR sends returns to the DE each quarter.

Recruitment and Selection

A total of 148 appointments were filled through formal recruitment processes in the calendar year 2020 across a range of posts in a permanent, fixed term, specified purpose and acting capacity.

Teaching Posts	72	FET Apprenticeship Instructors	7
Leadership and management in schools (included posts of responsibility, HSCL and Programme Coordinator)	33	Special Needs Assistants	8
Principal/Deputy Principal	10	Director	1
Clerical and Administrative (Grades III to Grade VII)	10	School Completion Posts (Donegal ETB act as Agents for SCP Local management Committees)	4
Community Education Facilitator (CEF) Grade	3		



The HR Department implemented a number of new processes in 2020.

Part Time Substitute Panels

In addition to the Part Time Substitute Teacher Panel, which is available on the Website, a new Part time Substitute Caretaking Panel and a Part Time Substitute Cleaning Panel was established to fill short term absences among Maintenance Staff in Donegal ETB's Post Primary Schools/Colleges/Centres.

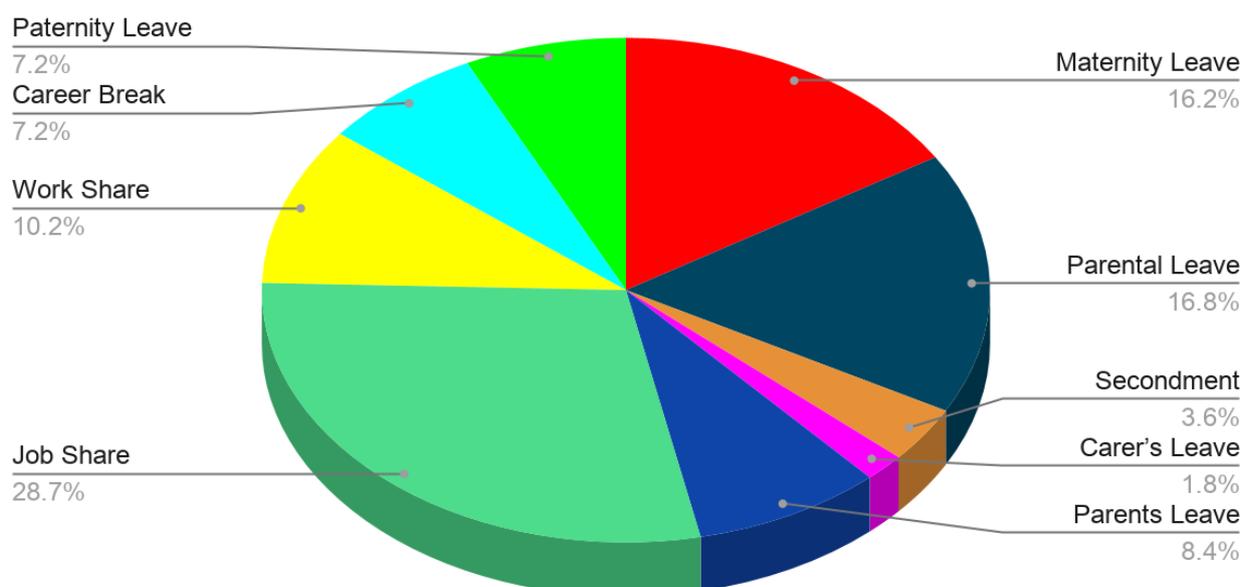
Remote Interview Arrangements.

New processes were introduced in 2020 to enable the continuation of recruitment for Donegal ETB. All manual documentation was uploaded to a shared drive to allow for on-line remote interviews. Guidance notes for applicants and Selection Boards were introduced as well as on-line training in respect of on-line interviews for individual Selection Board members prior to interview. The introduction of e-signature for official Recommendation Sheet and CE Appointment Report was also introduced.

Work/life balance and Statutory leave applications

The HR Department processed 167 Work Life Balance applications in 2020 as follows.

Maternity Leave	27	Job Share	48
Parental Leave	28	Work Share	17
Secondment	6	Career Break	12
Carer's Leave	3	Paternity Leave	12
Parents Leave	14		



Pensions/Superannuation

The Pensions section was given some extra support during the year to help process an increased level of enquiries from FET staff. The section also began preparing for changes because of the DE Shared Services Project, mentioned earlier.

Superannuation and retirement benefits

Here are some details in relation to the ETB Pensions section in 2020, starting with the names of the various schemes:

The Education and Training Boards Teacher Superannuation Scheme, 2015

The Education Sector Superannuation Scheme, 2015

The Single Public Sector Pension Scheme, 2012

The FÁS Closed Scheme

The FÁS Open Scheme

<i>Number of retirees in 2020</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Updated number of retirees at the end of 2020</i>	<i>320</i>

Employee Health and Wellbeing

2020 was a challenging year for Staff in terms of Staff health and Wellbeing. Each School/College/Centre has one designated Staff Wellbeing Promoter whose aim is to promote Staff Workplace Wellbeing. In supporting Staff the following was also introduced:

- Each Wellbeing Promoter received access to a Shared Drive where Wellbeing Resources are uploaded for sharing among Staff in their workplace.
- A separate Section of the Website was dedicated to Staff Wellbeing. In 2020 additional wellbeing resources were uploaded to the Website including:
 - COVID 19 Supports
 - Employee Assistance Programme
 - Promotion of National Workplace Wellbeing Day - 1st May 2020
 - Mindfulness
 - Wellbeing Articles/Resources
 - Working From Home
 - The Strategic Wellbeing Group met on two occasions during 2020

Contract management

Roll out of the on-line claim system in FET Centres across a range of Programmes.

The Roll out of an on-line PTT (Part Time Teacher) Claim Form system occurred in 2020 for FET Programme delivering VTOS, Youthreach, BTEI and Learning for Living. This is in preparation for the ESBS Payroll Shared Services Project and a move away from a paper based claim form system to an on-line one. The on-line system enables the recording of contract details at the point of entry and the tracking of successive Contracts.

Training and development

Training and Development during 2020 was delivered in the main on-line during 2020

Customer Service Training for 75 staff was scheduled to take place on 7th, 8th and 9th April, 2020 for Caretakers, Cleaners, Cooks and General Assistants employed in Donegal ETB. However due to the 2020 Pandemic this training did not proceed.

The following Training and Development was specifically initiated via Donegal ETBs Training and Development Policies

Pillar	No of Employees	Category
Schools	2	IT Related
Schools	8	Irish-medium and Gaeltacht Post-Primary
Schools	2	Leadership and Management
Schools	4	Subject Related
Schools	2	SNA Related
FET	1	Supporting Students with Disabilities
OSD	2	Data Protection / Procurement

PRIORITY 10

Provide a range of staff learning opportunities and supports to build organisational capacity and enhance the quality of educational and training provision.

OUTCOME

A dynamic organisation that responds quickly and effectively to change.

Further Education and Training:

Professional development opportunities for FET staff continued throughout 2020. Due to the challenges presented by the COVID 19 crisis, training and support for teachers, tutors and instruction staff focused on online delivery and the use of technology to enhance the learning experience. Staff trained as TEL mentors and provided additional peer support to colleagues in the delivery of emergency remote teaching (ERT). Universal Design of Learning (UDL) training was undertaken by 35 staff with AHEAD to enable the development and use of inclusive teaching strategies. An extensive range of CPD was offered to staff throughout 2020 including but not limited to: Google Classroom & Drive Training, Smartphone Video Training, Zoomergisers, UDL Summer School, E-Portfolio Training, Assessing your Students' Digital Capabilities, UDL Digital Badge, Supporting Wellbeing, and UDL in the Clouds, Assessment Communities of Practice and Designing Blended Learning Experiences for FET Students. A TEL national CPD programme was hosted by NCI & NUI Galway at NFQ levels 6, 7 & 8 in which 8 staff participated. Staff from across all programmes engaged in 21st Century Learning gaining a deeper understanding of the learning philosophy to enable them to take on a more facilitative role and provide student centred guidance and feedback. 18 staff completed an NFQ L9 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) award delivered by Letterkenny Institute of Technology. In total, there were 1594 engagements by FET staff in CPD interventions in 2020.

In November 2020, the FET service carried out research to document its experience of delivering adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills in order to develop its submission to inform the national *10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills Strategy for Ireland*. Surveys (162 responses), facilitated focus groups and interviews were carried out with students, staff and external stakeholders. The research findings will also inform CPD for staff and provide information that can be used to enhance teaching and learning.

Schools:

Provide a range of staff learning opportunities and supports to build organisational capacity and enhance the quality of education and training provision

- 24th August Curriculum Planning and Content Creation

Teaching and Learning - The New Classroom Webinar

This was a webinar facilitated by our Director of Schools Dr Martin Gormley and coordinated by Séan Mc Fadden where teachers showcased their work to outline the benefits of using the G Suite platform to support learning and teaching and to build on the existing practices employed across our schools. This event was designed to deepen our educators' understanding of how this approach to learning could support both students and educators in their classrooms. This was also to demonstrate the advantages of such an approach and the benefits of this new way of learning.

