



The Public Library and the School

Policies and Prospects for Library Services to Primary Schools in Ireland



Published by

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna / The Library Council

53/54 Upper Mount Street

Dublin 2

www.librarycouncil.ie

ISBN 978-1-873512-38-8

© An Chomhairle Leabharlanna / The Library Council 2010

The Public Library and the School

Policies and Prospects for Library Services to Primary Schools in Ireland



Public Library Research Programme

The Public Library Research Programme assists local authorities in carrying out public library research.

The Programme is co-funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and local authorities, and is managed by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council.

Public Library Research Committee

- Annette Kelly, Assistant Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council (Chair)
- Dave Corcoran, Assistant Principal, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Norma McDermott, Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council
- Fionnuala Hanrahan, County Librarian, Wexford County Council and Library Association of Ireland
- Michael Casey, Emeritus Professor, National University of Ireland, University College Dublin
- Executive Secretary: Susan O'Toole, Administrative Officer, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council

Project Steering Group Committee

- Deirdre Ellis-King, City Librarian, Dublin City Council, (Chair)
- Tommy O'Connor, County Librarian, Kerry County Council
- Mary Reynolds, County Librarian, Longford County Council
- Fionnuala Hanrahan, County Librarian, Wexford County Council
- Brendan Martin, County Librarian/Noelle Ringwood, Executive Librarian, Wicklow County Council
- Annette Kelly, Assistant Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council

Project Management Team

- Deirdre Ellis-King, City Librarian, Dublin City Council, Project Manager
- Bernadette Cogan, Dublin City Public Libraries, Project Officer
- Anne Piggott, Dublin City Public Libraries, Project Officer
- Anne Clarke, Sheela Keane and Avril Kiernan, Dublin City Public Libraries, Project Team
- Annette Kelly, Assistant Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council
- Susan O'Toole, Administrative Officer, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council

Acknowledgements

The project management team and steering group would like to acknowledge the contribution to the research process of City and County Librarians and their staffs; Principals and Teachers in primary schools in Dublin City, Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow; Pádraig MacFhlannchadha, Inspectorate, Department of Education and Science; Dave Corcoran, Assistant Principal Officer, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government; Anne White, National Coordinator, National Council Technology in Education; Kathryn Crowley, Director, Curriculum and Assessment, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment; Gerry McHugh, Director of the Dublin West Education Centre, Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland; Ciara O'Donnell, Deputy Director, Primary Professional Service, Department of Education and Science; and staff in Dublin City Public Libraries, particularly Gillian Colton and Eddie Byrne and in Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow.

List of Abbreviations

AASL	American Association of School Libraries
ACL	An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council
ALA	American Library Association
ALSC	Association of Library Services to Children
ASCEL	Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (UK)
ASTI	Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland
ATECI	Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland
BELB	Belfast Education and Library Board
BOSC	Branching Out Steering Committee
CASS	Curriculum and Advisory Support Service
CD	Compact disc
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (UK)
CPD	Continuous professional development
DCPL	Dublin City Public Libraries
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Science
DVD	Digital versatile disc
ELS	Education Library Service
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate (UK)
HSE	Health Services Executive
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Federation
ICTs	Information and communications technologies
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
JLC	Joint Libraries Committee
LAI	Library Association of Ireland
LEA	Local Education Authority (UK)
LISU	A Research and Information Centre at Loughborough University
MLA	Museums, Libraries and Archives (UK)
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCTE	National Centre for Technology in Education
NELB	Northern Education and Library Board
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education (UK)

PC	Personal computer
PCSP	Primary Curriculum Support Programme
PLRC	Public Libraries Research Committee
PLRP	Public Libraries Research Programme
PPDS	Primary Professional Development Service
RTT	Resource teacher for travellers
SEELB	South Eastern Education and Library Board
SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
SESE	Social, Environmental and Scientific Education
SGC	Steering Group Committee
SLA	School Library Association (UK)
SLARI	School Librarians Association – Republic of Ireland
SLS	Schools Library Service
SLWG	Schools Libraries Working Group
TBL	Temporary block loan
TUI	Teachers' Union of Ireland
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
WELB	Western Education and Library Board
YALSA	Young Adult Library Services Association

Contents

Foreword	10
Executive Summary	11
1 Introduction	14
1.1 The Schools Library Service	14
1.2 Project Aims and Objectives	15
1.3 Project Management	16
2 Project Methodology	17
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 Reviewing International Practice in Library Service Provision to Schools	18
2.3 Reviewing Library Service Provision to Primary Schools in Ireland	18
2.4 Surveys of the Public Library Authorities	19
2.5 Surveys of Primary School Principals and Teachers	20
3 A Review of International Practice in Library Service Provision to Schools	22
3.1 Introduction	22
3.2 The United Kingdom	22
3.3 The Scandinavian Countries	28
3.4 Australia	29
3.5 New Zealand	31
3.6 The United States	31
4 A Review of Library Service Provision to Primary Schools in Ireland	37
4.1 Introduction	37
4.2 Policy and Programme Initiatives leading to the Schools Library Service	38
4.3 Views of the Education Sector on Library Services to Primary Schools	41
4.4 Previous Research on the Schools Library Service	44
4.5 The Main Issues	45
5 Policies and Prospects for a Primary Schools Library Service in Ireland: A Survey of Public Library Authorities	50
5.1 A Survey of Public Library Authorities on the Status of the Schools Library Service (2008)	50
5.2 A Follow-up Survey of Public Library Authorities (2009): Plans for Services to Primary Education Following the Withdrawal of the DES Grant	68
5.3 Summary of Findings	77

6	Policies and Prospects for a Primary Schools Library Service in Ireland: A Survey of School Principals and Teachers	81
6.1	A Survey of School Principals and Teachers (2008)	82
6.2	A Follow-up Survey (2009): School Library Services Following the Withdrawal of the DES Grant	100
6.3	Summary of Findings	109
7	Main Conclusions	114
8	Recommendations	117
 Appendices		
Appendix 1	Interviews with Key Stakeholders in Primary Education	121
Appendix 2	Survey of Public Library Authorities (2008)	122
Appendix 3	Survey of School Principals and Teachers (2008)	127
Appendix 4	Follow-up Survey of Public Library Authorities (2009)	132
Appendix 5	Follow-up Survey of School Principals and Teachers (2009)	136
Appendix 6	Update Survey on Library Authority Expenditure on Children's Services 2008 & 2009	140

List of Tables and Charts

Table 2.1	Primary School Survey September 2008: School Populations and Survey Samples	20
Table 2.2	Primary School Survey June 2009: School Populations and Survey Samples	21
Table 5.1.3A	Summary of SLS Materials Provided on Loan to Schools 2008	52
Figure 5.1.3A	SLS Materials Made Available on Loan to Schools 2008	53
Table 5.1.3B	Summary of SLS Loan Arrangements 2008	54
Figure 5.1.3B	Summary of SLS Loan Arrangements 2008	55
Table 5.1.4A	Library Authority Services to Teachers 2008	56
Figure 5.1.4A	Library Authority Services to Teachers 2008	57
Table 5.1.4B	Library Authority Services to Parents 2008	58
Table 5.1.4C	Library Authority Services to Children 2008	59
Table 5.1.5	Additional SLS Services and Activities 2008	60
Figure 5.1.5	Additional SLS Services and Activities 2008	62
Table 5.1.6	Summary of Catalogues/Guides to SLS Resources 2008	64
Table 5.1.8	Library Staff Associated Directly with SLS Provision in All 32 Library Authorities 2008	65
Figure 5.1.8	Staff Grades Employed in SLS Provision 2008	65
Table 5.1.9	Logistics of Collection/Delivery of SLS Materials to Schools 2008	67
Figure 5.1.9	Logistics of Collection/Delivery of SLS Materials to Schools 2008	68
Table 5.2.1	Primary Schools Served by Library Authorities 2009	69
Table 5.2.2A	Expenditure on Service to Primary Education 2008	69
Figure 5.2.2A	Total SLS DES Grant per Library Authority 2008	70
Table 5.2.2B	Total Expenditure by Library Authorities on Services to Primary Education 2008	70
Table 5.2.3	Planned Public Library Policy for SLS in 2009 in Absence of DES Grant	72
Figure 5.2.3	Planned Public Library Policy for SLS in 2009 in Absence of DES Grant	72

Table 5.2.4.	Public Library Plans for Services to Primary Education in/from 2009	73
Table 5.2.5A	Estimated Likely Expenditure on Books, etc. for Primary Schools 2009	74
Table 5.2.5B	Estimated Likely Expenditure on Books, etc. for Children's General Collections in 2009	75
Table 6.1.1	Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2008	82
Figure 6.1.1	Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2008	83
Table 6.1.2	Class Groups Taught by Respondents 2008	83
Figure 6.1.2	Class Groups Taught by Respondents 2008	84
Table 6.1.3	Frequency of Contact with SLS 2007-8	84
Figure 6.1.3	Frequency of Contact with SLS 2007-8	85
Table 6.1.4	Requests for Materials for Purchase from the SLS 2007-8	85
Table 6.1.5	Teacher Satisfaction Rating for Choice of Loan Materials Available from the SLS 2008	86
Figure 6.1.5	Satisfaction Ratings for Loan Materials Available from SLS 2008	86
Table 6.1.6	Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials 2008	88
Figure 6.1.6	Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials 2008	88
Table 6.1.7	Arrangements for Collecting Library Materials from SLS 2008	89
Figure 6.1.7	Arrangements for Collecting Library Materials from SLS 2008	90
Table 6.1.8	Uses of SLS Materials 2008	91
Figure 6.1.8	Uses of SLS Materials 2008	91
Table 6.1.9	Sources Used by Students for SESE Work 2008	92
Figure 6.1.9	Sources Used by Students for SESE Work 2008	93
Table 6.1.10	Services/Facilities of Interest to Teachers 2008	94
Figure 6.1.10	Services/Facilities of Interest to Teachers 2008	94
Table 6.1.11	Frequency of Class Visits to the Local Public Library 2007-8	95
Figure 6.1.11	Frequency of Class Visits to the Local Public Library in the Last Year	95

Table 6.1.12	Participation in Activities Organised by the Local Public Library 2007-8	96
Table 6.1.13	Management of the School Library 2008	97
Figure 6.1.13	Management of the School Library 2008	97
Table 6.2.1	Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2009	100
Table 6.2.2	Number of Registered Students 2009	101
Table 6.2.3	Access to Telecommunications 2009	101
Table 6.2.4	Awareness of Withdrawal of DES Grant/Alternative to SLS	102
Figure 6.2.4	Awareness of DES Grant Withdrawal/Alternative to SLS	102
Table 6.2.5	School Plans for an Alternative to the SLS 2009	103
Table 6.2.6A	Intention to Purchase Books/Library Materials from School Capitation Grant 2009	103
Table 6.2.6B	Expected Budget Allocation for Purchase of School Library Materials 2009-2010	104
Figure 6.2.6B	Expected Budget Allocation for Purchase of Library Materials 2009-2010	104
Table 6.2.7	Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase 2009	105
Figure 6.2.7	Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase 2009	105
Table 6.2.8	School Plans for a Library Service in 2009-2010	106
Figure 6.2.8	School Plans for Library Services in 2009-2010	106
Table 6.2.9A	Teachers' Views on the Role of the Public Library 2009	107
Figure 6.2.9A	Teachers' Views on the Role of the Public Library 2009	108
Table 6.2.9B	Teachers' Views on the Most Important Role of the Public Library 2009	108

Foreword

The public library is based on a fundamental philosophy of supporting learning throughout life. Nowhere is that remit more critically evident than in its support for enabling learning opportunity for children of school-going age informally through the public branch library system and additionally, by the public library supporting the formal curriculum in the primary school. This report describes and evaluates the results of research related to the way in which the public library system has pursued a strategy of supporting the learning needs of children in Irish primary schools. Notwithstanding that the public library system has supported and continues to support the learning needs of children attending primary schools in various ways, the research focuses on the Schools Library Service (SLS) which was supported by a financial contribution made from 1970/71 to 2008 directly to each local authority public library system. The scheme is referenced as SLS throughout the report.

The research was carried out with the full support, nationally, of County and City Librarians and their staffs who extended to the project team a level of co-operation which enabled insightful analysis and evaluation of data received. The support of principal teachers in the primary schools, equally essential to the research process, is also central to the outcomes discussed in the report conclusions. Together, librarians and teachers have opened a window to the reality of SLS and the possibilities which present for a fully informed perspective on future-based development of public library services to primary school students. Whatever delivery model presents as the best way forward in particular local authority areas, undoubtedly SLS as a concept emerges as being of increasingly critical importance in an Ireland which needs its young people to have access to learning within the complementary structures of the primary school curriculum, coupled with the informal developmental possibilities inherent in the resources of the local public library.

The report outcomes point unreservedly, to a need for all partners in the educational process, including relevant government departments, together with local authorities and their public library systems, to commit to engaging in a collaborative effort to deliver on its findings and recommendations.

Deirdre Ellis-King *Dublin City Librarian*
Project Manager and Chair of Steering Group



Executive Summary

This report describes a research project on the current status and the recommended future development of the Schools Library Service (SLS) provided directly to primary schools throughout the Republic of Ireland by the local authority public library network.

The project was funded under the Public Libraries Research Programme (PLRP) and was managed by Dublin City Public Libraries (DCPL) with support from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. It was overseen by a Steering Group Committee on which An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and the following library authorities were represented – Dublin City Council (chair), Kerry County Council, Longford County Council, Wexford County Council and Wicklow County Council.

As part of the PLRP objectives to improve the quality and uptake of public library services, this study focused on the role of the public library network in meeting the needs of students and teachers at primary school level. As a baseline for the study, a literature review was carried out on international practice in the provision of library services to primary schools and this was supplemented by a similar review of practice in Ireland.

Initial fieldwork research was undertaken in 2008 and consisted of a telephone survey of all 32 public library authorities in the Republic of Ireland and self-completion questionnaire surveys of school principals and teachers in primary schools in the catchment areas of the five library authorities represented on the Steering Group Committee (see above). This was followed in early 2009 by face to face or telephone interviews with representatives of key stakeholders in the Republic of Ireland (listed in Appendix 1).

In broad terms the service provided SLS books and other resource materials, administered by the public library network and delivered to primary schools. In October 2008, the Department of Education and Science (DES) withdrew the annual grant of €2.2 million. It was decided to conduct a follow-up survey to assess the impact of the withdrawal of the grant and using the same methodologies as in 2008, follow-up surveys of public library authorities, school principals and teachers were undertaken in 2009.

The project has produced a blueprint of the desirable components of a modern public library SLS and, based on national and international consensus, has concluded that a SLS is a core element in the provision of education. The study presents a picture of the content, administration and delivery of a SLS by public library authorities to more than 484,000 pupils in over 3,200 primary schools throughout the country and concludes that the SLS in the Republic of Ireland is generally in line with international practice. As in the case of services overseas, there are inconsistencies in the Irish SLS in that the quality and extent of the service varies from one library authority to another and no universal standard of good practice for SLS provision has been adopted nationwide.