- **25th August 2020 Virtual Induction day for Newly Appointed teachers**

A CPD session on teaching and learning focusing on the integration of technology to enhance the experience for our students in our classrooms.

- **2020/2021 Curriculum Planning and Content Creation**

Teams of teachers in various subject areas collaborating across schools within the Donegal ETB where they share best practices and develop teaching and learning resources whilst planning curricula.

The support of the Educational Psychologist was evident during the 2020 pandemic where immediate and additional support were needed for students and school management. These included:

- Staff-in-service training on contingency planning for critical incidents in schools.
- Provision of support to school management, staff and pupils in the aftermath of a critical incident.
- Staff-in-service training on the Continuum of Support model of service for schools, developed by the National Educational Psychological Service.
- Facilitation of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) consultation groups for teachers of pupils with ASD.
- Staff in-service and support for the development and review of Student Support Teams.
- Provision of in-service training on the Continuum of Support model and Special Educational Needs in the classroom to new teachers of Donegal Education and Training Board.
- Provision of study skills programmes aimed at supporting Junior and Leaving Certificate students.
- Organisation of MAPA (Management of Actual and Potential Aggression) training to train a team of Donegal ETB teachers as in-house trainers.
- Teacher training as trainers for the FRIENDS for Youth programme (a programme to increase emotional literacy, resilience and problem-solving abilities with groups of young people) undertaken in collaboration with NEPS.

OSD:

The following Webinars were made available on the Website for new and returning Staff

- Return to Work Safely Induction
- Post Primary Wellbeing Webinar

Induction for New Teachers

The 2020 Induction for new teachers was delivered on-line in August, 2020 over two days covering a range of supports for new teachers. Day 1 focused on links with the HR Department covering Policies and Procedures, Staff Wellbeing and Leave Entitlements. Day 2 focused on the theme of Teaching and Learning including Catering for Students with Educational Needs, Communication in a Digital World for the Teacher and Teaching in a Gaelcholáiste.

PRIORITY 11

Use new and emerging technologies to enhance organisational support and development.

OUTCOME

As part of the COVID response Donegal ETB

- Enabled Remote Access for all Admin Staff to allow working from home. Whereas the traditional response would be to open ports to give remote access through our servers, it was felt that to enable Chrome Remote Desktop was more secure and much quicker to roll out. This was enabled pending the announcement of lockdown and all staff had access, using multi levelled authentication, directly to their own desktop workstations prior to the direction to begin working from home. This allowed staff to access mission critical systems such as Payroll, which are dependent on Government Network connections, from home. Donegal ETB Payroll was completed successfully by staff working from home in the first week following lockdown.
- As part of the initial response, devices were provided to all staff to allow them to work from home. The suite of Chromebooks purchased to facilitate meetings in our board room was utilised and then further purchase of laptops as required. This involved considerable interaction with numerous suppliers as the demand worldwide for laptops was intense.
- Training and support for all teaching staff engaged in remote learning was provided. This included online sessions and video tutorials on Classroom and Google Meet. We also engaged with Administrative staff to encourage best use of applications required to safely work from home.
- As part of the interaction between teachers and students, the IT Department worked on enhancing the configuration of the various applications to ensure that security was maintained. This involved some considerable work on our domains which is ongoing and will be completed during the summer of 2021.
- To ensure teaching staff had access to all the additional functionality introduced by Google to enhance online learning, user accounts were upgraded to facilitate these additional features. This allows for better integration with teacher accounts to allow recording of online classes, live streaming options, attendance reporting, breakout rooms and Q&A within online classes. This has already proven to be hugely popular with staff.
- Our ICT Department supported the rollout of devices for Disadvantaged Students in FET. This included;
 - Working with our FET department and advising on the best devices. We recommended they look at Chromebooks and refurbished laptops. This allowed the FET department to purchase many more devices than covered by the national framework.
 - The development of an online portal to facilitate and record the distribution of devices.
 - The rollout of upgraded Microsoft licencing to allow students to use applications when their internet was weak or unavailable.

- A Digital Content Hub to provide quick, easy to use instructional videos for staff and students was developed. This is ongoing and will be available to staff, students and parents in Schools & FET.
- The IT Department work closely with the FET Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) group who meet regularly during the year. This has involved engaging with staff during TEL events and the production of a quarterly ICT newsletter. This has had high engagement and will be further developed and rolled out to the wider school community.

PRIORITY 12

Develop a clear and effective communications strategy for Donegal ETB.

OUTCOME

There is an increased trust and a deeper understanding of Donegal ETB and its role, responsibilities and services among all the stakeholders.

In 2020 Donegal ETB continued to build on and further develop the communications of its work to the public in a variety of ways which are highlighted below. However, all of this was considerably reduced because of the COVID 19 containment measures. For example, because of Government restrictions, we were unable to host our annual Awards or our Enterprise Day for schools and Youthreach. While a number of FET Presentation of Awards took place in January and February 2020, not all locations in the county were able to host an awards evening. Nevertheless, a substantial amount of communications activity still took place.

- **STRATEGIC**

Donegal ETB's Communications Advisory Group, which provides strategic direction on Donegal ETB's communications structures and operations, met four times in 2020 to continue overseeing the development of Donegal ETB's communications in a number of areas including:

- Strategic
- Media/Press
- Digital Communications
- Corporate Communications
- Internal Communications
- Crisis Communications
- Marketing

In 2020, because of the global pandemic, strategic advice on social media usage was provided by Donegal ETB's Communications Officer to its post-primary schools in terms of their public sector messaging remit. For example, schools were advised to place very clear messaging about how to prevent the spread of COVID 19 on their social media platforms such as Facebook and were provided with the correctly sized Facebook banners. They were also advised regularly to continue sharing HSE guidelines on preventing the spread of COVID 19 across their various platforms.

- **MEDIA/PRESS**

In 2020 twenty-three press releases and statements were issued to local print, radio and online media as appropriate. This was six less than the previous year, 2019, but this was because of the change of circumstances brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic. These included for example, seven press releases on new staff appointments such as new Principals and Deputy Principals which received hugely positive reactions on the social media platforms of a number of the news outlets.

A total of forty-six news stories were written and posted to Donegal ETB's website and shared out across its various social media platforms as appropriate. These covered all aspects of the organisation

– Corporate (twenty-one), Schools (twelve) and Further Education and Training (FET) Services (thirteen). Because of the global pandemic in 2020, just over 30% of the stories (fourteen) related to COVID 19.

A number of interviews were arranged this year with the Donegal News – one with Chief Executive Anne McHugh on 18 December reflecting back on what was the most extraordinary year in the ETB’s history: <https://donegalnews.com/2020/12/march-12-will-forever-be-etched-in-my-brain/>. A second interview was also published on 24 December with just retired Director of OSD, Jim McGlynn who reflected on almost forty-three years of public service with Donegal ETB: <https://donegalnews.com/2020/12/career-included-many-changes-in-donegal-etb/>. The interview also is reproduced at the end of this Priority section.

• **DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Donegal ETB increased its digital communications outputs in 2020 through the use of its website and social media platforms to raise awareness of its brand, communicate its work and engage with its many audiences and communities across the county and its islands. This was also partly necessitated by the COVID 19 restrictions which saw so much of its work moved online.

In 2020, the website, which had been newly launched the previous July (2019), had 539,181 page views and 132,777 users, of which 129,042 were new users. In early 2020 Donegal ETB finalised the development of the Irish version of its website.

Donegal ETB, its schools, FET Service, Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre and music service, is very active across a number of social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn. In terms of vanity metrics, Donegal ETB continued to grow its followers on its other social media platforms in 2020:

- Donegal ETB’s largest social media platform, Facebook, gained almost 2,000 news followers (1,998) in 2020, to 8,845 by the end of December. This compared to an increase of 1,548 in the previous twelve months (01 January - 31 December 2019).
- Followers on Donegal ETB’s LinkedIn company account (opened May 2017) continued to grow, standing at 1,752 at the end of 2020, up from 1,123 the previous year (2019), an increase of 629 followers. At the end of December 2020 the ETB’s LinkedIn showcase page specifically for employer services had 259 followers.
- Donegal ETB’s Instagram account which was opened in April 2019 had 1,801 followers at the end of 2020, an increase of 601 followers from the previous year.



- Donegal ETB's Twitter account had 3,516 followers at the end of 2020, up from 3,104 at the end of 2019.
- The ETB's YouTube account had 234 followers at the end of December 2020.

The increasing engagement levels with Donegal ETB's various social media platforms can be further illustrated in more detail by looking at the continued growth in impressions of Donegal ETB's Twitter account (@DonegalETB) which had over 1.95 million impressions in 2020, up from 1.86 million in 2019 and a huge increase on its 138,800 impressions in 2016 when the role of Communications Officer was created.

#GoFurtherWithDonegalETB There was a continued and increased use of two of Donegal ETB's personalised hashtags, **#WeAreDonegalETB** and **#GoFurtherWithDonegalETB**, across various sections of the organisation, notably schools and FET.

A number of new videos were added to its YouTube account in 2020 and a number of the schools and music service had huge success with online music videos which also provide the schools and music service with positive exposure to a much wider than normal audience. This is outlined in more detail under Marketing.



Two Adult Literacy Organisers, Adele McElhinney and Dolores McGheidigh, developed and produced twenty-four 'Little [video] Lessons' in spelling, grammar and basic IT which were released on YouTube and Facebook in two series – the first series (fourteen videos) ran from 05 March – 04 June 2020 and the second series (ten videos) ran from 08 October-10 December. Specific YouTube and Facebook playlists were created to share these which are intended for use by the FET Service, schools and the wider

community:

1. YouTube Playlist Series 1: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIHRyIEecPt2ImUCRgP2KobKR356Qw7X8>
2. YouTube Playlist Series 2: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIHRyIEecPt0ySaIVOkxHbNoD34R6pmHs>
3. Facebook Playlist: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/DonegalETB/1315758835299661/>

• CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

In 2020 a core team, comprising Donegal ETB's three Directors, Head of Corporate Services, Communications Officer, music service manager and Corporate Services administration, put together Donegal ETB's 2019 annual report.

In 2020 a team of Donegal ETB staff featured in a light arts entertainment programme on TG4. The production of this began in 2019. The programme, 'Creative Company', embarked on a mission to find



Ireland's most creative workplace. Six staff members from across all three pillars of the organisation (Schools, FET and Organisation Support and Development), half of whom were Irish speakers, represented Donegal ETB in the programme. These were Jim McGlynn, Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD), Administrative Offices; Derval Newman, Oifigeach Tacaíochta Gaeilge; Cróna Kerr, Art and Design Teacher, Further Education and Training (FET) Service, Stranorlar; Marie Crossan, Art Teacher, Errigal College Letterkenny; Blaine Ó'Maolagáin,

Múinteoir Teicneolaíocht Ábhar Adhmad, Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn and Colm Richardson, Assistant Training Manager, Letterkenny and Gaoth Dobhair Training Centres, FET Service. The programme aired over six weeks in January and February 2020; Donegal ETB featured in the episode which aired on 6 February and in the last episode as our team made it through to the final (although we did not win). Publicity for this programme on Donegal ETB's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) from January-February had a reach of almost 59,000 and the beautiful art piece created for this initiative, 'Saor', is now on display in the reception area of our Administrative Offices. A summary video of the Donegal ETB team's involvement can be found on our YouTube account: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSvDrh4ThJE>. Further details on this initiative are included at the end of this section.

In 2020, the FET Service and the Administrative Offices replaced twenty-one large outdoor signs. This was required for a variety of reasons, including many being out of date, a number were badly storm damaged, some FET centre names had been updated and there was generally a lack of visual consistency in FET centre signs across the county.

• **INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

In 2019 Donegal ETB developed a new staff intranet to enhance internal communications. In 2020 analytics were enabled on our staff intranet, to provide learning on how staff are interacting with the site.

The Communications Officer developed a further number of communications guidelines (in English and Irish) in 2020. In relation to internal communications, these included:

1. Branding Guidelines re Name Use (Version 1)
2. Email Signature Template (Version 3)

These two sets of guidelines are also used for marketing purposes.

• **CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS**

In 2020, this involved issuing seven press statements related specifically to the COVID 19 containment measures and how they affected the continuation of services in our schools, FET centres and Administrative Offices. An information section was also set up on the landing page of the website and

a section on staff well-being was created in the staff intranet. Donegal ETB's Chief Executive also issued regular supportive messages to all staff as we navigated teaching and learning through the global pandemic.

- **MARKETING**

A wide range of communications to support marketing activities were carried out in 2020, despite the COVID 19 restrictions.

In addition to guidelines on name use and email signatures (see internal communications heading), the Communications Officer developed a number of other communications guidelines (in English and Irish) in 2020 related to marketing. These included:

1. Advertising Guidelines for FET re Print (Version 1)
2. Guidelines for Developing Promotional Videos in Schools (Version 1)
3. Guidelines for Social Media Accounts to Promote Student Projects (Version 1)



While our digital communication activities, outlined earlier, constitute marketing, additional activities also included:

- In 2020 work began on the complete design overhaul of the FET Prospectus, including plans to move it away from a calendar year as it has been up until now and to an academic year (2021-2022) and to increase the volume of information it provides.

- In 2020 we published a suite of new promotional materials (a bank of professional photographs, videos (listed below), brochure, flyer and pop-up banners) for PLCs under the FET Service which was a further extension of the branding and promotional materials developed through the FET Options for School Leavers brochure the previous year. A bank of social media assets was also created by the Communications Officer for the three

schools to support them with promoting their own PLCs.

Donegal ETB continued to work strategically with local online media outlet Donegal Daily to promote the standing of Further Education and Training (FET) which also consequently promotes the standing of Donegal ETB. Nine advertorials were published in 2020 which focused on a particular field of learning or support within the FET Service through its former students (see Appendix III).

Because of the COVID 19 restrictions in 2020, the FET Service was unable to hold its annual Information and Guidance Fair, which would normally attract around 1,000 adults and young people. One alternative solution to this provided by the Adult Guidance and Information Service were four related information articles published on Donegal Daily's website and social media accounts during the month of April to help those who had lost their jobs (see Appendix IV). An interview to discuss these supports was also arranged with Highland Radio in April.

Work to further develop Donegal ETB's visual communications was limited in 2020 also because of the COVID 19 restrictions. For example, with FET centres closed, we were unable to continue building a bank of professional FET photographs and a number of key annual events such as the annual ETB awards and Enterprise Day for schools and Youthreach could not take place. However, some work that had begun in 2019 was finalised in 2020:

- Work on developing specific promotional videos for the PLC courses offered by the FET Service within three of Donegal ETB's post-primary schools was finalised in 2020:
- Overall PLC promotional video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GkDKkas-Cw&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=13>
- Errigal College PLC promotional video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAAW4hmgLAs&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=10>
- Finn Valley College PLC promotional video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFtKf76XbDo&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=11>
- St Catherine's Vocational School PLC promotional video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUBcRVcfBGA&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=12>
- A FET Student Stories Playlist was also created on YouTube to begin building a bank of videos of FET students testimonials:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIHRyIEecPtIFlavZKsYSXYB688Zlxj-2>
- Because the FET Recruitment Officer was unable to visit schools to provide a presentations on the FET Service, two videos were created to enable her to provide online presentations – a short video to explain ten reasons to study with Donegal ETB's FET Service (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqiyIm34pBw&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=2>) and a longer presentation video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UScjrVhdNE&list=PLIHRyIEecPtIOz0QCTwbbGUMOIwe-t3eq&index=1>).
- In June 2020, following on from first doing so in June 2019 and being the first ETB to do so, Donegal ETB updated its logo across all its social media platforms to the Pride colours in solidarity with its LGBTI+ students and staff.

Work was also carried out on a number of local and national newsletters:

- A submission was made to ESF for their 2020 newsletter highlighting our work through ESF co-funded programmes. A feature on three female welders (specific skills training) was included in the 2020 newsletter which was published in December: <https://eufunds.ie/publications/> (ESF Newsletter 2020, p.17).
- Publicity was secured through ETBI in the national School Summit magazine which was issued digitally in 2020 with a feature on one of our PLC students: <https://belltimemagazine.ie/blog/2020/09/24/2020-autumn/> (p.16).
- An article on Donegal ETB's online support for businesses (Skills to Advance) during the first COVID 19 lockdown in the earlier part of 2020 was submitted to the Donegal Diaspora project for their October 2020 e-zine (which has a global reach) and which can now be found in the Learn Donegal section of their website:
<https://www.donegaldiaspora.ie/programme/donegal-businesses-upskill-staff-during-COVID-19-lockdown-donegal-etb>.
- Six contributions were made to ETBI's Further Education and Training News ezine in February, May and December 2020. These included:

February 2020:

1. Donegal ETB's First FET Student Voice Forum

May 2020:

2. Donegal ETB's Adult Guidance and Information Service Supporting those who have Lost Jobs due to COVID 19
3. Donegal ETB Supports Businesses through COVID 19 with Skills to Advance

December 2020:

4. Community Education Supporting Donegal Communities
5. Donegal ETB's FET Service Teaches Some Little Lessons

One of the FET Service Enterprise Engagement Officers, Dearbhla Kelly, spoke on Episode 2 of Highland Radio's newly established 'Business Matters' podcast on 08 July about the training supports Donegal ETB's FET Service provides Donegal businesses: <https://www.highlandradio.com/2020/07/08/business-matters-ep-2-dearbhla-kelly-marjorie-mcdaid/>.

The Communications Officer provided promotional support to the Enterprise Engagement staff with their online webinars for the business community (outlined in Priority 13).