At national level, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) has consistently supported the policy of library authorities delivering the SLS to schools and, through its financial support for the SLS since 1971, the DES has also recognised the need for provision of a library service to schools. However, DES funding for the SLS was withdrawn in 2008 and as indicated in an interview with a DES representative as part of this project, the DES is currently of the view that it has no direct role or responsibility in the provision of public library services to schools. This is a key finding in the context of the continued support for the service by DES for the past 37 years. The DES grants of €2.2 million represented 42% of the total annual spend of €5.19 million by library authorities on the DES supported SLS in 2008 and its withdrawal has collapsed the service nationwide.

The study has shown that the SLS was much appreciated by teachers as a vital element in education and high levels of satisfaction were expressed with the quality and range of fiction and non-fiction books supplied by the SLS and also with the delivery service which was tailored to the needs of individual schools. In addition to the provision of books and other resource materials, the top three services in which schools were interested were (1) current awareness services for teachers and students, (2) online access to reference materials and (3) information skills development for students and teachers.

In the wake of the withdrawal of the DES grant, many public library authorities have described plans to refocus support to primary schools via the public library and mobile library network and only a very small number hope to maintain the 2008 SLS model from within existing public library funding.

The expressed needs of schools and their plans for 2009-10 onwards coincided closely with the plans of the public libraries to support primary education following the collapse of the DES supported SLS model. For example, the top three roles of the public library in supporting the information needs of schools, as perceived by schools principals and teachers, conformed closely with the expressed intentions of public libraries to (1) provide general children's collections, (2) facilitate class visits to the public library and (3) support reading activities. A large proportion of schools expressed a need for general reference services for teachers and students, information on library events and activities and advice and assistance in organising and maintaining schools libraries. All of these issues were on the agendas of public libraries, to varying degrees, as part of their plans to support schools in 2009-10 and into the future. Both schools and libraries stated that they intend to make greater use of ICTs in order to more fully exploit electronic resources.

Over the past decade several reports have addressed issues relating to a national policy on SLS, particularly the DEHLG's Branching Out reports in 1998 and 2009 which were implemented through the DEHLG Branching Out Steering Committee (BOSC). In the light of the recent demise of the shared DEHLG/DES model for the nationwide delivery of a SLS, the project team recommends that the BOSC should be requested to develop and implement a revised national policy on the provision of library and information services to primary and secondary schools with a view to meeting the needs of students and teachers (a) at curriculum level and (b) in the area of library and other information related services and support to schools. A national SLS policy should clearly define the role of the public library system in supporting primary and secondary education and would require joint coordination at policy and senior levels by both the DEHLG and the DES.

Various other recommendations, aimed at public libraries, are also made in the report. For example, the further development of services to children, including general children's collections and collections that support the school curriculum, are considered to be key requirements for support by the public library network to primary education. Public libraries are also encouraged to exploit ICTs in order to improve access by school goers to an increasing range of electronic resources. Proactive promotion of public library services to schools, as well as awareness-raising among teachers and students, is also recommended as an important element in fostering cooperation between the public library and the school.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

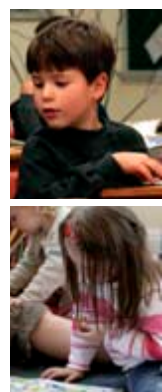
This report describes a research project on the current status and the recommended future development of the Schools Library Service (SLS) provided directly to primary schools throughout the Republic of Ireland by the local authority public library network with grant aid from the Department of Education and Science (DES) (up to October 2008).

1.1 The Schools Library Service (SLS)

In the school year 1970/71 a per capita grant of 20p per pupil was provided by the Department of Education to all 32 local authorities in the country for the purchase of books for direct delivery to primary schools. This was to be the beginning of a nationwide SLS that was managed and administered by the public library authorities i.e. the public library services of the local authorities. Over time, the per capita grant was increased at irregular intervals until it had reached a maximum of €4.52 per pupil in 2005, amounting to a total of just over €2 million per annum and was maintained at this level through to 2008. However, the amount of the grant has always been considered by library authorities, teachers and their associated professional bodies to be grossly inadequate to meet the information and educational needs of primary school children, and so, the termination of the DES grant by the government in the October 2008 budget was met with great surprise and disappointment by all parties involved in primary education.

Over the years, library authorities have been generous in their contribution to services provided to primary schools under the SLS scheme. The DES per capita grant was ring-fenced exclusively for the purchase of books and other media, while the library authorities bore the full costs of managing and administering the service, including the provision of dedicated public library staff for the SLS, accommodation for SLS resources within the public library, transport of SLS materials to and from schools and the general overheads associated with the service. Recent estimates have indicated that the DES per capita grant represented less than half of the total cost of operating the SLS and the remainder was borne by the library authorities. The DEHLG has always provided 100% grant aid towards the cost of purchasing schools delivery vehicles.

Library authorities have also been generous in the range of services they have provided under the umbrella of the SLS and have extended the service to cover considerably more than the provision of books and other media to schools. Although there is a wide variation in the levels of service provided by individual library authorities across the country, a wide spectrum of service is evident, including for example, assistance with reading promotion and reader development among students, information skills training for students and teachers and the provision of professional advice to schools on the selection of resource materials and on the setting up of in-house school libraries.



In addition to core SLS services, delivered centrally, individual public libraries developed additional links to local schools which resulted in extra services such as, public library membership, user education, term and holiday time reading projects, project or theme specific loans from local stock, class visits and other events.

1.2 Project Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the project were as follows:

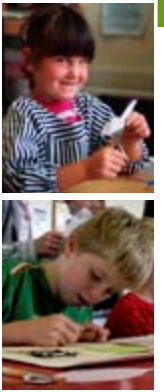
1. To review international practice in the provision of library services to primary schools.
2. To review current library service provision to primary schools in Ireland.
3. To survey public library authorities in Ireland with a view to ascertaining how their school library services were delivered and in particular to determine the following:
 - The structure and extent of library and other resources involved in the provision of SLSs to primary schools.
 - The variety of local arrangements in place to administer the DES grant.
 - The range of targeted resources developed to support specific teaching and learning activities in schools.
 - The local focus of support and advisory services offered by SLSs, for example, any measures designed to enhance the SESE (Social Environmental and Scientific Education) curriculum.
 - If any linkages existed between the public library and local and/or national organisations involved in education.
 - To assess the impact on the SLS of the withdrawal of the DES per capita grant in the October 2008 budget.
4. To survey school principals and teachers in Ireland with a view to collecting information on the following in relation to the SLS:
 - Teacher profiles – schools and classes in which they teach.
 - Usage of the SLS by schools.
 - Schools' assessment of the range of library loan materials provided by the SLS.
 - Levels of satisfaction among schools regarding information resources and formats made available via the SLS.
 - Logistics and local arrangements for collecting library materials from the SLS.
 - Uses of SLS materials by the school.
 - Sources used by students to find information for SESE projects.
 - Schools' views on advisory services offered by public libraries.
 - Frequency of class visits to the local public library.
 - Schools' participation in activities organised by the public library.
 - Information on libraries in schools, including staffing of the library.
 - To assess the impact on the schools of the withdrawal of the DES per capita grant in the October 2008 budget.

5. To secure the views of other relevant stakeholders on the status of library services to primary schools and how these might be improved.
6. To consider how ICTs might be designed, applied and more fully exploited to improve library and information services to primary schools.
7. To make recommendations for the continuance of, and possible improvements to, the provision of library and information services to primary schools by central and local government, including public library authorities, and by any other relevant agencies and/or mechanisms.

1.3 Project Management

The project was managed by Dublin City Public Libraries (DCPL) with support from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL)/The Library Council and was overseen by a Steering Group Committee (SGC) on which ACL and the following library authorities were represented – Dublin City Council, Kerry County Council, Longford County Council, Wexford County Council and Wicklow County Council. The SGC was chaired by DCPL.

The project officers reported monthly to the SGC and an interim report was submitted to the Public Library Research Committee (PLRC) at the mid-project stage in February 2009.



Chapter 2

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

The project was undertaken in the following phases from the spring of 2008 to the autumn of 2009:

1. A review of international practice in library service provision to schools.
2. A review of library service provision to primary schools in Ireland.
3. A survey of public library authorities (2008).
4. A survey of primary school principals and teachers (2008).
5. A follow-up survey of public library authorities (2009).
6. A follow-up survey of primary school principals and teachers (2009).
7. An update survey of public library authority expenditure on library service provision to schools and on general services to children of primary school age (2009).

Phases 1 and 2 were undertaken at the outset of the project in early 2008. The review of international practice in library service provision to schools (phase 1) was based mainly on desk research while phase 2 was carried out by desk research and interviews with key stakeholders in education and library service provision to primary schools in Ireland (Appendix 1). The surveys of all 32 public library authorities in Ireland (phases 3 and 5) were undertaken by telephone interview based on structured question templates (Appendices 2 and 4). The surveys of school principals and teachers (phases 4 and 6) were carried out using self completion questionnaires (Appendices 3 and 5) that were distributed by the five library authorities represented on the project Steering Group Committee (SGC). Phase 7 was conducted by telephone interview based on structured question templates (Appendix 6). Phases 3 and 4, undertaken in mid- to late-2008, were designed to investigate the status of the Schools Library Service (SLS) from the points of view of both the library authorities and the school principals and teachers. It was decided, on the recommendation of the Public Library Research Committee (PLRC), to carry out a follow-up survey in June 2009 to ascertain the impact on all parties of the withdrawal of the DES per capita grant for the SLS in the October 2008 budget. Phase 7 was carried out in October 2009 in order to acquire comparable data on library authority expenditure on SLS services and on services to children in 2008 and 2009.

2.2 Reviewing International Practice in Library Service Provision to Schools

A comprehensive review of the printed and electronic literature was undertaken using *Library and Information Science Abstracts* (LISA) and other sources, including websites, such as the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org/>), the American School Library Association, the American Association of School Librarians (<http://www.aasl.org/>), the United Kingdom (UK) School Library Association (SLA) (<http://www.sla.org.uk/>) and the Australian School Library Association (<http://www.asla.org.au/>).

The literature search yielded recent annual surveys and research reports emanating mainly from the UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand and the Scandinavian countries. In the case of Northern Ireland, an audit of the websites of the five library boards was undertaken i.e. the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB), North Eastern Education and Library Board (NELB), Southern Education and Library Board (SELB), South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) and the Western Education and Library Board (WELB). This was followed up with interviews and correspondence with management and staff from the Education Library Service in Northern Ireland.

The results of the review of international practice in library service provision to schools are presented in Chapter 3.

2.3 Reviewing Library Service Provision to Primary Schools in Ireland

This phase of the project was also conducted on the basis of desk research and interviews with key stakeholders. Although a wide range of literature and websites was consulted, the main sources that were found to be relevant included the following (see Chapter 4 for detailed references):

- *Branching Out: a new public library service* (1998)
- *Joining Forces* (1999)
- *The Borrowers at School: a report on primary school libraries* (2002)
- *First Report of the Schools Libraries Working Group* (2002)
- *The University of the People: celebrating Ireland's public libraries: The Thomas Davis Lectures* (2002)
- *The School Library in the 21st century: an agenda for change: a policy statement* (by SLARI) (2004)
- *DEIS: an action plan for educational inclusion* (2005)
- *Branching Out: Future Directions* (2008)

The websites of key players and stakeholders were also reviewed, including those of the DES, the DEHLG, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL), the Library Association of Ireland (LAI), the School Libraries Association – Republic of Ireland (SLARI) and sites such as www.askaboutireland.ie were examined for relevance to primary school students and teachers.

As it was important to ascertain the views of some key stakeholders in Irish primary education, interviews were held between January and May 2009 with representatives of the following bodies (see Appendix 1):

- Department of Education and Science (DES)
- Primary Professional Development Service (PPDS)
- Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland (ATECI)
- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG)
- National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA)
- National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE)

The results of the review of library service provision to schools in Ireland are presented in Chapter 4.

2.4 Surveys of the Public Library Authorities

Website Audit

The survey of the 32 public library authorities began with an audit of their websites in early June 2008 in order to gather any information which they had published on their library services to primary schools. In cases where no information on the SLS was found on the library authority's website, the audit was extended to the main website of the local authority.

Telephone Interviews

Using the interview template shown in Appendix 2, city and county librarians and/or SLS staff in all 32 library authorities were interviewed by telephone by two staff members of the Research Office of DCPL. Interviews took place during the first two weeks of July 2008 and all 32 library authorities cooperated and responded to the survey. Each interview response was transcribed onto the question template by the interviewer and was emailed to the respondent for validation.

The same procedure was adopted in the follow-up survey in June 2009 using the interview template shown in Appendix 4 and, again, all 32 library authorities responded to the survey.

An update survey of public library authority expenditure on library service provision to schools, and on general services to children of primary school age, was carried out in October 2009 using the interview template shown in Appendix 6. This was designed to provide comparable data on library authority expenditure in 2008 and the most recent available figures for 2009.

The results of the surveys of public library authorities are presented in Chapter 5.

2.5 Surveys of Primary School Principals and Teachers

The 2008 Survey

In September 2008, 449 questionnaires (see Appendix 3) were issued to schools in the five library authorities represented on the project Steering Group Committee (SGC) – Dublin City, Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow. This number represented 75% of the school population in the catchment areas of the five authorities.

A target quota for questionnaire completion was set at 50% of the total number of schools. Questionnaire returns were monitored on a weekly basis by telephone and email to secure response targets. In addition, education centres were notified and requested to inform teaching staff of the project.

A response to the survey was received within a month (October 2008) from 307 schools, representing 51% of the total school population under investigation. Details are presented in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 *Primary School Survey September 2008: School Populations and Survey Samples*

Local Authority	Total No. of Schools (Survey Population)	No. of English Questionnaires Issued (75% of Population)	No. of Irish Questionnaires Issued	Quota to Complete (50%)	No. of Completed Questionnaires Returned	Response as Percent of Total No. of Schools
Dublin City	226	170	113	113	115	51%
Kerry	143	107	72	72	78	55%
Longford	40	30	13	20	20	50%
Wexford	105	79	35	53	54	51%
Wicklow	85	64	28	43	40	47%
Total	599	450	261	301	307	51%

Some schools received copies of both Irish and English versions of questionnaire.

The Follow-up Survey 2009

The purpose of the follow-up survey in June 2009 was to elicit the views of school principals and teachers on the likely impact of the withdrawal of the DES capitation grant to local authorities. The questionnaire used in the follow-up survey is presented in Appendix 5.

In the follow-up survey, questionnaires were delivered to all primary schools in the catchment areas of the five public library authorities represented on the project Steering Group Committee (SGC) – Dublin City, Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow. A response was received from 353 schools, representing 59% of the total school population under investigation. Details of the responses are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 *Primary School Survey June 2009: School Populations and Survey Samples*

Local Authority	Total No. of Schools (Survey Population)	No. of Schools Contacted	Quota to Complete (50%)	No. of Completed Questionnaires Returned	Response as Percent of Total No. of Schools
Dublin City	223	223	111	158	71%
Kerry	143	143	71	79	55%
Longford	39	39	19	22	56%
Wexford	105	105	52	54	51%
Wicklow	85	85	42	40	47%
Total	595	595	295	353	59%

The results of the surveys of school principals and teachers are presented in Chapter 6.

Chapter 3

A REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE IN LIBRARY SERVICE PROVISION TO SCHOOLS

3.1 Introduction

A review of the international literature was undertaken to identify the range of approaches, as well as models of good practice, in the management and delivery of school library services (SLSs) to the primary education sector. The methodology for this element of the project was based on desk research using various online and website sources and is described in Chapter 2 above.

The focus of the review was on the SLS, usually provided to schools by public library authorities, as opposed to in-house libraries that were based in, and operated by schools themselves. The literature search also covered the relationships between schools and SLSs in terms of complementary roles, resources and the range of services provided.

Relevant papers were identified in the form of research papers, reports and national surveys and originated mainly in the United Kingdom (UK), the Scandinavian countries, Australia, New Zealand and the United States (US).

3.2 The United Kingdom

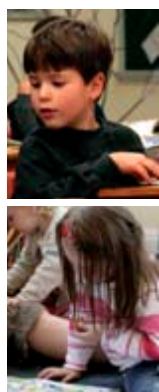
Defining School Library Services

School library services are operated in the UK by local authority education services, local authority library services or independent business units. In a review of SLSs, Tike (1997) identified the range of services and advisory activities typically associated with a SLS to be as follows:

- A loan collection of books, with a proportion exchanged on a school term basis annually,
- Specific collections, borrowed for short periods of time, to assist with topics or project teaching,
- An exhibition collection of the current best available titles,
- Centralised facilities for book ordering, binding and processing,
- Compilation of book lists and other bibliographical aids and services,
- Advisory services and training courses for teachers.

Tike also identified the following categories as typically comprising the advisory functions of a SLS:

- Contribution to curriculum development,
- Contribution to learning and information skills,
- Support for reading development,



- Provision of training opportunities,
- Evaluating school libraries,
- Formulation and publication of guidelines for school libraries.

Other advisory functions which could be provided as part of a SLS were later identified in a LISU study (see below) as follows:

- Design and refurbishment of school libraries,
- Library management system support,
- Current awareness services.

Tike did not identify any particular model for the structure of SLSs.

The separation of general library services for children from school library services is reflected in the findings by researchers at LISU, a research and information centre for library and information studies based at Loughborough University. LISU undertook national statistical surveys of library services for children in the UK from 1989-90 through to 2005-6 (LISU, 2007).

Creaser (2007) defined school library services as *“library services provided directly to children through the public library service and indirectly via support services to schools, however managed, throughout the UK”*. She notes that:

“The picture for schools library services is a mixed one, with some areas clearly faring better than others. The last ten years have seen a number of organisational changes, which have fragmented services and changed their funding basis, particularly in England. With direct funding from schools now the norm in England, pressure on school budgets has affected schools library services, and the percentage of LEA (Local Education Authority) pupils served overall continues to fall. While many services have successfully marketed themselves in the new climate, some have not. Seven have closed between 1999-2000 and 2003-4, and two more closed during the 2004-5 year. Those services, which remain, are developing new and innovative strategies to support both schools and other groups, with a diverse range of loan and advisory services, and new collaborations being instigated”.

The LISU 2005-6 national survey revealed the following (LISU, 2007):

- Total UK expenditure on children’s services was estimated at £50.1 million, up 10% over the previous year. This was broken down as £28.1 million on specialist staff, £20 million on books and other resources and £1.9 million on specific activities and promotions.
- Total UK expenditure on the SLS was estimated at £39.2 million. This was made up of £21.7 million on staff, £3.1 million on premises, £10.8 million on materials and £3.6 million on other expenditure. This equated to £6.69 per pupil, compared to £6.64 in the previous year.
- There were almost 600 FTE professional children’s librarians in the UK in 2005-6, an increase of 3% from the previous year. Almost 100 more held posts in services that were integrated with the SLS, or had a joint responsibility. It was estimated that 285 professional library staff were working in the SLS, 5% fewer than the previous year.

- 85% of all services in England received most of their income directly from schools, which purchased their services. The main exception was the metropolitan districts, where 30% retained significant central funding.
- 13% of LEA pupils in the UK attended schools in areas with no formal SLS provision. Where there was SLS provision, pupils were in schools which used their SLS for loan of resources, advisory services or both.
- Few SLSs had their own websites, although over three quarters had pages within a wider local authority site. 42% had catalogues which could be accessed remotely and 45% allowed schools to book resources electronically.
- Three quarters of SLSs offered management system support to school libraries.
- No two SLSs offered the same selection of services to schools in their areas. While there was considerable overlap – 95% offered books and resource advice; 91% offered project loans, for example – there was also a number of specialist services available in some areas.

Examples of special projects and collaborative activities included the following:

- More than half of all SLSs undertook special projects such as book awards (60%), surveys (44%) and evaluation exercises (43%).
- Many SLSs reported that they collaborated with other SLSs (56%) and 45% reported involvement with CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) and 44% with ASCEL (Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians).

The contribution of SLSs to education is noted in an inspection of primary and secondary schools undertaken in 2004 and 2005 by Ofsted HMI (Office for Standards in Education, Her Majesty's Inspectorate) (Ofsted, 2006).

SLS and the School Library

In 2004/2005 HMI inspectors visited 32 primary and second level schools in England in order to identify and subsequently promote aspects of good practice in relation to school libraries (Ofsted, 2006). Whereas the main focus was on the in-house school library, as part of their investigation they established that most schools audited had service-level agreements with their authority's SLS, although one or two had opted out because of costs. It was found that SLSs provided good support for books as well as offering a range of advice and guidance, such as:

- stock audits and guidance,
- purchasing recommendations to fill gaps in particular collections,
- training for librarians and pupil librarians,
- sessions on study skills taught by SLS staff,
- advice on policies and programmes for teaching information skills. This was an area of support most needed by many secondary schools,
- opportunities for networking.

It was noted by HMI that many schools had improved their library provision in recent years as a result of external factors, the two most common being

- action taken in response to inspection by Ofsted and
- the impact of reports from the local authority or the SLS.

Reviews and audits carried out by the local authority and/or the SLS were highly influential, particularly within secondary schools. Primary school audits tended to be more limited in scope and often focused on issues such as resources and accommodation, choice of texts, how to display books and the height of shelves. Feedback from the survey indicated that *“Primary schools found such advice very helpful as few were able to appoint specialist library staff. The audit carried out in one school acted as a useful benchmark as it sought to tackle the lack of resources, partly through fundraising and additional funds released by the governing body for the library. The report also enabled the school to draw up a library action plan that linked with its school improvement plan – a crucial step in identifying a vision and plan for improving the library”*.

The HMI study exposed some serious deficiencies in the development of student information skills. *“The quality of pupils’ information literacy skills was often unsatisfactory. Many pupils struggled to locate and to make use of information. The most effective schools had put in place systematic programmes for teaching these skills”* (p. 1).

In the context of putative roles of the SLS, other than the provision of books and other information resources, Tike (1997) noted that:

“References to schools library services in the information skills literature suggest a development of a role, which has not traditionally been seen as a SLS or even a librarian’s province. It is an area where much work needs to be done, and tensions and an ambiguity of role remain, as the literature suggests” (p. 22).

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), a Scottish government sponsored education agency, provides an online learning series relating to information literacy and study skills on its website (Learning Technology Scotland, 2009). The learning series is aimed at age groups 9-11, 12-14 and 15-18 using the following headings: *What, Look, Choose and Tell*. Learning materials are provided for pupils, parents and teachers. Significantly, this resource was developed by the education sector.

Linkages Between Schools and Public Libraries

In relation to links with public libraries the Ofsted report (2006, p.17) referred to the *Education and Libraries Task Group Report* in 2000, which noted that *“coordination between public libraries ... and school or academic libraries ... is inadequate”*. The HMI 2005-6 survey did not provide any evidence that circumstances had changed significantly since 2000.

Speaking at a *Campaign for the Book* conference, in Birmingham on June 27, 2009, Roy Clare, CEO of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) said: *"An effective school library can be the reading, learning and information hub at the heart of the school and its wider community"* (Tolliday, 2009). He announced that the MLA would be working with the School Library Association (SLA) on a charter that will outline what constitutes an excellent library service, including better links with public libraries. MLA would also be promoting best practice through its field teams and website. His comments followed regional reports of a wide variation in the quality of the library service from school to school.

The role of the public library and the SLS in addressing the needs of schools is evident in Clare's definition of a quality school library service which he outlined as follows:

- Range of services – books, magazines, Internet access, reader groups and a welcoming, appropriate space for project work. It should also be flexible and take into account changes in the curriculum and technology.
- Information, advice and guidance – this should be available from library staff as well as other support networks such as careers advice and pastoral care.
- Learning activities and skills development – for example helping students develop as independent users of information.
- Partnerships – facilitating learning in and out of school through class visits, homework clubs and ICT networks with public libraries and should consider using the skills and expertise of the SLS.
- Extended services – the potential to open up school libraries for out of hours learning and activities for families and the wider community.

The Role of the Public Library in Reader Development and Promotion

Sarah McNicol, in a project on reading development and promotion among 11 to 16 year olds, in both school libraries and public libraries, explored the differences in emphasis between both types of library, in terms of aims and objectives and in how students perceived and used the services (McNicol, 2003, p.3). The project highlighted the importance of school and public libraries working together and developing a greater understanding of each other's roles and strengths. She suggested that the main focus of a school library has tended to be on its role in the school curriculum, in particular in relation to information skills, the National Literacy Strategy and the Framework for Teaching English at Key Stage. Citing research completed by Spreadbury and Spiller (1999) that 40% of pupils described the school library as *"a place where I can read and relax"* compared to 72% who saw it as, *"a place where I can concentrate and do my work"* McNicol (2003, p. 11) concluded that *"through working together, public and school library staff will be able to draw on expertise and resources and promote reading in a way which engages greater numbers of 11 to 16 year olds"*.

Initiatives in reader development are designed to foster confidence and competence in reading and to promote reading as an enjoyable and creative activity. An example of such an initiative is described in a publication funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which was aimed at improving links between

schools and public libraries. The Reading Agency, a commercial reader development organisation, in its publication *“Enjoying reading: public library partnerships with schools”* (The Reading Agency, 2004) provided a policy framework emphasising the need for *“joined-up”* services for children and articulates how public libraries can help schools to meet key objectives by:

- developing children’s reading choices,
- providing the widest range of reading,
- introducing children to a learning resource for life,
- supporting the National Curriculum and the National Primary Strategy with resources and information,
- developing children’s creativity and imagination,
- contributing to the quality of life of children and families,
- providing children with a community role and space,
- supporting children to participate in their community through practical citizenship projects,
- supporting children’s health, well being and self-esteem through reading confidence,
- ensuring that the school, public and school library services work collaboratively for the child’s benefit (p. 8).

This approach was also emphasised in a research project on school library services in the North West region of England (Wilson and Train 2006).

“More work and association with comparatively high-profile reader development initiatives could help to encourage the necessary cultural change and reinforce the role of school library services with respect to learning, literacy and educational attainment. The research has revealed a desire within the sector for a more visible alignment of schools library services within the empirical services to children and young people agenda”.

McNicol identified the Norwegian experience where the principle of cooperation is enshrined in law (The School Act and the Library Act, 1985) and where Ministerial Guidelines recommend a coordination committee with representatives from schools and public libraries (McNicol, 2003).

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland SLS provision operates on a statutory basis and is delivered via five education and library boards (ELBs) in Belfast (BELB) and in the northern (NELB), southern (SELB), south eastern (SEELB) and western (WELB) regions of Northern Ireland. In 2006 the BELB and the SEELB combined to provide a joint service called BASE. The SLS in Northern Ireland is called the Education Library Service (ELS) in order to reflect more accurately the range of services provided. The Education Library Service is managed by the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) which is based in each ELB and liaises with the schools in relation to service provision.

The UK LISU 2005-6 national survey mentioned above (LISU, 2007) covered Northern Ireland and found that all five ELBs provided services to primary schools and other educational sectors. For example, 98% reported that they served special schools, 94% served nursery schools and secondary schools, 93% served pupil referral units, 68% served schools in the independent sector and 59% provided services to pre-schools. In general, the five ELBs provided a uniform range of loan services, although, as in other parts of the UK, no two ELBs provided exactly the same loan or advisory services. All exchanged resources and provided audio, video and CD-Rom resources. Four ELBs provided inter-library loan services and one offered an equipment hire service.

The ELBs of all five ELBs reported that they provided book information, reading promotion and information skills programmes, undertook curriculum support activities and offered advisory services on topics such as school libraries self evaluation and planning. Three ELBs indicated that they made schools aware of their events and activities by means of current awareness services. Details of services offered by individual ELBs are presented on their websites (see bibliography).

According to the LISU survey, in 2005-6 there were 22.5 FTE professional library staff and 48.5 FTE other grades of library staff (total 71) employed in providing ELBs in Northern Ireland and this represented a 12% increase on the previous year (LISU, 2007).

It should be noted that changes are being anticipated in Northern Ireland on foot of a reform agenda. A single Northern Ireland public library service, Libraries NI, has been established. A new body entitled the Education and Skills Authority (www.esani.org.uk) will be established shortly and the ELB will be part of the new body.

3.3 The Scandinavian Countries

A legislative instrument such as the Norwegian School Act and the Library Act 1985, noted by McNicol (2003), does not necessarily guarantee an adequate or standardised service. Holm (2006) describes a cooperative venture between the Oslo Education Department and Oslo Public Library (the Deichman Library). This was initiated in response to a need for primary school reform which resulted in a greater focus on project and assignment work and a demand for library resources which proved challenging to meet. The aim of the initiative was to include school libraries within a network of services supplied by the Deichman Library, combined with input from the shared experience of the schools. Project funding supported the development of the following:

- the main library and some selected libraries were upgraded to facilitate class visits,
- advisory services were made available, new literature was purchased and study areas were established,
- participating school libraries had to assume responsibility for the library premises, staff and ICT equipment,

- participating school libraries were provided with a library management system instruction in software use and back-up support from the Oslo Education Department and the Deichman Library.

The public library service also developed a course on guidance for library users, the Internet, developing library collections and fitting out the library. The initiative ended in 2005 and the author observed that, while much progress had been made, the challenge remained to continue developing the scheme within the normal working framework.

Elsewhere, Hansson (2006) noted that in some cases, public libraries assumed formal responsibility over school libraries due to school staffing issues. The responsibilities of the public library could range from offering a specific service to the schools to employing and managing staff. Hanson characterised this as the public library assuming a *"compensatory role"* in relation to the schools. The author suggested that the development of a coordinated approach between the Cultural Administration and Stockholm Public Library served as an example of how collaborative ventures between schools and libraries should develop.