Donegal ETB Featured in TG4 series 'Creative Company'

Donegal ETB was one of ten teams, including two from County Donegal, to take part in a new television series on TG4 called 'Creative Company' in January and February 2020. This arts-based entertainment show ran for six weeks from Thursday 9 January and embarked on a mission to find Ireland's most creative workplace. Donegal ETB featured in the episode which aired on 6 February.

Creative Company paired each team with an accomplished Irish artist throughout the entire process who worked with the companies involved - Liam de Frinse, an award-winning multidisciplinary artist from Belfast, worked with the Donegal ETB team during the latter half of 2019 to come up with their art piece 'Saor' which represented all three pillars of the organisation.

The project was judged by a team of expert art critics - Evelyn O'Rourke, Broadcaster RTÉ; Caomhán Mac Con Iomaire, National Gallery of Ireland and Helen Carroll, Business to Arts.



The other nine participating companies were Circle K, Energia, The Gleneagle Hotel, Big O Taxi's, The Dingle Hub, Standún, Raidió na Life, Maurice Ward Transport and Donegal Yarns.

Five workplaces made it to the grand final and a public vote helped to decide which workplace created the most impressive piece of art and deserve to be crowned Ireland's most creative company.

Donegal ETB was represented by a team of six staff from across the organisation: former Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD) Jim McGlynn, Oifigeach Tacaíochta Gaeilge Derval Newman, Further Education and Training (FET) Service Art and Design Teacher, Cróna Kerr, Errigal College Art Teacher Marie Crossan, Múinteoir Teicneolaíocht Ábhar Adhmad, Coláiste Ailigh Blaine Ó'Maolagáin and Further Education and Training (FET) Service Bainisteoir Cúnta Ionad Traenála Leitir Ceanainn agus Gaoth Dobhair Colm Mac Ristéard.



While Donegal ETB made it through to the final with their creation 'Saor', unfortunately we didn't win but were delighted fellow Donegal company, Donegal Yarns did win and even more delighted to have been given this unique opportunity.

Tribute to Jim McGlynn



Our long-serving Director of Organisation, Support and Development, Mr. Jim McGlynn, retired after giving forty three years of service to Donegal ETB, during which time he made an immense contribution to the progress made by the organisation. The following piece is a tribute to Jim which appeared in the local media on the occasion of his retirement.

Donegal News interview with Director of OSD Jim McGlynn, published on 24 December 2020*

Career included many changes in Donegal ETB

When Jim McGlynn completed his Leaving Certificate Examinations in 1977 his goal, like many of his peers of that time, was to get a secure, permanent and pensionable job.

The attractions of a dependable salary, pension entitlements and the chance of promotion with one employer drew the young Glenfin man towards the Donegal Vocational Education Committee (VEC).

Together with Paddy Gallagher, Finola Furey, Frankie Quinn, Patrick Doherty and the fondly remembered Patsy Breslin RIP, he made up what was later referred to as "The Class of '78".

Last week, Jim (61) attended his final meeting of the Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB), which replaced the former VEC in 2013, before his retirement at the end of the year.

It ends a career of public service spanning close on 43 years, one which saw him rise to become a senior leader of one of the largest public sector organisations in the county.

Head of Administration and Finance for many years, Jim has been Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD) for the last four years. He has seen a lot of change in that time and this week he reflected on his contribution and that of the Donegal VEC / ETB to improving and supporting the lives of the county's citizens.

The VEC's budget was less than €3 million when Jim first started back in 1978. Their work at that time was largely associated with their nine Vocational Schools, Letterkenny Regional Technical College (RTC) and the School of Tourism in Killybegs, together with a significant Adult Education Night Classes programme.

This year, the budget will exceed €80 million and also includes the former FÁS Training Services in the Letterkenny and Gweedore Training Centres which transferred to the ETB in 2014.

While control of both Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the School of Tourism in Killybegs have since gone from the ETB, there are now 15 Vocational Schools and 17 Further Education and Training Centres spread around the county and its islands of Arranmore and Tory.

"When the six of us started in 1978, we almost doubled the administration staff numbers in the Administrative Offices," he recalled this week.

A year earlier, Fianna Fáil had a landslide election win and one of their commitments was to increase the number of the civil and public servants.

COLLEGE BOARDER

“I had been a boarder in St. Eunan’s College and had an opportunity to go to third level however, with lesser numbers going on to third-level back then and the lure of employment and regular income, I went looking for work. The following February (1978) I got my first permanent offer, to join the ESB in Sligo, but I was always drawn to my home county and Letterkenny.

“There were any number of jobs on offer in the weekend papers in the civil service and numerous public bodies like the North Western Health Board (NWHB), local authorities, including Donegal County Council and Donegal VEC. I wasn’t as aware of the VEC as the others so I was curious and went into the then National Manpower Office in Ballybofey and received ample information to convince me to apply. In those days, applicants were placed on Clerical Officer panels having regard to their Leaving Certificate results and their performance at interview.

I was offered temporary employment with Donegal County Council where I spent four days before being offered a permanent post with the ESB in Sligo the same week. I was then offered a clerical officer post with the VEC in August 1978 and started on August 14. The following day was a church holiday when public services closed, so we had the day off. I thought it was a great job!” he laughed.

The VEC Administrative Offices at that time were located within the former Letterkenny Vocational School building on Ard O’Donnell.

“The same space we all had then is now taken up by a portion of our HR Department.” he said.

In 1979, the Offices moved to leased accommodation on the upper floor of the Gleneany House building on the Port Road and then on to Pearse Road, adjacent to the Community Centre, before returning to Ard O’Donnell in 1987, following the opening of Errigal College at Windyhall. It’s been headquarters to the ETB ever since.

The seventies and early eighties saw many students being educated in prefabs before the VEC, under then CEO, Seán Ó Longáin embarked on a huge building programme with the support of the Department of Education.

“Some of the schools at that time were made up entirely of prefabs. Killybegs springs to mind. I was working in Building services at one stage during that period and I remember us reporting to the VEC and the Department that the growth in enrolments in our schools meant that there were 186 prefabs used to house students in Donegal VEC.”

NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Starting with the Abbey Vocational School in Donegal Town in 1981, millions were invested in new school buildings on the mainland and our two islands. Once the new schools were built, the former Vocational School buildings were retained and adapted to facilitate Further and Adult Education programmes – like Gort a Choirce, Ballyshannon, Milford, Bunrana and more recently, the former Finn Valley College building on Main Street in Stranorlar.

“We had great School Principals running our schools in difficult conditions in those early years and that quality of leadership has continued to the present day. Hugh Dorrian and Michael Fox became our first Adult Education Organisers and did a lot of groundwork in establishing some of the initial further and adult education programmes. They were succeeded by Cróna Gallagher and Martin Gormley who really set about growing and developing our full range of further education programmes, including the delivery of community education programmes in the communities and the towns and villages,” he said.

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre has always been a big part of my working life and music education, youth work and drugs and alcohol education and prevention are now integral parts of our ETB operations.

“There’s been so many good FET programmes like VTOS, Youthreach, Back to Education Initiatives (BTEI), Adult Literacy and Community Education which the ETB has delivered down the years,” he added.

Starting off as a Grade 3 Clerical Officer, Jim worked his way up to becoming the Head of Administration by 1987 and the youngest Administrative Officer (Grade 7) in the public service at that time. In the early years, many of the admin functions were undertaken manually with only basic payroll and accounting software available.

Recognising the need to develop and implement enhanced systems and, long before the concept of shared services had been spoken about, Jim and colleagues in Donegal VEC reached out and collaborated with colleagues in other VECs to develop and implement new systems and software and maximise the benefits of new and emerging technologies in our administrative functions.

“There was trojan work done to establish fully integrated HR and Payroll systems and financial management systems that we have now. It was a real leap of faith back then but they have all stood the test of time,” he said.

“The whole operation has been totally transformed and we found ourselves well positioned to continue to deliver the organisation support services encompassing HR, Finance and Payroll, IT, Corporate, Procurement, Health and Safety and Building Services to our schools, centres, staff and suppliers following the challenges presented by the COVID 19 pandemic.

“We were able to respond really quickly and efficiently to continue to support our 1,600 strong staff and 29,000 students in our schools and centres and great credit must go to my colleagues, Sharon McColgan, Head of Finance, Ciaran Cunningham, Head of IT, Eileen Doherty, Head of HR and Brenda Boyle, Head of Corporate Services and their respective teams. I was lucky to lead and work with many like-minded colleagues over my career who shared a “can do” attitude to our work.”

Today, the membership of the ETB Board is made up of County Councillors nominated by Donegal County Council, along with elected representatives of staff and parents, and nominees of interest groups including business, students, school management bodies, tourism and special education.

OVERWHELMING

“However, forty years ago it was normal to have TDs, MEPs, Senators and religious nominees on the Committee of the former VEC. It was a bit overwhelming at the start. You had people like Neil T Blaney, Patrick McGowan, Paddy Harte, Pat the Cope Gallagher and more recently, Mary Coughlan. I worked with a lot of distinguished public representatives on those boards right up to the present and I really appreciated the tributes bestowed by our outgoing Chairperson, Geoffrey Browne and the current Board Members at my final meeting on the 7th December. To each and every one who has served over my time, I say thank you,” he said.