3.4 Australia

The issue of public library support for institutional educational also emerges in the literature emanating from Australia. For example, Bundy (2006), referring to a survey undertaken in 2001 on connections between schools and public libraries, concluded that both were players in the education process and often had a sense of common endeavour. However, he could find little evidence of higher or lower level planning or encouragement to facilitate collaboration between schools and public libraries. Qualifiers of progress in this area were identified as the following:

- different understandings and enthusiasms about the need for, and reality of, and the potential interaction between schools and public libraries,
- cooperation was often one sided, with essentially the public library pursuing its broad cradle to grave mission,
- cooperative agreements were usually informal,
- a lack of qualified teacher librarians particularly in primary schools, and a lack of qualified public librarians in rural areas, inhibited understanding and cooperation,
- funding, frequent school staff changes, time and access issues were other constraints to cooperation (p. 129).

Bundy's report on a 2006 survey of Australian public libraries by Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA) (Bundy, 2006) revealed that *"about 9% of Australian public libraries were joint use libraries in partnership with formal educational providers, the majority with high schools but also with Tafe (Technical and Further Education) colleges and universities. This was most common in regional and rural areas and was most prevalent in South Australia where nearly 40% of public libraries were joint use"*.

Many public libraries were found to provide a wide range of services and resources to support students, including professional reference assistance, Internet access, online homework tutoring, special collections, study spaces, and homework centres and clubs. Some examples of public libraries supporting student's homework and reference enquiries needs included:

- support to homework centres,
- the availability of the online yourTutor service at: <http://yourtutor.com.au>.
This service was provided in over 60 public libraries to support homework in topics such as maths, English, science, study and research skills,
- promotion of the Asknow online reference service.

Bundy expressed concern that student demand on public libraries was tending to increase for a variety of reasons *"but there is still little indication of awareness or concern about this from governments, education departments and individual schools. This is an international phenomenon, experienced in other countries such as the US, Canada and the UK, and is a concern often raised by the public library sector in those and other countries"* (p. 134).

Bundy's concluding comments on the survey were as follows:

"School libraries and public libraries should be pivotal to the 21st century educational experience, and the base for a positive attitude by young people towards information skills development, lifelong learning and enhancing their life chances. For this to occur requires that schools and local authorities/state governments fund and staff their school and public libraries well to maximize the enduring benefits to students and teachers of their educational partnership. It also requires connected national, state and local government policy frameworks, and an expectation that schools and public libraries cooperate in supporting students".

Nimon (2004) documents the development of school libraries in Australia in terms of infrastructural developments of the 1970s and 1980s, the impact of resource-based learning and the challenges of ensuring the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) standard that professional staff in charge of school libraries should hold dual qualifications in teaching and librarianship. Significantly, Nimon refers to earlier work by Margaret Trask in 1966, in which *"she emphasised the need for services to children as a whole, writing on the 'specialisation of children's librarianship' which conceives of service to young people from the perspective of their needs, rather than by a division into school and public libraries that reflects the realities of adult employment opportunities than the group to be served"*.

Nimon makes an interesting comment on the issue of the librarian's role in promoting information literacy among students. He suggests that *"any study to identify teacher librarians' contribution to the development of students' information literacy will need to be developed collaboratively with other teachers whose perspectives on the desired learning outcomes and of students' success in regard to them will not always accord with those of the librarian. Success in using information for learning must thus be*

judged on criteria developed jointly". This implies that library authorities should perceive schools as equal partners in the design of information literacy, reader development and other educational services for students.

3.5 New Zealand

Joint use libraries also emerged as a theme in the literature from New Zealand. Mathews and Calvert (2007) undertook a study of the critical success factors in school and community joint libraries in New Zealand. A joint use library was defined as one in which two or more separate library services cooperate to serve their user groups equitably in shared facilities (also known as dual use, combined use, school and community, school university/public or polytechnic/public libraries). It was noted that they were established elsewhere in countries such as Australia, Canada, the US and the UK and were often set up to provide public library services in rural areas where the lack of *"funding made normal public library provision difficult"*. Mathews and Calvert identified the critical success factors to be as follows:

- planning factors, for example, an undertaking that the level of service is at least equal or better than the separate entities,
- location and physical factors, for example, complete integration of facilities,
- collections and services and no restrictive access to any resources,
- signed formal agreements between partners covering all management and operational aspects,
- staffing factors, for example, an integrated staff structure with a single library manager who has communication with a management board.

A curriculum support service is another means by which libraries may contribute to the needs of students at primary and secondary levels. A good example of such a service is provided by the New Zealand National Library (2009). This service is available to teachers, students who are home-schooled and libraries to support teaching and learning in New Zealand. The collection of 500,000 items includes books, videos and DVDs. Schools can also borrow music books and serials from the National Library's general collections through their local Curriculum Information Centres. Details of the scheme are available online at: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/services/access-to-items/curriculum-resources>

3.6 The United States (US)

Shirley Fitzgibbons (2000) provided a comprehensive literature review of the relationship between public libraries and school media centres in the US in which she explored the historical context and rationale for cooperative relationships, joint school-public library facilities and the potential for innovative measures to improve cooperation. The main forms of cooperation she considered were as follows:

- networking and resource sharing,
- cooperation in building collections,
- cooperation in providing information services and instruction,
- cooperation to encourage reading and literacy.

She recommended a state-wide action plan for serving the school and out-of-school learning needs for all children and young people and suggested that it could include the following elements:

- “• *Guidelines and advocacy for funding to plan true collaboration by school and public libraries that takes into consideration current and future learning designs such as year-round schooling, magnet schools, home schooling, and partnerships for service and support to parents and other adult caregivers.*
- *Designated state level library and media personnel to serve as consultants for public library children's and youth services and school library media programs.*
- *A communitywide vision statement for those serving children and youth through both school and public libraries.*
- *An action plan in each community that spells out collaboration and roles of all agencies and institutions.*
- *This plan will develop plans and funding for meaningful, on-going collaborations between libraries and other youth-serving agencies. (Fitzgibbon, 2000)."*

She concluded by suggesting that

"Public and school libraries (and librarians as intermediaries) are the key institutions that can provide collections and services to meet the needs of youth, but the provision planning for these services must be a community-based activity that includes politicians, community leaders, educators, parents, librarians, and student representation (and for young children, their caretakers and advocates)" (Fitzgibbon, 2000).

In February 2004, a Task Force on School/Public Library Cooperative Activities in the US conducted an electronic mailing list survey requesting information on existing school/public library cooperative programs, their funding source, and a contact person for the programme (ALSC/AASL/YALSA Joint Task Force ..., 2004). The Task Force was a joint initiative by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC), the American Association of School Libraries (AASL) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). Respondents were also asked to cite case studies of programmes that were unsuccessful or encountered barriers that people should be made aware of. The main focus of the study was on cooperative, collaborative or partnership programs between elementary, middle or high schools and local public libraries. The paper lists all the responses received in the survey and is a useful source of information on cooperative programmes in action in the US. Although no overall analysis is made of the responses, the report is organised and presented under the following main categories of cooperation, collaboration and partnership arrangements:

- Assignment Alert Programs
- Book Collections/Kits
- Book Discussion Groups
- Community Reading Projects
- Delivery to Schools
- Large, System-wide Initiatives
- Library Card Campaigns

Library Cards for Educators/Schools
 Public Library Visits to Schools
 Publicity (including newsletters)
 School Visits to the Public Library
 Special Events
 Summer Reading Programs and Lists
 Tutoring/Student Success Programs
 Cautionary Tales

There are many other publications on cooperative and collaborative initiatives between public libraries and schools in the US and many of these are listed on the American Library Association's website (ALA, 2009), including works by Brown (2004), Rutherford and Shanks (2004), Gross (2005), Jackson (2005) and Bush (2006). Laura J. Brown (2004) cited some examples of how schools and public and college libraries worked together to provide online services while Gail Bush discussed best practices in school and public library cooperation. Elise Jackson (2005) focused on bookmobile and outreach services as part of formal and informal partnerships between public libraries and schools. Dawn Rutherford and Brenna Shanks, both of whom are Teen Service Librarians in the King County Library System near Seattle, shared their ideas, programmes, and projects that they have developed in cooperating with Bellevue Public Schools, including book-talking and a summer reading project.

In conclusion, the international literature review has clearly demonstrated and confirmed that the public library has a pivotal role to play in education and, in particular, as a partner and support agency, working alongside the school in meeting the information needs of the student both within and beyond the curriculum. However, this role is not always realised for a variety of reasons and there is still much work to be done in fostering greater cooperation between the public library and the school in the interests of both students and teachers.

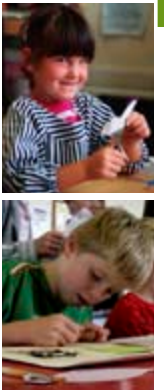
Works Consulted

- American Library Association (ALA), (2009). "Professional development topics. School and public library cooperation". Online. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/profdev/schoolpublic.cfm> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- ALSC/AASL/YALSA Joint Task Force on School/Public Library Cooperative Activities, (2004). "School/public library cooperative programs". Online. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/initiatives/partnerships/coopacts/schoolplcoopprogs.cfm> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- BELB, <http://www.belb.org.uk/libraries/> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Bourke, C., (2007). "Working with schools, parents and the community groups." *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*. Vol 20 (2) 67-71.
- Brown, L. J., (2004). "S.O.S.: Save Online Services." *Library Media Connection*. Vol 23 (5) (October) 50-51. Available Online. Wilson Web. Full text.

- Buckingham, R. and McNicol, S (2005). "Schools and public libraries: working together." *School Librarian*, Vol 53 (1) 14-15.
- Bundy, A., (2006). "Supporting students: the educational contribution of Australia's public libraries." *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*. Vol 19 (3) 126-135. See also – Bundy, A., (2006) "Supporting students: the educational contribution of Australia's public libraries: A report to the nation by Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA), Melbourne, 2006. Online. Available at: <http://www.fola.org.au/pdfs/supportstudents.pdf> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Bundy, A., (2002). "Essential Connections: school and public libraries for lifelong learning." *The Australian Library Journal*. Vol 51 (1) Online. Available at: <http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/alj/51.1/full.text/essential.connections.html> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Bush, G., (2006). "Walking the Road between Libraries: Best Practices in School and Public Library Cooperative Activities." *School Library Media Activities Monthly*. Vol 22 (6) (February) 25-8. Available Online. Wilson Web. Full text.
- Creaser, C., (2007). "Schools library services – the last ten years." *School Librarian*. Vol 55 (2) 66-67.
- Creaser, C. and Maynard, S., (2006). *A survey of library services to schools and children in the UK 2005-06*. Loughborough LISU. Online. Available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/lis/lisu/index.html> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- "EBSCO introduces literary reference center", (2006). *Advanced Technology Libraries*, Vol 35 (4) 3-3.
- Fitzgibbon, S.A., (2000). "School and public library relationships: essential ingredients in implementing educational reform and improving student learning." *School Library Media Research*. Vol 3 (Refereed research journal of the American Association of School Librarians.) Online: Available at: <http://ala.org> and <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/slmrb/slmrcontents/volume32000/relationships.cfm> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Gibson, J., (1998). "Lewisham, libraries and literacy 2000: a partnership approach." *School Librarian*. Vol 46 (1) 10-11.
- Gross, V., (2005). "A+ Partners in Education: Linking Libraries to Education for a Flourishing Future." *Public Libraries*. Vol 44 (4) (July/August) 217-22. Online: Available at: <http://infopeople.org/workshop/instructor/12191> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Hansson, J., (2006). "School + library = linguistic progress + reading skills." *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly*. (1) 6-19.
- Holm, A. K., (2006). "School library initiatives and future challenges: cooperation between public libraries and school libraries in Oslo." *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly*. (1) 10-11.

- Honig-Bear, S., (2001). "School-public library partnerships in Washoe County, Nevada." *Resource Sharing and Information Networks*. Vol 15 (1/2) 5-16.
- Jackson, E., (2005). "Formal and Informal Opportunities for Public Libraries to Partner with Schools." *Bookmobile and Outreach Services*. Vol 8 (2) (2005): 45-67. Available Online. Wilson Web. Full text.
- Kaye, M., (2008) "The critical success factors of school and community joint use libraries in New Zealand." *Australasian Public Libraries* Vol 21 (1) 13-24 Online. Available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Kyle, T., (2002). "Seeking greater understanding: public librarians and the new school curriculum." *School Libraries in Canada*, Vol 21 (4) 24-25.
- Learning Technology Scotland, (2009). *Information Literacy Website*. Online. Available at: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/informationliteracy/> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Libraries NI, <http://www.ni-libraries.net/> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Lightfoot, M., (2005). "Information literacy and study skills for LT Scotland Discussion document." Cambridge Training and Development Ltd. Cambridge.
- LISU, (2007). "A survey of library services to schools and children in the UK 2005-6". Online. Available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/lis/lisu/pages/publications/sch-chil06.html> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- McNicol, S., Centre for information Research & R. Buckingham, Isle of Wight Council (2003). "Reader development and reading promotion in school libraries and public libraries". Online. Available at: http://www.ebase.bcu.ac.uk/projects/reader_development.htm (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Mathews V.K. and Calvert, P., (2007). "The critical success factors for community (joint use) libraries in New Zealand", *Education Libraries (Library Collaboration)*, Vol 30, (2), 5-17. Online. Available at: <http://units.sla.org/division/ded/educationlibraries/30-2.pdf> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Maynard, S. and Davies, J. E (2005). "Metrics for schools and children's services: a ten year retrospective." *Vine*, Vol 35 (4) 196-209.
- Mears, S., (2008). "Class Visits: a partnership to broaden horizons." *Library and Information Update*, Vol 7 (3) 42-43.
- Moore, V., (2000). "The literacy connection: bringing libraries and classrooms together." *Library Mosaics*, Vol 11 (6) 16-17.
- National Library of New Zealand, (2009). "National library of New Zealand curriculum resources". Online. Available at: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/services/access-to-items/curriculum-resources> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- NELB, <http://www.neelb.org.uk/schools/sls/spsn> (Accessed 30/12/2009).

- Nimon, M., (2004). "School Libraries in Australia." *The Australian Library Journal*. Vol 53 (1) Online. Available at: <http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/alj/53.1/full.text/nimon.html> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education), (2006). "Good School Libraries: making a difference to learning". Online. Available at: <http://ofsted.gov.uk> Ref no. HM 2624 (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Rutherford, D. and Shanks, B., (2004). "A Fantastic Team: Schools and Public Libraries." *VOYA*, Vol. 27 (5) (December) 357-359.
- SELB, <http://www.selb.org/library/index.htm> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Slack, F. and Rowley, J., (1999). "Pathways to knowledge: a perspective in information and knowledge delivery in Australia." *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, Vol 31 (4) 197-203.
- Squires, L. and Laurence, S., (2002). "I feel more into reading: Gloucestershire's Children Selecting Books Project." *School Librarian*, Vol 50 (2) 68-69, 71.
- Streatfield, D. and Markless, S., (2000). "Are school library services equipped to survive in the age of information?" *Information Research*. Vol 5 (4) Online Available at: <http://informationr.net/ir/5-4/paper84.html> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Sullivan, E., (2001). "Connect with success: a few tips for public library – school cooperation." *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries*, Vol 14 (3) 14.
- Tice, M., (2001). "Queens borough public library and the connecting libraries and schools project." *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries*. Vol 14 (3) 11-13.
- The Reading Agency, (2004). "Enjoying reading public library partnerships with schools toolkit". Online available at: www.readingagency.org.uk (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Tolliday, B., (2009). "Schools and public libraries need to develop better relationships with each other to give children a love of books and reading". Online available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/news_and_views/press/releases/2009/Best_school_libraries (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Tilke, A., (1997). "Advisory roles of schools library services in the United Kingdom." *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*, Vol 3 11-37.
- Usherwood, B., (2000). "Rediscover the public librarian: your value and worth." *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*, Vol 13 (1) 7-13.
- WELB, <http://www.welbni.org/index.cfm/do/SchLibServs> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Wilson, K. and Train, B., (2006). "Marketing library services to children and young people: The role of schools library services" *New Review of Children's Literature*, Vol 12 (2) 147-161.



Chapter 4

A REVIEW OF LIBRARY SERVICE PROVISION TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IRELAND

4.1 Introduction

From the late 1960s, a nationwide library service, in one form or another, has been provided to primary schools in Ireland by means of a joint partnership between the Department of Education (now the Department of Education and Science – DES) and the 32 local authority public library services. As early as 1954, soon after the establishment of the Public Libraries Act of 1947, the Library Association of Ireland (LAI) made a written submission to the Minister for Education arguing a strong case for a nationwide Schools Library Service (SLS) but was unsuccessful in securing a commitment for such a service. The first evidence of an undertaking by the Department of Education to provide any form of support for the provision of a library service to primary schools was in July 1962 when the Minister for Education, Dr. Patrick Hillery, following a meeting with representatives of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL) (The Library Council – established under the Public Libraries Act, 1947), indicated that his Department “*would accept responsibility, as soon as possible, for placing some basic reference works like a dictionary and an encyclopaedia in each school, in a small way at first*” (Coolahan, 2002). A small grant of £20,000 ensued in the 1963/64 financial year and was used to provide books for primary schools initially in only five counties – Laois, Leitrim, Monaghan, Limerick and Waterford and the grant amounted to an average of only £30 per school. In succeeding years the scheme of basic stock reference books was extended to all primary schools in the country and, according to Coolahan (2002), it was well received by teachers and the general public.

In 1971 a new primary school curriculum was published and a per capita grant of 20p per primary school pupil was made available for a national SLS to be managed and administered by the local authority public library services. By the year 2000/1 the per capita grant provided by DES had increased to £2.99 per pupil and in 2005 through to 2008 it had stabilised at €4.52, amounting to a total national DES grant of circa €2.2 million to partly fund a national library service to the 484,492 pupils in 3,269 primary schools throughout the country. However, this represented only 42% of the national spend on the SLS, the remaining 58% being financed by the local authority public library services (See Chapter 5). Regrettably, the DES grant was abruptly abolished by the government in the October 2008 Budget as part of a series of measures designed to reduce public expenditure following a sudden, dramatic downturn in the Irish economy.

4.2 Policy and Programme Initiatives Leading to the Schools Library Service

As already noted above, the LAI and ACL have been active lobbyists in promoting the concept of a national SLS to government over several decades. Indeed it was as a direct result of the efforts of these bodies that a commitment was made in the early 1960s by the Minister of Education of the day to provide funds, if somewhat meagre, for a SLS and to share this responsibility with local authorities. The LAI submitted various policy documents to government over the years in which it recommended the provision of library services for all educational levels, including primary and secondary schools. Key submissions to government by the LAI in 1968, and later in 1981, proposing a comprehensive, nationwide SLS for both primary and secondary schools served as vital catalysts for the emergence of such a service, at least to the primary school sector. In 1994 a School Library Development Adhoc Committee of the LAI produced a report on school libraries in which it again advocated that *“a well developed SLS be administered by the local authority library and properly funded and supported by the Department of Education”* (LAI, 1994, p.14). The LAI also made submissions to other national policy making bodies such as the Information Society Commission and to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) project on the development of public libraries (DEHLG, 1998, 2008).

Other bodies that have influenced policies on library services for schools include the Reading Association of Ireland (RAI), the Children’s Literature Association of Ireland (CLAI) and the School Library Association – Republic of Ireland (SLARI). For example, in a policy statement in 2004, SLARI declared:

“The capitation grant given to each public library authority towards a Schools Library Service for primary schools buys no more than one book per year for every three or four pupils. While this was boosted in 1998 and 1999 by the book grants to school libraries, this level of funding, even if it were on an annual basis, would do little to provide suitable accommodation and shelving for these books, or the staff and equipment necessary to fully exploit the collection” (SLARI, 2004).

In 1998, the DEHLG published a policy document, *Branching Out*, describing the Department’s national policy on the development of the public library service in Ireland (DEHLG, 1998). In the report the public library was identified as *“a gateway to the world of knowledge for children by providing books, multimedia materials and ICT resources to stimulate and improve their minds and imaginations”* and it *“acts as a centre for literacy and information skills, sharpening reading skills and assisting children to gain information through reading”* (p. 21). The report highlighted the need to improve schools library services (p. 43) and, in summarising key issues to be addressed, the project team believed *“that the public library has a positive contribution to make to the formal education system in Ireland. In particular, the team believes that the library can assist in the development of literacy and reading and in the development of information skills among school-goers”* (p. 92).

Following the publication of *Branching Out* (DEHLG, 1998), a Branching Out Steering Committee (BOSC) was set up by DEHLG, with representation from DEHLG and DES and other agencies, to implement the recommendations of the *Branching Out* report. The BOSC set up a Schools Libraries Working Group (SLWG) to investigate and make recommendations on the design, management and operation of a model for the delivery of a nationwide library service to primary schools. The SLWG was also requested to address issues such as the roles of key partners and the funding needed to provide a service to the highest standards. The SLWG reported in 2002 and recommended a national model for a SLS on three levels – at national, library authority and schools levels.

At national level, it was proposed that a steering group be formed to develop and implement a national school library and information strategy using examples of best practice both nationally and internationally. Regular monitoring and evaluation of service quality through quantitative methodology were proposed as important indicators for future development.

At library authority level the following key features were highlighted:

- The SLS should be delivered through a partnership arrangement between schools and the library authority. Partnership links should also be encouraged through cooperation with colleges and third level institutions to assist service delivery.
- The development of school library collections should incorporate a range of materials to support the school curriculum and special needs groups.
- A professionally qualified school librarian should manage the SLS and support teaching staff and parents on school library administration.
- Maximum investment should be made in ICT resources to facilitate shared access to information, to support the school curriculum and teacher training.

At school level, it was recommended that a school library plan should be prepared and a designated teacher should be made responsible for the school library and liaison with the public library service.

The Working Group was of the opinion that *“the level of funding provided by the DES is not adequate to meet the needs of the library service as envisaged in the (1998) revised primary school curriculum”* (p. 6) and recommended a significant increase on the basis of a 50:50 sharing of the full costs of the service between the DES and the local authority public library services.

The report was accepted by the Branching Out Steering Group and sent by the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government to the Minister for Education and Science in December 2002. The DES responded that no additional funding was available.

In May 2005 the DES published an action plan for educational inclusion – DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools) which aimed to concentrate on early education provision in the most disadvantaged communities (DES, 2005). The focus was on literacy and numeracy – defined as *“the integration of reading and writing, listening, speaking and mathematics for everyday life, for communication and learning*

to learn" (p. 34). The report acknowledged the role of the national SLS in the advancement of literacy and numeracy and noted that *"further cooperation on educational inclusion issues between the library system and the education sector will be actively pursued in implementing this action plan"* (p. 39). Examples of areas in which the local authority library system was already supporting schools and which could serve as a basis for further development in the DEIS educational inclusion programme were identified as the following:

- *"Assisting schools in selecting and procuring reading material appropriate to different age groups.*
- *Supporting homework clubs at local level.*
- *Promoting and supporting reading groups and hosting discussions with authors.*
- *Advising on the stocking and running of school-based libraries"* (p. 39).

In a study, commissioned in 2007 by the Heritage Council, a comprehensive audit of online heritage materials for the primary school sector was undertaken. The purpose of the study was to assess their current and potential use by teachers and children and to inform decision-making and planning around the possible provision of web-based resources for primary schools (Heritage Council, 2007). One of the recommendations of the report was that schools should consider *"working with heritage officers, Education Centre Network, local heritage groups, libraries and museums to facilitate a county-based approach to provision of local information"* (p. 38). As heritage materials are of direct relevance to the SESE curriculum, this is an area in which public library authorities have much to contribute to primary schools.

Ten years after the publication of the first Branching Out report in 1998, a new national policy document Branching Out, Future Directions, was published by the DEHLG setting priorities for 2008-2012 (DEHLG, 2008). It recommended that:

1. *"the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government continues to develop cooperative opportunities with the Department of Education and Science with a view to maximising the value that the public libraries can provide to support education at primary, secondary and continuing adult learning levels."* and
2. *"the Department of Education and Science (should) maintain, and increase where feasible the current level of grant aid for the provision of the school library to library authorities."*

Another initiative by the library community, designed to support the education sector, includes the *Ask About Ireland* website (www.askaboutireland.ie). This resource is managed by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, partly as an aid to primary and secondary school studies and is supported by the DEHLG. A dedicated Learning Zone supports the 1998 revised primary school curriculum and is a useful source of information for school projects and other educational activities. The website encourages the student to avail of, and become familiar with electronic resources and, in the process, to expand their range of information skills. The development work for the Learning Zone element of the website was supported by educational bodies such as the National Council for

Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) and the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) and this represents a good example of interworking and cooperation between the library profession and the education sector to meet the needs of students.

The public library service in cooperation with ACL has been developing a programme of electronic information resources in libraries and online via library websites. This means that students potentially have access to the same electronic online resources as they have in school, in their local public library outside school hours and at home via the public library websites.

4.3 Views of the Education Sector on Library Services to Primary Schools

The key stakeholders with an interest in delivering library and information services to primary schools include the school principals, teachers, the DES, the DEHLG and the local authorities who determine public library policy and manage the national network of public libraries and, finally, those bodies charged with responsibility for the design and implementation of national educational policies and programmes.

The views of school principals and teachers, and of all 32 public library authorities, were elicited by means of surveys which are described in the following chapters. Key representatives of the remaining stakeholders were interviewed to secure a balanced, comprehensive range of opinions of all key players relating to policy, management and delivery of library and information services to primary schools (see Appendix 1). The organisations interviewed included the DEHLG, which has national responsibility for local government, and the following major players in education.

- Department of Education and Science (DES)
- Primary Professional Development Service (PPDS)
- Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland (ATECI)
- National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA)
- National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)

The consensus among all stakeholders was that the public library network has a vital role to play in support of primary education and the following is a summary of their suggestions and recommendations.

Roles and National Policies on Library Service Provision to Primary Schools

The main players at national level in this context are DEHLG and DES. The DEHLG representative was of the view that public libraries have a duty to support all sections of the community, including school-going children, and should therefore endeavour to foster close links with local schools.

The DES representative considered that the DES does not have a direct role or responsibility in library service provision to schools because, in his view, this is a function of the DEHLG and the local authorities, as well as the schools themselves. He suggested that, while the DES provided a once-off grant to schools for the purchase of reading materials during the roll-out of the primary school curriculum in 1999, schools may replenish reading materials as they see fit using the annual DES grant and by enlisting the support of the public library service.

The primary school curriculum stresses the importance of reading and the availability of a wide range of suitable books in all primary schools. It is recommended in the curriculum that schools should develop class libraries and, where possible, a school library. Schools are also encouraged to establish links with local libraries and to arrange access by teachers to a wide range of information resources, to invite local library staff to speak to children, to organise class visits to the public library and to encourage pupils to use the local library for research as well as leisure purposes.

The DES representative suggested that the DES has a potential role in the development of library policy by providing advice on how public libraries could assist schools. He also noted that, through its Inspectorate, the Department endeavours to promote good practice in relation to the use of libraries, including the local public library. However, at local level, it is up to each local authority to make provision for library services to schools within the context of local conditions, resources, priorities and constraints. It is also up to management and staff in individual schools, in accordance with local factors, such as distance from the local library, transport facilities and costs, health and safety issues, timetabling constraints and staffing levels, to decide on how they will use the local public library as a resource.

In the context of national policy, it was suggested that public library authorities should seek and secure wider representation on national and regional bodies involved in curriculum design and implementation. For example, many education boards have representation by INTO, IBEC and others, but not by library authorities. There is no representation by professional librarians on bodies such as the NCCA, the NCTE or the PPDS, all of which are key players in educational policy making and planning and are important drivers in developing and operating the school curriculum. It was suggested that a working group be established at national level to include representation from library authorities, DES, teacher support services (PPDS), education centres, NCCA, NCTE and other relevant bodies in order to make more effective and efficient use of the resources and services of all stakeholders in education. The working group, which might be managed by the public library authorities, could establish good practice guidelines and provide aids such as information sheets for schools on the effective use of library services.

Cooperation and Interworking

Interviewees considered that public library authorities and educational bodies such as NCTE, the PPDS, the Schools Inspectorate and teacher education centres should work together to achieve maximum use of collective resources and expertise in promoting library and information services to primary schools. For example, the PPDS has a national network of advisors who could be briefed on public library resources and services and who could then disseminate this information to schools throughout the country. The Schools Inspectorate could identify schools where good practice in library provision is observed to be in operation and to notify this to public library authorities, who could then contact and work with these schools to promote and extend good practice to other schools. This approach would eventually serve to introduce improved standardisation in services throughout the country.

At local and national levels the NCTE has much to offer in improving access to electronic resources within and outside the school. The availability and interlinking of online resources such as *Scoilnet* and *AskaboutIreland*, together with improved online access to students and teachers outside school hours, either at home or in local public libraries, is a scenario that offers exciting opportunities for all stakeholders.

Facilities and Services

In general, schools in urban areas have greater ease of access than rural schools to library and information resources. For this reason, most stakeholders considered that the provision of books and other learning materials for the use of children in rural schools should be prioritised by public library authorities when allocating resources in support of children's services.

Public library authorities were also perceived as having a vital role in providing and supporting access to electronic resources, both within and beyond the library for example, by means of CDs, DVDs etc. on stand-alone computers and by Internet connected PCs offering access to the global electronic environment.

Several interviewees suggested that it would be very helpful if library authorities were to provide "learning zones" in local public libraries. These zones would include defined study spaces with books and other reading materials specifically targeted and appropriately labelled for homework and/or project research for both students and teachers. The PPDS inventories of literature that support the implementation of the various subject areas of the curriculum could be used to stock the shelves in the learning zone and their relevance should be highlighted to teachers and parents.