Seán Ó Longáin was CEO between 1976 and 2009 and led by example. He was succeeded by Mary Anne Kane who was previously Education Officer and sadly passed away in 2012. Sean Purcell, a former CEO in Sligo VEC, then held the reins before transferring back to Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB in 2015 at which point Anne McHugh was appointed Chief Executive. Following the re-designation of VECs as Education and Training Boards, Donegal VEC was deemed to be of sufficient scale and standing to operate as a stand alone ETB, which was welcome news for us all! The Department of Education decided that there should be three Director posts assigned to each ETB reporting to the CE and I was joined in September 2016 by Martin Gormley as Director of Schools and Cróna Gallagher as Director of Further Education and Training (FET). All three Directors have worked closely with our CE, Anne McHugh to continue to deliver on our Strategy Statement and annual Service Plans and I want to sincerely thank Anne, Martin and Cróna for their collegiality and support to me over that time. GDPR, Governance, compliance and internal controls systems have also become the modern day language in our work.

“We were never shy in making strong business cases for Donegal when it came to securing capital or recurring funding and staffing. We always looked to maximise all levels of investment for staffing, buildings, facilities and equipment. In fairness, the Department of Education usually recognised the need for such investment and the only frustration in some cases was the time taken to deliver and benefit from such investment.” he said.

“We lived and worked through a number of tough recessions, I remember particularly the eighties when PAYE workers had to campaign against high levels of taxation and high mortgage interest rates. We had emerged from the most recent recession and we’re now in the middle of the COVID pandemic however, I’ve found over the years that Donegal people are very resilient and I’m confident we’ll all come out of this better and stronger,” he added.

Married to Frances, the couple have three grown up children Shane, James and Louise. Captain of the ETB Golf Society this year, Jim hopes to spend a little more time on the fairways while he is also a valued member of Letterkenny Gaels GAA Club.

As members of the Swilly Hiking Club, Jim and Frances also hope to spend more time hill walking.

“While the GAA and Golf have been my first interests outside of work, the Swilly Hikers have opened our eyes to so many beautiful parts of our wonderful county and beyond that you can only see properly on foot.” he said.

“I would also like to help establish a retired staff association. For an organisation as big as Donegal ETB with 1,600 to 1,700 staff spread across all our schools and centres, I think it would be nice to create an opportunity for retired colleagues to meet up socially during their retirement.” he concluded.

And then there’s Arsenal but, the least said there at the moment, the better!

** Interview by Donegal News Deputy Editor Harry Walsh with Jim McGlynn reproduced here with permission.*

KEY THEME 3

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

PRIORITY 13

Build on relationships already established with local community groups and relevant voluntary, statutory, cross border and employers to work towards shared goals.

OUTCOME

Strengthened partnerships providing more focused approaches to learning and employment opportunities.

Community Partnerships

Collaboration and partnership with the community and voluntary sector continued to play an important role in the work of the FET service in 2020. 62 community groups were funded to provide tuition to local education groups. However, COVID 19 severely impacted on the delivery of community education, with 169 courses delivered, down from nearly 500 in 2019. Popular courses included organic vegetable growing, foraging, improving biodiversity and rewilding, online art and yoga. The annual Community Education seminar, held on 11th December, was facilitated online. The keynote speaker was psychologist Shane Martin whose address was on the theme of personal well-being and was very well received by the 70+ participants.

The FET service supported 30 Community Education Providers to apply to SOLAS for funding through the Mitigating Adult Education Disadvantage Fund (MAEDF) to set up digital and study hubs to support the engagement of disadvantaged students in local communities. It also availed of the MAEDF funding to establish 4 digital and study hubs within ETB centres to accommodate students who may have issues at home with connectivity or lack access to digital devices. This initiative will help reduce the digital divide and educational disadvantage in marginalised communities.

Enterprise Engagement

2020 proved to be an eventful year for our Enterprise Engagement service. The recruitment of a Programme Development Officer (PDO) and the merging of the former Skills for Work function into the Enterprise Engagement team have enabled us to enhance service provision while continuing to extend our reach across the Donegal industrial landscape. These developments have enabled us to respond to the identified training needs of our clients in an agile and timely manner. The integrated team, with an Enterprise Engagement Officer who focuses primarily on QQI Levels 1-4 provision, now gives us the capacity to provide training interventions across the spectrum from Levels 1-6 while also facilitating access to various learning pathways for our students.

A key challenge from the outset for our Enterprise Engagement service has been the need to establish the Donegal FET brand as a professional and responsive service with much to offer industry in Donegal. At the start of the year, we entered into a collaboration with Highland Radio's *Business Matters* programme. This venture has provided us with the platform to publicise our enterprise services across the Northwest region while also accommodating a number of one-to-one interviews with key personnel in our team on the weekly podcast – the feedback on this partnership has been extremely positive. We also undertook a number of outward-facing projects with the support of the Communications' Officer which have helped us to make significant progress in this regard. Online webinars for the business sector in 2020 included:

1. 14 April: Communicating with your Customers in a Time of Crisis
2. 20 May: Restarting Retail Emerging Retail Trends & Models
3. 27 May: Restarting Retail - Surviving Now
4. 28 May: Restarting Retail - Creating Your Retail Plan
5. 15 September: Selling Strategies Post-COVID
6. 22 September: Lead Generation

Communicating with your Customers in a Time of Crisis



Supported by Donegal ETB's Further Education & Training (FET) Service through the Skills to Advance initiative.

Working in partnership with the business community has been vital to the success of engagements. The April webinar was led by Donegal Business Network in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and Donegal Women in Business. The May webinars were in partnership with Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce, while the two September webinars were led by Donegal Business Network in partnership with Highland Radio's 'Business Matters' podcast and all of them were in support of the main business networks in the county - Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce and the Donegal Women in Business Network.

National level programme initiatives developed locally in 2020 included the L4 (L6 NFQ) Certificate in Leadership and Management certified by City & Guilds / ILM. The delivery content for this initiative was developed as part of a SOLAS Regional Skills collaborative involving four ETBs, in conjunction with SOLAS, Enterprise Ireland and the Regional Skills Fora, where Donegal ETB had lead responsibility. This programme was delivered to 3 groups in 2020, with participants ranging across multiple industry sectors and as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic a stand-alone unit in Managing Remote Workers was also offered to assist organisations to manage their teams in the 'working from home' environment.

All programmes for employees were taught online from March 2020. 60 different programmes in conjunction with 117 companies and a cohort of 509 students were delivered in 2020.

Adult Guidance

FET Guidance Service collaborated with MSLETB's Guidance service to roll out 'Unlock your Future', a 4-week online career exploration and planning programme. 24 clients engaged with the initiative which required a 2-hour commitment per week. The mechanism used to deliver this initiative was MyFuture from Careers Portal.



Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) work expanded in 2020 to include the start of a 2-year collaborative partnership with Limerick and Clare ETB (LCETB) and LyIT. The project, Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees (VCCSE), began in June 2020 and uses RPL to support care service employees to engage with Further Education and Training. This workforce has been identified as an “at risk” group who often have minimum qualifications and little or no vocational mobility. The key objectives of the project are: to provide an alternative and accelerated route to the acquisition of qualification for health care assistants and to embed and mainstream RPL as a key process in FET by developing the capacity of FET staff, engendering an understanding of the process and producing a toolkit of resources for the sector. The destination awards include QQI L5 Major Award in Health Service Skills and QQI L5 Major Award in Healthcare Support.

By the end of 2020, 26 experienced care sector employees in Donegal had achieved 81 QQI L5 Minor Awards and 5 QQI L5 Major Awards.

Engagement continued with the Traveller and Roma Communities in 2020 to support participation in FET provision. FET service engagement with the Age Friendly Alliance supported provision and inclusion of older people in the community in FET initiatives and provision. A key initiative in 2020 was the development of a booklet of activities, information and articles that was circulated to 5,000 households in the county. This provided an opportunity to improve the standing and reach of FET within the county.

Links through music – The challenge of responding to the COVID 19 pandemic saw the Donegal Music Education Partnership strengthen its links with key music organisations nationally. The DMEP’s Martin McGinley was involved in regular online meetings with Music Generation co-ordinators around the country. He served as a board member of the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras, a key source of guidance and news in music education in 2020.

The DMEP continued to work with Donegal County Council, and particularly arts officer Traolach Ó’Fionnáin, on significant music projects. Chief among these in 2020 was a major commission for Dublin composer and conductor Vincent Kennedy, funded by the Council and Creative Ireland. Vincent, who conducts the Donegal Youth Orchestra, will compose a suite to mark the Colmcille 1500 celebrations in 2021.

Media link-ups also developed further. In February RTÉ Lyric FM featured the DMEP’s full-time violin resource tutor Orsolya Szabo-Yélamo and her husband Victor Yélamo, also a DMEP tutor, in the series ‘Musical Migrations’. Lyric FM presenter Evelyn Grant also paid a special tribute on air to Sr Concepta Murphy, one of the founders of the DMEP, following her death in September.

The DMEP helped with the organisation of auditions in Dungloe for the ITV show ‘The Voice UK’, which led to the appearance of singing trio ‘Evergreen’ on the programme in February 2020.

Interagency PEACE IV Funded Community Leadership Project

This inter-agency collaborative project led by Donegal ETB’s FET Service in collaboration with Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP) and Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) concluded in 2020. The project supported engagement with 10 community hubs along the border area of Donegal and facilitated cross-border and cross community interaction, engagement and shared cultural experiences. The project outcomes were impacted by COVID 19 but 51 participants successfully achieved NFQ L5 accreditation in Working with Groups and Social Analysis.

Drugs and Alcohol Education Programmes

Donegal ETB works in partnership with North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force, the Health Service Executive and Alcohol Forum Ireland as well as numerous stakeholders to develop, design and deliver education and training to frontline and non-frontline services and organisations. Many statutory organisations such as Tusla, HSE, Gardai, and non statutory organisations and individuals avail of the evidenced informed course to support their continuous professional development and accredited courses. Every year up to 200 people participate in the alcohol and other drug educational programmes.

PRIORITY 14

Support the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of youth work activities across the county.

OUTCOME

Further development of quality youth work in Donegal.

Youth Work Functions

Implementation of the UBU Your Place Your Space

This was a new targeted youth funding scheme for youth services. This new funding scheme replaced the previous Special Projects for Disadvantaged Youth Scheme. The transfer to the UBU Your Place Your Space took place on July 1st 2020. The Funding Scheme aims to provide supports to young people in their local communities to enable them to overcome adverse circumstances and achieve their full potential by improving their personal and social development outcomes.

The work of the Youth Work Functions is guided and supported through the Donegal ETB Youth Work Co-Ordination Group.

The UBU Your Place Your Space process included:

Application Process with the Youth Organisations completed, including,

- Application Form Assessments and Reviews
- 3 Youth Organisations positioned in the UBU Scheme; Involve CLG, Donegal Youth Service and Foróige.
- Funding for the UBU Scheme administered accordingly.

Performance, Oversight & Engagement Framework implementation with the Youth Organisations Planning and Progress Review Meetings also took place.

Reviews and Continuous Improvement Process commenced.

Regular and ongoing contact with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs DCYA/Department of Children Equality Disability Integration & Youth DCEDIY.

'Greenfield Sites' Area Profile, Needs Assessment and Service Requirement was carried out to determine geographical-regions or themes of need of service provision within the Donegal ETB area.

The following programmes continue to be funded within Special Projects for Youth, Youth Information Centre, Youth Capital and Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force schemes through the DCYA/DCEDIY.

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre (Donegal Youth Service)

Donegal Youth Drug and Alcohol Education/Prevention Training Programme (Foróige)

Donegal Drug Education and Training Programme (Donegal ETB)

LGBTI+ Youth Service Initiative

Provision of funding to support LGBTI+ specific youth service provision with a particular focus on the availability of, and access to, youth services for LGBTI+ young people in rural areas. The Initiative is intended to provide for additional youth worker hours dedicated specifically to supporting young LGBTI+ people; the action arises primarily from the needs identified by young people themselves and the youth sector in the consultation process for the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy. The evidence review also identifies youth services support as important to young people during the coming out process.

Local Youth Club Grant Scheme (LYCGS)

Funding administered in small grants through the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2020 to volunteer-led clubs and groups across the county, involving young people and youth leaders, supporting a diverse range of non-formal educational programmes and activities.

The DCEDIY provided once off-funding to offset expenditure incurred due to COVID 19. Also an additional ICT Grant was provided to support costs of the delivery of online programmes by Youth Organisations and Clubs.

Youth Capital Funding Scheme

The DCYA provided Youth Capital Funding for targeted Staff-led Youth Services for the purchase of equipment to support the running of project/organisation in the provision of quality services for young people.

Peace IV

Citizenship and Leadership through Youth Work Programme in conjunction with Donegal Youth service completed. The CLIC Project, or Citizenship and Leadership in Communities engaged a total of 120 young people across Donegal in 2019 and 2020, participating in peace and reconciliation, exploring diversity and looking at Art, Drama, Performance and Accredited training programmes were used to deliver sessions in a safe, fun, educational and interactive way.

Donegal Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC)

The purpose of the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) is to secure better outcomes for children and young people through more effective integration of existing services and interventions at local level. Interagency work with, for example, Youth Organisations, Schools, Youthreach and Comhairle na nÓg takes place. The Youth Officer has recently been involved in setting up the Youth Participation Sub-Group to facilitate ongoing dialogue between agencies and children and young people. The objectives are to coordinate communication processes between and across youth participation structures and Donegal CYPSC and to develop mechanisms for young people to have a voice in the planning of youth facilities, parks, housing estates etc.

National Quality Standards for Youth Work (NQS)

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQS) is a support and development tool for the Youth Work sector providing a structured framework through which to consider and enhance Youth Work in Co Donegal. Its aim is to assess youth work, to assist continuous development, and is a mechanism through which the youth sector can demonstrate its effectiveness and improve practice.

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre

2020 Highlights

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre (OETC) made the best of what was a difficult year throughout 2020. 140 different groups from primary/post primary, youth, community, training, FET/HET and adults took part in outdoor education and training courses throughout the year.

2020 highlights:

- 21 Post Primary Schools attended the Centre in 2020. 1,706 students and 103 teachers took part in outdoor education and training courses.
- 291 young people and 55 leaders from the youth / community sector took part in outdoor education and training courses at the Centre in 2020.
- 360 adults took part in outdoor education and training courses at the Centre in 2020.
- 7 trainee instructors completed a full time 47 week traineeship qualifying as instructors in kayaking, windsurfing, sailing and attaining proficiency qualifications in mountaineering, powerboating and first aid. 10 new trainee instructors started on the outdoor activity traineeship in September which will finish in September 2021.
- 2020 saw Gartan OETC reinstate its sailing and windsurfing school on Trá Beg in Downings for July and August which was received very well, both locally and by the annual holiday makers. 203 people accessed weeklong tuition at the school over a seven week period.
- Summer outdoor education adventure camps were at full capacity for July and August with 310 young people participating in weeklong courses.



Donegal Music Education Partnership

2020 Highlights

It was shaping up to be an extraordinary year for the Donegal Music Education Partnership, but 2020 ended up being busy and challenging for unexpected reasons. It was a year in which the DMEP, like the wider Donegal ETB, worked hard to maintain services to students and families threatened by the COVID 19 pandemic.

It was also a year overshadowed by the death in September of Sister Concepta Murphy, Ballyshannon, a key figure in the DMEP's history and development.

The pandemic restrictions introduced in March put paid to plans for a very busy year for the DMEP and its ten performing groups. To take one example, it forced the cancellation of five concerts planned in early summer for the Donegal Youth Orchestra – an exchange with Mayo Youth Orchestra, with concerts in Castlebar and Donegal; a visit to Arranmore Island; an appearance at the Star Wars festival in Malin; and the traditional end-of-year concert at An Grianán Theatre in Letterkenny.

Around 400 music students across Donegal were involved in the DMEP's tuition programme once again in 2020. As with education generally, tuition ended up being a mix of 'in person' and online during the year. The DMEP, with the co-operation of tutors, was able to move a substantial amount of tuition online from March until the end of the school year in May. 'In person' tuition resumed from September until the end of the year, with full health and safety protocols in place. The support of the wider Donegal ETB, and of schools and centres, was vital in making this happen.

The COVID 19 restrictions in March put paid to the DMEP's programme of voice and recorder tuition for around 500 students in primary schools. However a €5,000 instrument grant, courtesy of insurance company IPB and Music Generation, helped with the creation of a new ukulele programme for primary schools. There were more than 200 ukulele 'trainees' in six schools by the end of the year.

DMEP events moved online. There were no less than three Christmas concerts hosted on the DMEP's Facebook page on Monday 21st December, and also uploaded to YouTube –

- The DMEP Christmas Student Concert, featuring Letterkenny Junior Choir and students from throughout Donegal, got around 2,000 views.
- The DMEP Christmas Concert featured Donegal Youth Choir and a host of DMEP and guest performers, and also got around 2,000 views.
- The 'Home to Ballybeg' concert - the first video presentation of Manus Lunny's suite 'Home to Ballybeg' from 2016, featuring a top-class professional band and a DMEP string section conducted by Vincent Kennedy (Dublin). It got more than 17,000 views.

Most successful of the lot, in terms of online and offline attention, was the video by Donegal Youth Choir (conductor – Sara Laughlin) of the Coldplay song 'Fix You'. It got more than 40,000 views online. It was picked up by one of Ireland's busiest websites, her.ie, and was praised by Daniel O'Donnell in his 'Sunday World' column. It was featured by the online City of Derry International Choir Festival.