Public libraries are well placed to be proactive in promoting local history by providing access to local history resources, raising awareness about their collections and facilitating teacher and pupil sessions with local historians. This would be an important contribution by libraries to the SESE curriculum and it would also benefit teachers, many of whom have little or no knowledge of the history of the areas in which they work.

The promotion of preschool reading in public libraries, especially in areas of educational disadvantage, was also identified as an area for development.

Barriers to Accessing and/or Providing Library Services

The main barriers to library service access and/or provision were identified as low awareness among teachers of the services provided by public libraries and/or poor communications between libraries and schools. Lack of time and curriculum overload among teaching staff was seen as a significant factor and pressure on the financial and human resources of both schools and library authorities also featured as a barrier to services.

A suggested solution to alleviate some of the barriers was that designated persons in both the school and the library authority should be made responsible for liaison between the two organisations. It was also suggested that libraries should be proactive in promoting their services to schools and in raising awareness among teachers and students. It was also recommended that school principals and teachers need to play their part and to go outside the school and explore and more fully exploit external resources and facilities.

4.4 Previous Research on the Schools Library Service

In 1999, the LAI, with funding from the DES, commissioned the first comprehensive survey of library provision for primary schools in Ireland, in which teachers, parents and librarians were invited to give their views on the service (Haslett, 2002). On the issue of policy *“it was the overwhelming finding of this study, from teachers, librarians, parents and written submissions, that the current situation regarding almost all aspects of primary school libraries is unsatisfactory ... and a commitment (from the DES) to primary school libraries in terms of policy, planning and funding is crucial”* (p. 61). The findings also echoed the 1996 recommendation of the LAI that there should be a statutory obligation on the part of the DES *“to provide effective libraries in schools at all levels, supported by realistic, regular, financial commitment”* (p. 61).

The LAI survey examined the nationwide SLS that was provided to schools by the public library authorities and found that there was a wide variation in the levels of service provided by individual authorities. For librarians, these variations were due fundamentally to a lack of recognition, on the part of the DES, of the need for school libraries and of the value of the service provided by the SLS. Of the teachers who responded, 16% reported that their school did not receive a SLS from their local authority and of those who said that they did receive a SLS, almost half rated the books they received as either *good* or *very good* while almost a quarter considered them to be *poor* or *very poor* (Haslett, 2002, p.63). The main recommendations of the report in relation to the SLS were as follows:

- The existing arrangement of shared responsibility of the DES and the local authorities for the delivery of the SLS should continue and the management and administration roles of the public library authority in this regard should be retained, supported and strengthened.
- There should be service agreements between the DES and the local authority as to the funding of the management and administration of the SLS and it was recommended that the DES per capita grant to local authorities be increased to €38 by 2004 and reviewed and adjusted annually thereafter to meet changing needs.

- There should be at least one professionally qualified schools librarian dedicated full-time to the SLS in each public library authority and he/she should be supported by sufficient numbers of trained staff to allow a quality SLS to be provided.
- The schools librarian should be charged, *inter alia*, with producing a development plan for the SLS in cooperation with the public library authority and with local educational partners.
- Links between public libraries and schools should be encouraged in order to develop library use as a practice for lifelong learning and pleasure. These linkages should include regular class visits to the library, librarian visits to the school, display of schoolwork in the local library and other supportive interactions.
- Recent investment in ICT in schools and public libraries should be harnessed to facilitate shared cataloguing of materials, access to other information sources and improved communications between teachers and the SLS.

In 2007, the Public Library Research Committee (PLRC), acting on behalf the Public Library Research Programme (PLRP), invited calls for proposals for further research on library services to schools in Ireland and accepted a proposal led by Dublin City Public Libraries (DCPL). Following negotiations with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, acting on behalf of the PLRC, the current project covered by this report was initiated in 2008 in cooperation with the four other public library authorities – Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow.

4.5 The Main Issues

The main issues identified in this review of the school library service in the Republic of Ireland may be summarised as follows:

Policy Issues

- There are currently two policies in place at national level that inform the provision of library services to primary education i.e. a national policy by DEHLG on the public library service and a national policy on education by the DES.
- On the basis of interviews held in April-May 2009 with representatives of DEHLG and DES, the DEHLG acknowledges that it has a role and responsibility in providing library services to primary school children while the DES is of the view that it has no direct role or responsibility in the provision of library services to primary schools.
- DEHLG policy on a Schools Library Service (SLS) is presented in the two *Branching Out* reports (DEHLG, 1998 and 2008). The essence of DEHLG policy is “*that the public library has a positive contribution to make to the formal education system in Ireland*” (and) “*in particular, ... that the library can assist in the development of literacy and reading and in the development of information skills among school-goers*” (DEHLG, 1998, p.92).
- DES policy on reading and libraries, as reported during the stakeholder interviews, is reflected in the primary school curriculum which stresses the importance of reading and the availability of a wide range of suitable books in all primary schools.

- A model for a SLS was prepared and published in 2002 by the SLWG and its recommendations were accepted by the Branching Out Steering Committee (BOSC). However, the DEHLG failed to secure co-funding from the DES to implement the recommendations of the SLWG.
- Despite the DEHLG position that the public library has a positive contribution to make to the formal education system, public library authorities are not represented on educational policy making bodies at national level.
- According to the SLWG model for a SLS, public library authorities should have a SLS policy in place which defines the authority's aims for a SLS, commitment of staff and financial resources, management and operations, and relations with primary schools and other educational bodies.
- The SLWG also recommended that schools should have an internal library policy and should allocate responsibility for its management and operation within the school as well as liaison with the local public library authority.

Partnerships and Roles

- The key stakeholders in primary education have been identified as (1) primary school principals, teachers and students, (2) national policy making bodies in education, including the DES, NCCA, NCTE, PPDS and ATECI and (3) the DEHLG and the local authorities, who determine public library policy and manage the public library network. At present, the public library authorities manage and administer a SLS, which, until October 2008, was grant aided by an annual per capita payment to local authorities by DES. The schools play a role in stock selection, arranging block book loans and class visits to the public library.
- There is no evidence of any significant level of cooperation or partnership between library authorities and national policy making and/or support organisations in education in the area of policy, planning or delivery of a SLS to primary schools. However, ACL is actively engaged in discussions and cooperation with bodies such as the NCTE with a view to improving access by school-goers to electronic resources, within and outside the school, via platforms such as the Ask About Ireland website (www.askaboutireland.ie) and local authority library websites.
- In addition to providing books and other media resources, it is recognised in the literature that the public library has a wider role to play in meeting the information needs of students and teachers. At least three key areas have been highlighted – the promotion of literacy, reading development as well as reading for pleasure and for lifelong learning; the promotion of information skills; and the advisory role of the library in helping the school to select books and other resource materials and to design, manage and operate an in-house school library.

Management and Administration

- The SLS is managed and administered solely by the library authorities. This involves a huge commitment on the part of the authorities and is provided in addition to the general services provided by the public library service for children and young people. In the absence of adequate funding and clearly defined and agreed policies, the future provision of a SLS is an issue that requires urgent consideration and attention.

- SLS resources within schools are usually managed by a designated person and/or by teachers of individual subjects.

Application of ICTs

- Many of the reports cited above make reference to the potential of ICTs in meeting the needs of students and in supporting the role of library authorities in providing services to schools. The Ask About Ireland website, managed by ACL, is a good example of how ICTs may be brought to the classroom by the library sector. The DES has provided online resources in primary schools and these resources are also provided in parallel by the public library network, allowing students to access these resources outside school hours. There is also scope for library authorities to exploit ICTs to enhance access by primary schools to SESE resources as recommended by the Heritage Council (2007).
- Cooperation and interworking between key educational stakeholders, such as the NCTE, ACL, the public library authorities and the schools, is a promising means of improving access to electronic resources within and outside the school.
- ICTs may also be applied, through local websites, to carry local information and provide links to national information resources.

Standards and Good Practice

- No universal standard of good practice for the provision of a SLS applies in Ireland. A wide variation in the level of service exists among the 32 library authorities.

Staff

- It has been recommended by professional bodies, and in various reports and policy documents cited above, that the SLS should be staffed by at least one professional school librarian in each library authority, with the support of a sufficient number of trained staff to provide an adequate level of service to schools.

Funding

- In 2008, DES provided a per capita grant of €4.52 which amounted to an annual commitment of circa €2.2 million and represented 42% of the total cost of the SLS. The remaining 58% of SLS costs, which included public library staff dedicated to SLS provision as well as SLS accommodation, transport and overheads, was covered by the public library authorities. The DES per capita grant was withdrawn in the October 2008 budget.
- From the time that the SLS was introduced in the 1960s, all relevant professional and other bodies have been of the view that the service was seriously under resourced. The current status of the SLS is that it is no longer part-funded by the DES in the form of a per capita grant. The library authorities, who have hitherto funded more than half of the cost of the service, are entrenched in a crisis of budget and staff cuts, an embargo on recruitment, and significant reductions or complete withdrawal of funds for their general collections.

Barriers to Accessing and/or Providing Library Services

The main barriers to library service access and/or provision were identified as:

- Low awareness among teachers of the services provided by public libraries.
- Poor communications between libraries and schools.
- Lack of time and curriculum overload among teaching staff.
- Pressure on the financial and human resources of both schools and library authorities.

Suggested solutions to alleviate some of the barriers included:

- Designated persons in both the school and the library authority should be made responsible for liaison between the two organisations.
- Libraries should be proactive in promoting their services to schools and in raising awareness among teachers and students.
- School principals and teachers also need to play their part and to go outside the school and explore and more fully exploit external resources and facilities.

Works Consulted

- An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (1999), *“Joining Forces: delivering libraries and information services in the information age*, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, ISBN 1-873512-03-1.
- ATECI (Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland), <http://www.dwec.ie/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- Coolahan, J., (2002). “Unrealised potential: the relationship of schools with the library service” (in) *“The university of the people: celebrating Ireland’s public libraries: The Thomas Davis lectures 2002*, Dublin, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/ RTE, pp. 143-164, ISBN 1-873512-10-4.
- DES (Department of Education and Science), <http://www.education.ie/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- DES (Department of Education and Science), (2000). “Micheál Martin T.D. launches National Reading Initiative”, Press Release. Online. Available at: <http://www.education.ie/robots/view.jsp?pcategory=10861&language=EN&ecategory=40232&link=link001&doc=16638> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- DES (Department of Education and Science), (2005). *“DEIS (Delivering equality of opportunity in schools): An action plan for educational inclusion”*, Department of Education and Science. Online. Available at: http://jcsp.slss.ie/resources/DEIS_action_plan_on_educational_inclusion.pdf (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- DEHLG (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government), <http://www.environ.ie/en/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)

- DEHLG (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government) (1998). *"Branching Out: a new public library service"*, Stationery Office, Dublin, ISBN 0-7076-6174-40-X.
- DEHLG (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government), (2008). *"Branching Out: Future Directions"*, Stationery Office, Dublin, ISBN 978-1-4064-2132-3.
- Hanrahan, F., (2009). *"The primary schools library service in County Wexford: Status report January 2009 and review 2004-2008"*, Wexford County Council Public Library Service. Online. Available at: <http://www.wexford.ie/wex/Departments/Library/Thefile,8596,en.pdf> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- Haslett, D., (Library Association of Ireland), (2002). *"The borrowers at school: a report on primary school libraries"*, ISBN 0 946037 40X.
- Heritage Council, (2007). *"Scoping study for the development t of on-line heritage materials for the primary school sector"*, Online. Available at: http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Education/Motherway_Begley_Scoping_Study.pdf (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- LAI (Library Association of Ireland), School Library Development Adhoc Committee, (1994). *"School libraries: Guidelines for good practice"*, 20p, pbk, RCN 0946037248.
- NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment), <http://www.ncca.ie/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- NCTE (National Centre for Technology in Education), <http://www.ncte.ie/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- SLWG (Schools Libraries Working Group), (2002). *"First Report of the Schools Libraries Working Group"*. Unpublished.
- PCSP (Primary Curriculum Support Programme), <http://www.ppds.ie/pcsparchive/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- PPDS (Primary Professional Development Service), <http://www.ppds.ie/> (Accessed 30/12/2009)
- School Library Association Republic of Ireland (SLARI), (2004). *"The school library in the 21st century: an agenda for change. Policy statement"*, Online. Available at: <http://www.slari.ie/Policy/SLARIpolicy.pdf> (Accessed 30/12/2009).

Chapter 5

POLICIES AND PROSPECTS FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOLS LIBRARY SERVICE IN IRELAND: A SURVEY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITIES

A telephone survey of all 32 library authorities in the Republic of Ireland was undertaken in July 2008 to assess the status of the Schools Library Service (SLS) in each authority at that time and to elicit the views of City and County Librarians on various issues relating to services for primary schools.

In 2008, the SLS was supported by a DES per capita grant of €4.52 per primary school student which was allocated for bookstock and other resource materials for primary schools. This grant was withdrawn in the October 2008 budget. Because of this important development, it was necessary to undertake a follow-up survey of library authorities in June 2009 to ascertain the impact of the withdrawal of the DES grant on their plans for SLS provision in the 2009-2010 school year and beyond.

This chapter reports on the findings of both the 2008 survey and the 2009 follow-up survey of all 32 library authorities in the Republic of Ireland.

5.1 A Survey of Public Library Authorities on the Status of the Schools Library Service (2008)

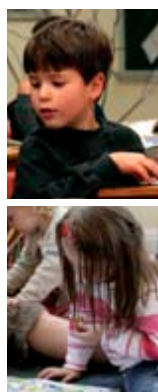
5.1.1 Introduction

All 32 library authorities were surveyed by telephone interview in July 2008 and all authorities responded to the survey. The study sought to establish how schools library services were delivered by public library authorities in Ireland and in particular to determine the following:

- the structure and extent of library and other resources involved in the provision of SLS to primary schools.
- the variety of local arrangements in place to administer the DES grant.
- the range of targeted resources developed to support specific teaching and learning activities in schools.
- the local focus of support and advisory services offered by SLSs, for example, any measures designed to enhance the SESE (Social Environmental and Scientific Education) curriculum.
- if any linkages existed between the public library and local and/or national organisations involved in education.

The following is a summary of key findings, categorised as follows:

- Provision of reference resources specifically for school use.
- Provision of loan services under the SLS scheme.
- SLS support and advisory services to teachers, parents and children.



- Additional services and activities such as support for the SESE curriculum, reading development activities, support for homework and book clubs and provision of library stationery to schools with in-house libraries.
- Availability of dedicated SLS catalogues and guides to SLS resource materials.
- Structure of the SLS within the library authority.
- Numbers and grades of staff directly involved in delivering the SLS.
- SLS facilities and operational aspects (selection, collection and delivery of resource materials).
- Cooperation and promotion with local and/or national educational organisations.

5.1.2 Provision of Reference Services Specifically for School Use

Of the 31 library authorities that responded to this question, 14 (44%) stated that they provided reference resources specifically for use by schools and 17 respondents (53%) indicated that they did not. Library authorities providing reference services included Carlow, Cavan, Donegal, Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Fingal, Galway, Kerry, Kilkenny, Mayo, Roscommon, South Dublin, Tipperary JLC and Waterford County.