DMEP events in 2020 also included an 'in person' strings workshop by Vanessa Sweeney (Dublin) in February. During the summer DMEP tutor Áine Doolan hosted online workshops for junior and senior ukulele over six weeks.

2020 ended with the prospect of a return to lockdown and online teaching. However the year had shown the resilience and adaptability of the project. It was greatly helped by the guidance of an expanded advisory committee; the support of the wider ETB and particularly Director of Schools Dr Martin Gormley; the commitment of tutors; and the co-operation and interest of the music students and their families. Special mention must be made of full-time staff members John McIvor, administrator, whose home office became a DMEP hub, and Orsolya Szabo-Yélamo, violin resource tutor.



Donegal choir Fix You

Like Comment Share

her Her.ie

628 79 comments 158 shares

32K views · on Saturday ·

Donegal Youth Choir have recorded an incredible social distancing version of Coldplay's Fix You.

An absolutely stellar performance 🌟

Chat (109)

COVID 19

The onset of COVID 19 in March 2020 and the restrictions imposed on society in accordance with government and public health guidelines impacted significantly on the operations of almost all organisations, and Donegal ETB was no exception.

The pandemic presented many challenges to us, among them:

- Ensuring the health and safety of all our staff and students / service users
- The need to urgently adapt modes of delivery of instruction
- Upskilling of staff to better facilitate remote learning
- Procuring additional resources for staff and students to enable remote delivery of our services
- Provision of supports to staff and students to assist them in coping with new demands
- Maintaining day to day operations in areas such as Finance, Human Resources, Information and Communication Technology and Corporate Services.

Donegal ETB responded quickly to the challenges posed by the pandemic. A COVID 19 Response Team was formed and Business Continuity Plans were implemented to ensure the continuation of service delivery in a manner that safeguarded the health and safety of staff and students in accordance with the public health guidelines, and ensured communication channels were maintained throughout the organisation.

As part of the Workplace Safety Response Plan the COVID 19 Response Team met on a continuing basis throughout the process of implementing the plan. The Response Team included the Executive Forum and FET Senior Managers. Each school, centre and administrative office nominated a Lead Worker Representative to work collaboratively to assist in the implementation of measures and monitor adherence to the measures to prevent the spread of COVID 19 in their place of work. Training was provided to each Lead Worker Representative and in addition online induction training was provided to each member of staff.

National guidelines on COVID 19 were made available on both the internet and the intranet. The staff wellbeing folder was used to update staff members on how to access a range of COVID 19 supports for their mental health and wellbeing. All staff were required to adhere to the Work Safely Protocol and in addition complete the Return to Work Form upon physical return to their workplaces.

We adapted the HSA based COVID 19 checklists to prepare for a full return to work and these were required to be reviewed and worked through by each School/Centre. Staff were advised to keep updated with national guidelines such as the Health Service Executive and the Health and Safety Authority website as information and guidelines were being updated on a continuing basis.

Risk Assessments were carried out in all Schools/Centres by an outsourced Health and Safety company which assisted in assessing the levels of risk associated with each workplace and work activities for staff, students, suppliers and contractors. Contact tracing records were instigated to

inform public health of close contacts. PPE equipment was purchased and work spaces were adapted to meet governmental guidelines.

We recognise that so many of our staff went way above and beyond the call of duty in responding to the challenges we faced. We are grateful to them for maintaining service delivery and enhancing our reputation as an organisation during a year of incredibly difficult challenges on so many fronts.

In years to come we may well reflect that 2020 was a watershed year in many ways. It has forced many changes upon us, some welcome, and others not. There is no doubt that many missed the camaraderie and social interaction that comes with being able to meet in person with friends and colleagues. Many struggled to cope with the changes brought about by the pandemic. Staff wellbeing has been a key consideration throughout.

On the other hand, many learned new skills, while others rose to challenges in ways they never imagined they could. It has forced us to rethink, reflect, refocus, and reimagine in so many aspects of our work and lives. New ways of working, learning, and socialising have been forced upon us, and many of the changes that have occurred will have an impact far into the future.

Donegal ETB is extremely proud of how our staff and students adapted to the challenges faced during 2020. Our response as an organisation gives us great confidence as we look to the future.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Department supports the organisation in the following areas:-

Operations of the Board of Donegal ETB

Corporate Governance

Risk Management

Procurement

Estates Management

Energy Management

Health, Safety and Welfare at Work (inclusive of COVID 19)

Data Management inclusive of Data Protection and Freedom of Information

Communications

Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oificiúla

Customer Service

Procurement Section

Donegal ETB has operated a centralised Procurement Section since 2013. The objectives of this section include ensuring procurement compliance with national and EU guidelines together with the Donegal ETB Procurement Policy. This is achieved by the tendering and awarding of contracts to suppliers for the delivery of quality goods, services and works in line with legislation and regulations. The procurement section has been working towards increasing compliance levels while simultaneously achieving value for money. Engagement with SMEs is an important part of the delivery of our service within Donegal ETB.

The Procurement Section has developed a Corporate Procurement Plan as is required under the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (CL 0002/2019). This plan will assist in forecasting the procurement needs of the organisation thereby aligning the section with the overall organisational goals and objectives of the organisation through fit for purpose contracts and frameworks which offer value for money. In addition the plan is supported by the production of a three year rolling Multi-Annual

Procurement Plan or “MAPP”. The detailed breakdown of organisational spend within the MAPP will provide insight into ongoing procurement strategies and is also shared with ETBI who in turn provide a sector wide analysis of spends across ETBs to the Office of Government Procurement through the Education Procurement Service. Consequently this allows for strategic procurement planning at a national level which in turn will result in more fit for purpose contracts and frameworks available for use by individual ETBs and other public bodies.

The Procurement Section operates a dedicated email address which supports both external and internal customers. Within the organisation this includes Schools, Centres and administrative staff and the support provided by the section ensures that all staff have a point of contact to refer any queries or seek guidance which in turn creates efficiencies throughout the organisation.

ETBI supports the ongoing collaboration of Procurement Sections across all ETBs which meet on average four times a year. The purpose of this collaboration is to draw from the expertise within the sector, provide specialised training to suit the needs of ETBs and to create and develop with the assistance of working groups from the sector such opportunities for collaboration in order to develop efficiencies, expertise and best practice in procurement. This has proved to be very successful for all ETBs.

At all times Donegal ETB apply the Principles of Public Procurement as follows:-

- **Transparency:** All procurement activities are open and transparent with necessary information provided to all. Procurement intentions and decisions are advertised publicly as appropriate.
- **Equal treatment and Non-Discrimination:** The same rules apply to all with equal rights of access. Decisions are to be based on objectivity and fairness.
- **Proportionality:** All measures used must be both necessary and appropriate in relation to the objective i.e. the award of contract. No excessive or disproportionate conditions, criteria, or rules are to be applied.
- **Mutual Recognition:** Equal validity is to be given to qualifications / standards applicable in other EU Member States.

Capital Development Programme Estates Management

In 2020 the Buildings Section provided a range of services to support the physical aspects of schools, centres and administrative offices under its remit. A wide ranging array of projects were carried out in 2020 as shown below. To ensure the success of all projects this involved close collaboration between the Buildings Section and key stakeholders including the Department of Education, SOLAS, School Principals, Centre Managers, Senior Management within Donegal ETB and professionals within the building industry to name but a few.

Location	Works
Finn Valley College	Design Team Appointed ASA – 3 x SEN Classrooms
Mulroy College	Design Team Appointed ASA – 1 x General Classroom, 2 x SEN Classrooms, 3 x SET Classrooms
Colaiste na Carraige	Appointment of Consultant (Architect) ASA – 1 x Multimedia Classroom, 1 x Music Classroom, 1 x Metalwork Classroom, 1 x Textiles Classroom and Ancillary
Crana College	Appointment of Consultant (Architect) SMW - Science Lab Refurb, Porch and extension to Staffroom
Gairmscoil Chu Uladh	Appointment of Consultant (Architect) SMW – 1 x Music Classroom, 1 x Textiles Classroom, 1 x Engineering Classroom and Ancillary (prefab replacement)
Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada	Appointment of Consultant (Architect) SMW – 1 x Art Classroom, 1 General Classroom, 2 x WC
Magh Ene College	EWS – Space Heating System - Gym
Crana College	SWS Life Safety Systems – Installation of Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarms Systems
Deele College	SWS Life Safety Systems – Installation of Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarms Systems
Coláiste na Carraige	SWS Life Safety Systems – Installation of Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarms Systems
FET Centre, Milford	Car Park – Additional Spaces
FET Centre, Glengad (Youthreach)	Centre Retrofit
FET Centre, Buncrana	Reconfiguration of Classrooms
FET Centre, Stranorlar	Roofing Project

ASA – Additional School Accommodation
SWS – Summer Works Scheme
EWG – Emergency Works Grant
SMW – Small Minor Works

Protected Disclosures

In accordance with the provisions of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, Donegal ETB has appointed a designated officer for receiving protected disclosures. As required by Section 22 of the Act Donegal ETB confirms that no Protected Disclosures were made in 2020 and a report has been published on the Donegal ETB website reflecting this.

Freedom of Information -

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 came into effect for Donegal ETB on 14 April 2015. The Act gives individuals the right to access personal and non-personal records, to have incorrect or misleading records amended or deleted and to seek reasons for decisions that are made which affect him/her. This Act was introduced to increase openness and improve accountability.

Requests are made by emailing foi@donegaletb.ie. During 2020, Donegal ETB received 18 requests under the Freedom of Information Act which are outlined below. An Annual FOI Disclosure Record is published on the website under Publications and Resources.

Freedom of Information Requests 2020

Requests (number of requests)	Category (journalist etc)	Status (granted/refused)
9	Journalist	Granted
1	Journalist	Part Granted
1	Journalist	Refused
1	Other	Granted
1	Other	Part Granted
1	Client	Granted
3	Business/ Interest Group	Granted
1	Oireachtas	Granted

Data Protection

The area of Data Protection has been strengthened by the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which continues to be embedded within the organisation. Donegal ETB processes personal data on a variety of data subjects and is committed to the protection of the rights of individuals relating to the storage and processing of personal data. This data is processed in order to carry out the business function of the organisation and to adhere to statutory requirements and is supported by this non exhaustive list:- Data Protection Policy, CCTV Policy, Records Management Policy, Privacy Notices, Records Retention Schedule, Data Breach Protocol all of which have been published on the website. The Data Protection Officer acts as a point of contact for all data privacy queries in line with regulation and policies.

Health, Safety and Welfare

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, was brought in to make further provision for the safety, health and welfare of persons at work. This Act clarifies and enhances the responsibilities of employer, employees and various other parties in relation to safety and health at work. The Act also details the role and functions of the Health and Safety Authority, provides for a range of enforcement measures that may be applied and specifies penalties that may be applied for breach of occupational safety and health.

Donegal ETB continues to work to ensure that a safe and healthy workplace is provided for all Donegal ETB staff. A training schedule continues to be provided throughout the organisation.

The Health, Safety and Welfare Committee established a Working Group consisting of Health, Safety and Welfare staff from all parts of the organisation. The role of the working group is to assist with the strategic direction and provide guidance where required to specific projects identified by the group.

Policies and Procedures

The various policies and procedures in place in Donegal ETB are uploaded to the Donegal ETB website and circulated to ETB Board, management and staff.

Donegal ETB have policies in place addressing the following major areas:

Corporate Services - Compliance and Governance - Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy
Corporate Services - Compliance and Governance - Protected Disclosures Policy
Corporate Services - Compliance and Governance - Risk Management Policy
Corporate Services - Procurement Policy
Corporate Services - Data Protection Policy
Corporate Services - Data Protection - CCTV Policy
Corporate Services - Data Protection - Data Breach Protocol
Corporate Services - Data Protection - Access to Records Policy

Human Resources - Annual Leave Policy
Human Resources - Bullying Prevention Policy
Human Resources - Leavers Policy
Human Resources - Harassment Prevention Policy
Human Resources - Vetting Policy - Staff, Volunteers, Students and Contractors

Finance - Hospitality and Gifts Policy

ICT - Mobile Usage Policy
ICT - Social Media Usage Policy

Committees

Audit and Risk Committee

ARC Membership

1. Mr Kevin Huston, Chairperson (external member)
2. Mr David Alcorn (external member)
3. Mr Gabriel O'Donnell (external member)
4. Mr Andrew McGovern (external member)
5. Ms Kathleen Bonner (external member)
6. Ms Lorraine Thompson
7. Cllr Michael McBride
8. Mr Gerard Grant

Register of Attendance and Frequency of Meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee in 2020:

Member	4 February 2020	24 March 2020	20 October 2020	15 December 2020
Mr Kevin Huston(Chairperson)	•	•	•	•
Mr Gabriel O'Donnell	•	•	•	•
Ms Kathleen Bonner	•	•	•	•
Mr Andy McGovern	•	•	•	•
Mr David Alcorn	•			•
Cllr Michael McBride	•	•	•	•
Ms Lorraine Thompson	•	•	•	•
Mr Gerard Grant		•	•	•

Finance Committee

Finance Committee Membership

1. Mr Patsy McVicar, Chairperson
2. Mr Conall Dunne (external member)
3. Ms Mary Doogan (external member)
4. Mr Seamus Bradley (external member)
5. Ms Regina Grant
6. Cllr Gary Doherty
7. Cllr Martin Harley

Record of Members Attendance and Frequency of Meetings of the Finance Committee in 2020:

	10 February 2020	24 March 2020 (joint Meeting)	17 November 2020	9 December 2020
Mr Patsy McVicar	•	•	•	•
Mr Conall Dunne	•	•	•	
Ms Mary Doogan	•	•	•	•
Mr Seamus Bradley	•		•	•
Ms Regina Grant	•	•	•	•
Cllr Gary Doherty		•	•	•
Cllr Martin Harley		•	•	•

Donegal ETB Youth Work Committee

Following a review of the ETB Youth Work Committees and the drawing-up of new Terms of Reference, the first meeting of the new Donegal ETB Youth Work Committee was held on Wednesday 14th October 2020 via Google Meet, with a further meeting taking place in on December 15th 2020.

	14th October 2020	15th December 2020
Geoffrey Browne	•	•
Cllr Donal Coyle	•	•
Lorraine Thompson	•	•
Claire Gavigan	•	•
Grainne McGlynn	•	•
Frank Duffy	•	•
Martin Keeney	•	•
Elaine Ní Fhíoruisce	•	•
Seamus McGonigle		•
Siobhan McLaughlin		
Gina Grant		•
Kevin Ferguson	•	•

Abbreviations

Parent – refers to parent or guardian

Student – refers to student

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders
AFS	Annual Financial Statements
ARC	Audit and Risk Committee
ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
BOM	Board of Management
C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General
CAT	Compliance Assessment Tool
CE	Chief Executive
CL	Circular Letter
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPSI	Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections
CSL	Centre for School Leadership
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DBN	Donegal Business Network
DDLDP	Deputy Designated Liaison Person
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DEOS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools
DE	Department of Education
DLDC	Donegal Local Development Company
DLP	Designated Liaison Person
DMEP	Donegal Music Education Partnership
ESBS	Education Shared Business Services
ESF	European Social Fund
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
FET	Further Education and Training
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
IAU	Internal Audit Unit
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IDP	Inishowen Development Partnership
IGC	Institute of Guidance Counsellors
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management
IPB	Irish Public Bodies [insurance]
JCSP	Junior Certificate Schools Programme
JCT	Junior Certificate Training
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
LDS	Leadership Development for Schools
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
LYIT	Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Appendix I - List of Schools, Youthreach Centres and Youth Work Organisation involved in the Restorative Practices Project (see Priority 2)

ETB Schools:

1. Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
2. Crana College, Bunrana
3. Deelee College, Raphoe
4. Errigal College, Letterkenny
5. Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
6. Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir
7. Merville Community College
8. Mulroy College, Milford
9. St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

Non-ETB Schools:

10. Loreto Community School, Milford
11. Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe
12. Scoil Mhuire Secondary School, Bunrana
13. St Eunan's College, Letterkenny

Youthreach Centres

14. Ballyshannon
15. Bunrana/Glengad
16. Gort a Choirce
17. Letterkenny
18. Lifford

Youth Work Organisation:

19. Foróige

Appendix II - List of 2020 Donegal Daily advertorials for the FET service (see Priority 12)

1. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/03/08/women-steeled-for-success-in-welding/>
2. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/04/03/how-anthonys-job-prospects-grew-in-the-field-of-horticulture/>
3. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/05/05/message-in-a-news-bulletin-leads-donegal-woman-back-to-employment/>
4. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/06/02/post-leaving-cert-courses-open-doors-for-donegal-students/>
5. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/07/01/irene-joins-community-with-confidence-with-guidance-from-donegal-etb/>
6. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/08/04/how-it-courses-helped-tiffany-and-megan-click-onto-new-skills/>
7. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/09/01/donegal-man-adds-to-his-achievements-with-accounting-at-donegal-etb/>
8. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/10/06/jasmine-crafts-a-career-with-youthreach/>
9. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/11/09/an-apprenticeship-can-navigate-you-towards-a-dream-job/>

Appendix III - List of Adult Guidance Service online information articles (see Priority 12)

1. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/04/01/career-support-for-adults-during-COVID-19-online-learning/>
2. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/04/08/career-support-for-adults-during-COVID-19-building-your-skills-profile-transversal-skills/>
3. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/04/15/career-support-adults-during-COVID-19-understanding-yourself-and-career-matching/>
4. <https://www.donegaldaily.com/2020/04/22/career-support-for-adults-during-COVID-19-finding-jobs-in-uncertain-times/>



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future

European Social Fund



**Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020**

Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Adult literacy, the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI), specific skills training and traineeships are co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020.

Youthreach is co-funded by the Government of Ireland, the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020.