Examples of reference materials provided for the SLS included encyclopaedias, dictionaries, atlases, bibliographies, teacher resource materials, periodicals, multicultural materials, project materials, child craft books, remedial textbooks on dyslexia and dyspraxia, special needs materials, *Britannica online*, *World Book* etc. Only one library authority (Meath) reported that it provided unique user access to online resources for schools. However, a number of respondents noted that their service provided public online access to resources such as *Britannica Online*, *Credo Reference*, *OSI maps*, *Irish Times Digital Archive* and *Press Display.com*. Public access to many of these resources was reported to be available via public library websites and/or by availing of services via the branch library network.

5.1.3 Provision of SLS Loan Services

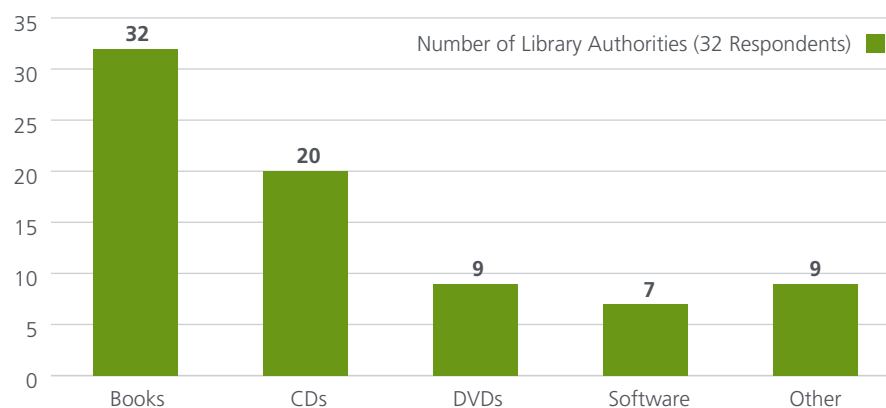
All 32 library authorities reported that they lend books to primary schools under the DES part-funded SLS scheme and almost two thirds (20 = 63%) also lend CDs.

Nine library authorities (28%) stated that they lend DVDs, and software was reported to be available on loan by seven authorities (22%). DVD loans were reported by Dublin City, Fingal, Kildare, Kilkenny, Louth, Mayo, Monaghan, South Dublin and Waterford City. A software lending service was reported by Donegal, Dublin City, Fingal, Galway, Kilkenny, Mayo and Waterford City.

Other materials made available on loan under the SLS scheme included audiotapes, audio-books, book/CD packs, tactile books, literacy packs, reading kits, flash cards, educational toys, maps, AV materials, videos (including storytelling on video), large format books, games, learning puzzles, musical instruments and scores. Loan services are summarised in Table 5.1.3A and Figure 5.1.3A.

Table 5.1.3A *Summary of SLS Materials Provided on Loan to Schools 2008*

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Book Loans	CD Loans	DVD Loans	Software Loans	Other Loans
Carlow	✓	✓			
Cavan	✓				
Clare	✓				
Cork City	✓				
Cork County	✓	✓			
Donegal	✓	✓		✓	✓
Dublin City	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	✓				
Fingal	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Galway	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kerry	✓				
Kildare	✓	✓	✓		
Kilkenny	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Laois	✓	✓			
Leitrim	✓				
Limerick City	✓	✓			
Limerick County	✓	✓			
Longford	✓	✓			
Louth	✓	✓	✓		
Mayo	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Meath	✓				✓
Monaghan	✓	✓	✓		✓
Offaly	✓	✓			
Roscommon	✓	✓			✓
Sligo	✓				
South Dublin	✓	✓	✓		✓
Tipperary JLC	✓				✓
Waterford City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waterford County	✓				
Westmeath	✓				
Wexford	✓				✓
Wicklow	✓	✓			
Totals	32	20	9	7	9

Figure 5.1.3A *SLS Materials Made Available on Loan to Schools 2008*

Loan Arrangements for SLS Materials

Almost two thirds of library authorities (20 = 63%) provided permanent block loans of SLS materials to schools and almost the same number (19 = 59%) offered temporary block loans. In the case of the latter arrangement, eight authorities (25%) exchanged materials twice a year, six (19%) exchanged materials once a term and seven (22%) did not exchange materials.

Almost half of authorities (15 = 47%) provided short-term loans over periods ranging from one week to a year. Specific categories such as the class novel were reported to be monitored and flexible arrangements were offered in some cases.

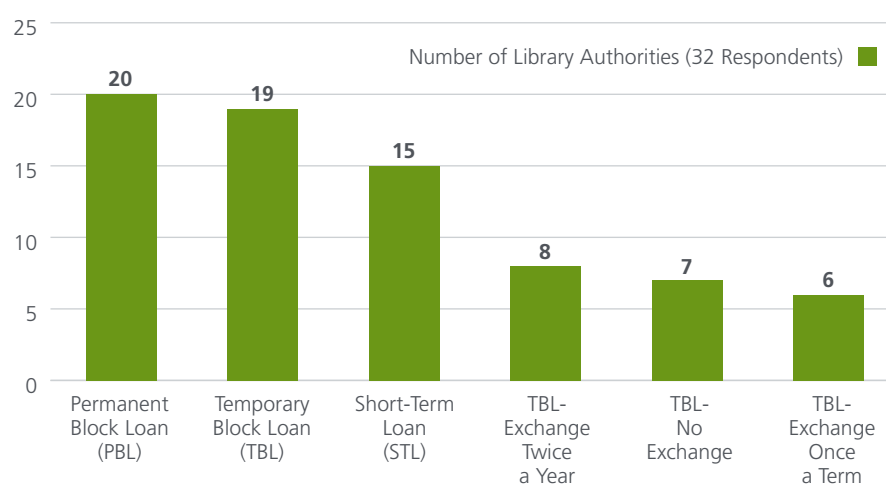
Details of loan arrangements are summarised in Table 5.1.3B and are presented in ranked order in Figure 5.1.3 B.

Table 5.1.3B *Summary of SLS Loan Arrangements 2008*

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Permanent Block Loan (PBL)	Temporary Block Loan (TBL)	No TBL Exchange	TBL Exchanged Once a Term	TBL Exchanged Twice a Year	Short-Term Loan (STL)	Normal Loan Period of STL
Carlow	✓				✓	✓	As required
Cavan		✓	✓				
Clare	✓						
Cork City	✓						
Cork County	✓						
Donegal	✓					✓	3-6 months
Dublin City	✓						
Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown	✓					✓	3 months
Fingal	✓					✓	3 months
Galway		✓			✓	✓	1 term
Kerry	✓						
Kildare	✓	✓	✓				
Kilkenny		✓		✓			
Laois	✓		✓				
Leitrim	✓						
Limerick City	✓	✓		✓		✓	1 term
Limerick County	✓					✓	2-3 months
Longford		✓			✓		
Louth		✓		✓			
Mayo		✓			✓	✓	1-2 terms
Meath	✓	✓	✓			✓	1 term
Monaghan	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Offaly		✓			✓		
Roscommon		✓			✓	✓	6 months
Sligo		✓			✓		
South Dublin	✓					✓	3 months
Tipperary JLC		✓		✓		✓	Up to 12 months for class novels
Waterford City	✓	✓		✓		✓	

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Permanent Block Loan (PBL)	Temporary Block Loan (TBL)	No TBL Exchange	TBL Exchanged Once a Term	TBL Exchanged Twice a Year	Short-Term Loan (STL)	Normal Loan Period of STL
Waterford County		✓			✓		1 week
Westmeath		✓	✓				
Wexford	✓	✓		✓		✓	1 term – 6 months
Wicklow	✓	✓	✓				
Totals	20	19	7	6	8	15	

Figure 5.1.3B Summary of SLS Loan Arrangements 2008



Collections to Meet Specific Needs

Examples of collections, targeted to meet the needs of local primary schools, and made available on a short-term loan basis, included the following:

- Teacher resource collections including specialist services offered to language and learning support teachers.
- The 'Class Novel' – schools request particular novels from the SLS and are supplied with multiple copies as required. Schools may retain these books for up to a year or longer and some schools hold on to them indefinitely.
- Multicultural collections to cater for the increasing multiethnic needs of pupils.
- Project materials, including themed boxed books for projects.
- Reading schemes and materials to support reading projects.

- Special needs collections including reading schemes for children with dyslexia and children who are slow learners.
- Dual-language books, tactile books and large print books.
- Local studies.
- Games and musical instruments.

5.1.4 SLS Support and Advisory Services to Teachers, Parents and Children

Services to Teachers

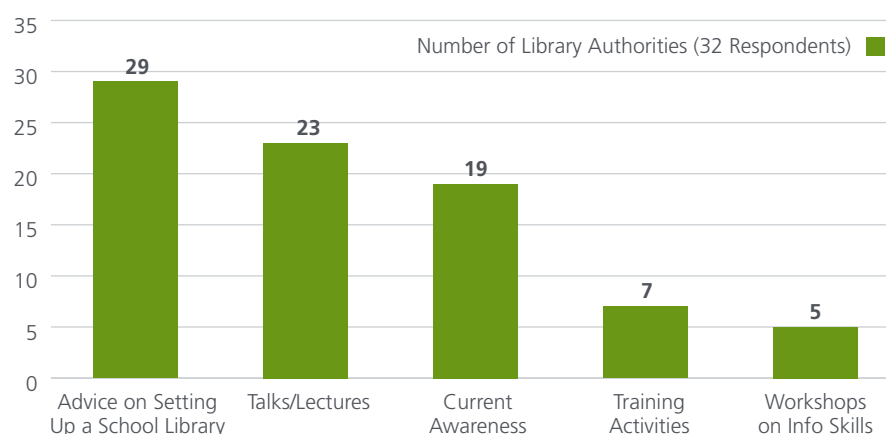
Services offered to teachers by library authorities as part of their SLS consisted of talks/lectures, workshops on information skills, various training activities and advice on the setting up and evaluation of school library services within the schools. The response is summarised in Table 5.1.4A and is presented in ranked order in Figure 5.1.4A below.

Table 5.1.4A Library Authority Services to Teachers 2008

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Talks/Lectures	Workshops on Info Skills	Training Activities	Current Awareness	Advice on Setting Up & Evaluating School Libraries
Carlow	✓			✓	✓
Cavan	✓			✓	✓
Clare	✓				✓
Cork City	✓				✓
Cork County	✓			✓	✓
Donegal					✓
Dublin City	✓			✓	✓
Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown	✓		✓	✓	✓
Fingal				✓	✓
Galway	✓				✓
Kerry	✓			✓	✓
Kildare	✓		✓	✓	✓
Kilkenny	✓	✓			✓
Laois					✓
Leitrim					
Limerick City	✓			✓	✓
Limerick County					✓
Longford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Louth	✓				✓
Mayo	✓			✓	✓

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Talks/Lectures	Workshops on Info Skills	Training Activities	Current Awareness	Advice on Setting Up & Evaluating School Libraries
Meath				✓	✓
Monaghan					✓
Offaly				✓	
Roscommon	✓			✓	✓
Sligo	✓				
South Dublin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tipperary JLC	✓		✓	✓	✓
Waterford City	✓			✓	✓
Waterford County	✓			✓	✓
Westmeath	✓	✓	✓		✓
Wexford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wicklow					✓
Totals	23	5	7	19	29

Figure 5.1.4A Library Authority Services to Teachers 2008



The most widespread service available to teachers was advice on establishing a library within the school (29 = 91% of authorities) followed by talks/lectures (23 = 72%) and current awareness services (19 = 59% of authorities). Several authorities reported that they offer workshops and other training facilities to teachers on topics such as use of the OPAC, use of the Internet, access to online resources (e.g. www.askaboutireland.ie, www.borrowbooks.ie, encyclopaedias and OSI maps online etc.), the 'E-Book Project' and how to download e-books. Other topics targeted at teachers included sessions on

publishers and relevant children's websites, posting book reviews on the library website, creative writing and poetry writing.

Current awareness services include annual visits and awareness raising sessions either in the library or the school designed to bring teaching staff up to date on SLS developments. Information was also provided on printed promotional materials and posted on library websites notifying teachers (and students) of forthcoming events such as children's book festivals, storytelling and author visits etc.

Services to Parents

One third of library authorities (11 = 34%) provided talks/lectures for parents on a wide range of topics such as the importance of books and reading, literacy resources and book selection. Four respondents indicated that they arranged workshops on information skills for parents and six authorities provided current awareness services along the same lines as those noted above for teachers – i.e. notices on library websites as well as printed promotional materials.

Services to parents are summarised in Table 5.1.4B below.

Table 5.1.4B *Library Authority Services to Parents 2008*

Library Authority (Response =32/32)	Talks/Lectures	Workshops on Info Skills	Current Awareness
Carlow	✓		
Clare	✓		
Cork City			✓
Cork County	✓		
Dublin City	✓		
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	✓		
Galway	✓		
Kerry			✓
Mayo	✓		
Roscommon			✓
South Dublin	✓	✓	
Tipperary JLC	✓	✓	
Waterford City	✓	✓	✓
Waterford County			✓
Westmeath		✓	
Wexford	✓		✓
Totals	11	4	6

Services to Children

Almost half of all library authorities (15 = 47%) provided talks/lectures for children, for example, by arranging visits to schools by library staff and authors and by organising class and informal visits by children to the library and to events held in the library. Programmes such as *'My favourite book'* were organised and promoted to children and library staff visited crèches, mother and toddler groups etc.

Seven authorities (22%) reported that they arranged workshops on information skills for children on topics such as reference resources, school projects and electronic resources (for 5th and 6th classes). SLS services to children are summarised in Table 5.1.4C below.

Table 5.1.4C *Library Authority Services to Children 2008*

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Talks/Lectures	Workshops on Info Skills
Carlow	✓	✓
Cavan	✓	
Clare	✓	
Cork City		✓
Dublin City	✓	✓
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	✓	
Kerry	✓	
Limerick City	✓	✓
Longford	✓	✓
Mayo	✓	
Roscommon	✓	
South Dublin	✓	✓
Tipperary JLC	✓	
Waterford City	✓	
Waterford County	✓	
Westmeath		✓
Wexford	✓	
Totals	15	7

5.1.5 Additional SLS Services and Activities 2008

Library authorities were asked if they provided schools with the wide range of services listed under the headings included in Table 5.1.5 and Figure 5.1.5 below. They were also asked if they cooperated in any way with local and/or national educational bodies.

Almost half of the respondents (14 = 44%) supported the **SESE** (Social, Environmental and Scientific Education) **curriculum** by various means. These included the purchase of resources directly related to the SESE curriculum in areas of science, the environment and social, personal and health education (SPHE), history and folklore projects and local studies. Many libraries also organised a science week or an engineering week, while others arranged workshops on green issues and other SESE related topics.

Support for **reading development** was provided via the SLS by virtually all authorities (29 = 91%). Examples of measures included the provision of teacher resource materials for reading development, building special needs collections, producing literacy workbooks, 'read & respond' sheets for specific novels and support packs for reluctant readers as well as organising 'writer in residence' programmes and visits by authors and illustrators.

Table 5.1.5 Additional SLS Services and Activities 2008

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	SLS Delivers Activities Specific to SESE Curriculum	SLS Provides Resources in Support of Reading Development	SLS Offers Additional Services (e.g. Homework & Book Clubs etc)	SLS Provides Library Stationery to Schools with In-House Library	Information on the SLS is Included on Library Website	Library Cooperates with Local/National Educational Organisations
Carlow		✓	✓			✓
Cavan	✓	✓	✓			
Clare					✓	
Cork City	✓	✓				✓
Cork County		✓		✓	✓	✓
Donegal	✓	✓			✓	✓
Dublin City		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fingal		✓	✓			
Galway	✓	✓		✓		✓
Kerry	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Kildare		✓	✓		✓	✓
Kilkenny	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Laois		✓		✓		✓

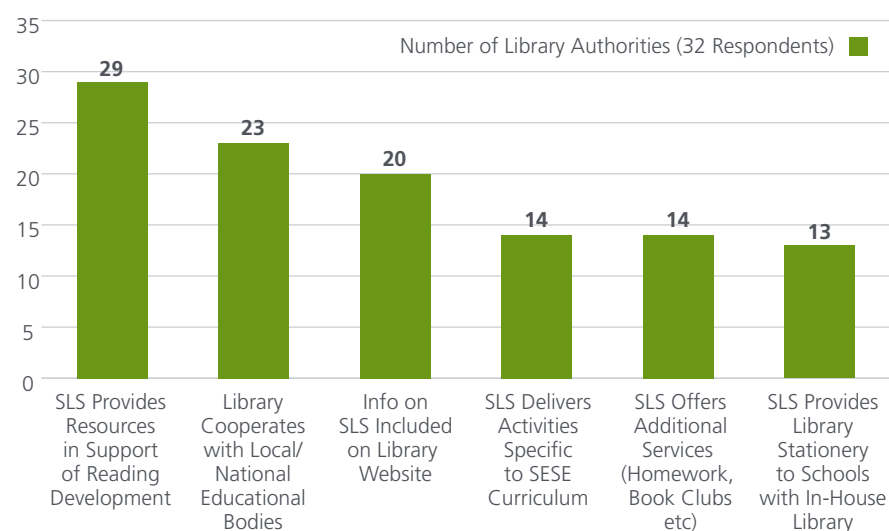
Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	SLS Delivers Activities Specific to SESE Curriculum	SLS Provides Resources in Support of Reading Development	SLS Offers Additional Services (e.g. Homework & Book Clubs etc)	SLS Provides Library Stationery to Schools with In-House Library	Information on the SLS is Included on Library Website	Library Cooperates with Local/National Educational Organisations
Leitrim		✓	✓			✓
Limerick City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Limerick County		✓		✓		
Longford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Louth		✓	✓			
Mayo	✓	✓			✓	✓
Meath		✓		✓	✓	✓
Monaghan				✓	✓	
Offaly			✓	✓		
Roscommon	✓	✓			✓	✓
Sligo		✓			✓	✓
South Dublin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tipperary JLC	✓	✓			✓	✓
Waterford City	✓	✓			✓	✓
Waterford County		✓			✓	
Westmeath		✓			✓	✓
Wexford		✓			✓	✓
Wicklow		✓				✓
Totals	14	29	14	13	20	23

In addition to supporting reader development via the SLS, half of the library authorities (16 = 50%) reported that they **organised reader development activities through their branch library networks**. These activities took the form of class visits to local branch libraries, invitations to schools to attend public events in the branch, engagement of the schools in summer reading schemes, library and heritage weeks, book festivals, visits by authors, illustrators and storytellers, and other cultural events hosted by the branch libraries. Ten respondents specifically stated that they arranged **class visits to local branch libraries**.

The provision of **additional services** was reported by just under half of library authorities (14 = 44%). These mainly consisted of support for homework clubs, afterschool clubs and book clubs as well as parent/child reading schemes. Homework activities included supervision sessions, supply of books for homework clubs, sessions on how to use the library's resources to support and enrich a child's schoolwork, family learning initiatives and arts and crafts activities and events. Thirteen libraries (41%) provide library stationery to schools with an in-house library. Examples of stationery supplied include book labels, pockets for book tickets, reader tickets and bookmarks. Two thirds of respondents (20 = 63%) reported that their website included information on their SLS.

Services and activities are presented in ranked order in Figure 5.1.5.

Figure 5.1.5 Additional SLS Services and Activities 2008



A large majority of public library authorities (23 = 72%) stated that they had **extensive links and actively cooperated with a wide range of voluntary, statutory and professional organisations** at both local and national levels. The following are examples of organisations cited by respondents:

- Local community centres
- Local and regional youth services
- Local learning networks
- Local disability groups
- Local and regional education centres
- Local Vocational Educational Committees (VECs)
- County childcare networks and committees

- The Childcare Company
- Barnardo's
- Children's Books Ireland (CBI)
- School Library Association Republic of Ireland (SLARI)
- Teacher focus groups
- Teachers' Centre of Ireland
- Home-school liaison committees
- Local urban regeneration projects/agencies
- Arts Council
- Poetry Ireland
- Adult education centres and services
- Family learning centres
- Dyslexia Association
- County Education Board
- Department of Education and Science (DES)
- Health Services Executive (HSE)

When asked if any form of **evaluation** of their SLS had been undertaken, one third of authorities (11 = 34%) reported that the service have been evaluated by teachers and only one authority indicated that the service had been evaluated by students. The evaluations were undertaken by means of surveys and the results were used to match services with the needs of schools.

5.1.6 *Dedicated SLS Catalogues and Guides to SLS Resources*

Only 5 library authorities (16%) reported having a separate catalogue of SLS materials and these were available in electronic, online and hardcopy formats. However, half of all authorities (16 = 50%) have produced a guide to the resources offered by their SLS. Details are presented in Table 5.1.6.

Although the majority of library authorities did not have a dedicated SLS catalogue, many of them indicated that they store details relating to their SLS stock on their library management systems which is accessible by library staff only.

Table 5.1.6 *Summary of Catalogues/Guides to SLS Resources 2008*

Library Authority (Response = 31/32)	Dedicated SLS Catalogue	Guide to Resources offered by SLS
Cork County	✓	✓
Donegal	✓	
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown		✓
Fingal	✓	✓
Kerry		✓
Kildare		✓
Kilkenny		✓
Longford		✓
Louth		✓
Mayo		✓
Monaghan		✓
Roscommon		✓
South Dublin		✓
Tipperary JLC	✓	✓
Waterford City	✓	✓
Waterford County		✓
Wexford		✓
Totals	5	16

5.1.7 *Structure of the SLS Within the Library Authority*

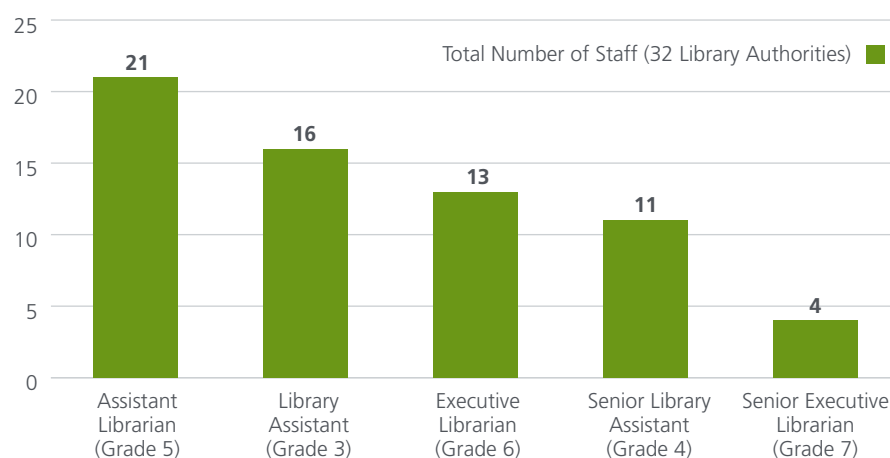
All 32 library authorities operated a SLS. Twenty two (69%) reported that their SLS operated as a separate service, 8 authorities (25%) indicated that the SLS was integrated within a children's and schools' service, one authority (3%) operated the SLS as part of its mobile service and one authority (3%) included it as part of another service.

5.1.8 *Staff Associated Directly with SLS Provision*

The survey identified a total of 65 full-time and part-time library staff and 19 drivers directly involved in the provision of SLSs among the 32 library authorities. Of the 65 library staff, 38 (58%) were professionally qualified librarians (i.e. staff grades 5-7) (see Table 5.1.8 and Figure 5.1.8). The role of drivers in delivering materials directly to schools was also central to the operation of the service in 19 library authorities. In all cases both library staff and drivers were not necessarily dedicated fully to the SLS and had other assignments and responsibilities. The above figures did not include other professional or managerial staff who had overall responsibility for SLSs in a PMDS (performance management development system), or those responsible for facilities and/or bibliographical process management.

Table 5.1.8 *Library Staff Associated Directly with SLS Provision in All 32 Library Authorities 2008*

Staff Category (Response = 32/32)	Senior Executive Librarian (Grade 7)	Executive Librarian (Grade 6)	Assistant Librarian (Grade 5)	Senior Library Assistant (Grade 4)	Library Assistant (Grade 3)	Total Number per Staff Category
Full-time Professional	1	9	8	–	–	18
Part-time Professional	3	4	7	–	–	14
Full-time Non-Professional	–	–	3	9	7	19
Part-time Non-Professional	–	–	3	2	9	14
Total Number per Staff Grade	4	13	21	11	16	65

Figure 5.1.8 *Staff Grades Employed in SLS Provision 2008*

5.1.9 SLS Facilities and Operational Aspects

Twenty eight authorities (88%) reported that they provided a centralised facility dedicated to SLS book processing and/or display and/or an SLS resource collection.

Selection Procedures for SLS Books, CDs and Other Resources

SLS materials could be selected for a school at two separate stages i.e.

- at the *purchasing stage*, when library authority staff and/or teachers from the school could be involved in the selection of materials for purchase, or
- at the *allocation stage*, when materials were selected for individual schools (either by library staff, teachers or both) from the materials already selected, purchased and allocated by library staff for the SLS for the city or county.

The survey revealed that, at the *purchasing stage*, in 24 library authorities (75%) selection of SLS materials was made exclusively by library staff, while in 7 cases (22%), both teachers and library staff were involved in the selection of SLS materials. The latter 7 authorities included Dublin City, Fingal, Kerry, Kildare, Limerick County, Louth and Waterford County. Only one library authority (Leitrim) reported that selection was made exclusively by teachers at the purchasing stage.

At *allocation stage*, 6 library authorities (19%) reported that decisions on the allocation of materials for schools were made exclusively by library staff (Carlow, Monaghan, Sligo, Roscommon, Waterford County and Wexford). Selection at this stage was made exclusively by teachers in the case of 9 library authorities (28%) (Clare, Cork City, Donegal, Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Kildare, Longford, South Dublin and Westmeath). However, the majority of library authorities, 17 (53%), used a combination of both of the above approaches.

Delivery of Materials

Practical arrangements for the delivery of SLS materials to schools operated as follows (see Table 5.1.9 and Figure 5.1.9):

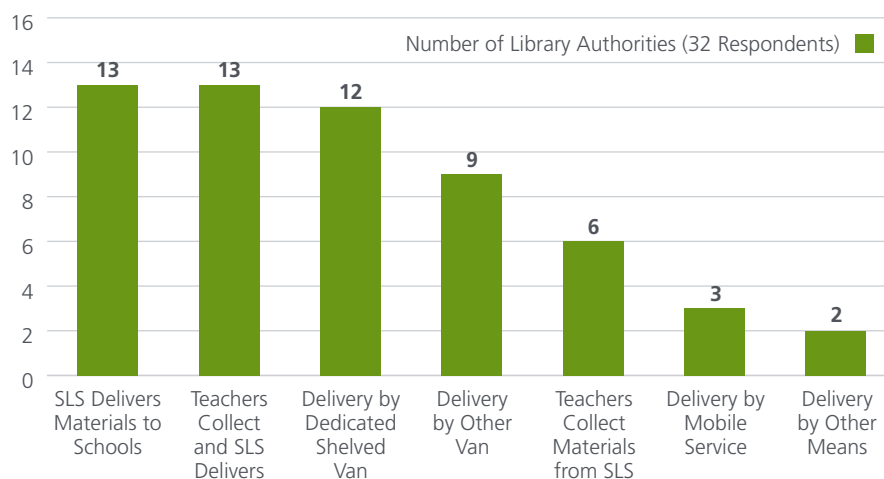
- 6 library authorities (18%) reported that teachers visited the SLS and collected the allocation for their school (Clare, Cork City, Donegal, Dublin City, Laois and South Dublin)
- 13 library authorities (41%) arranged the delivery of materials to schools.
- In the case of a further 13 library authorities (41%), a combination of the above two arrangements applied.

The following methods of transport were used to deliver materials to schools:

- 12 authorities (38%) used a dedicated shelved van;
- 9 (28%) used a delivery van;
- 3 (9%) used the mobile service;
- 2 (6%) used other methods, specifically, delivery by a library staff member in his/her car.

Table 5.1.9 Logistics of Collection/Delivery of SLS Materials to Schools 2008

Library Authority (Response = 32/32)	Teachers Visit & Collect Materials from SLS	SLS Arranges Delivery of Materials to Schools	Teachers Visit/ Collect AND SLS Delivers to Schools	Delivery by Dedicated Shelved Van	Delivery by Other Van	Delivery by Mobile Service	Delivery by Other Means
Carlow		✓			✓		
Cavan		✓		✓			
Clare	✓						
Cork City	✓						
Cork County			✓			✓	
Donegal	✓						
Dublin City	✓						
Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown		✓			✓		
Fingal			✓			✓	
Galway			✓	✓			
Kerry			✓		✓		
Kildare			✓		✓		
Kilkenny			✓	✓			
Laois	✓						
Leitrim		✓				✓	✓
Limerick City			✓				✓
Limerick County		✓			✓		
Longford		✓		✓			
Louth			✓	✓			
Mayo		✓		✓			
Meath		✓			✓		
Monaghan		✓		✓			
Offaly			✓	✓			
Roscommon		✓		✓			
Sligo		✓		✓			
South Dublin	✓						
Tipperary JLC			✓	✓			
Waterford City			✓		✓		
Waterford County			✓		✓		
Westmeath		✓		✓			
Wexford			✓				
Wicklow		✓			✓		
Totals	6	13	13	12	9	3	2

Figure 5.1.9 *Logistics of Collection/Delivery of SLS Materials to Schools 2008*

5.2 A Follow-up Survey of Public Library Authorities (2009): Plans for Services to Primary Education Following the Withdrawal of the DES Grant

All 32 library authorities were surveyed by telephone interview in June 2009 in order to assess the impact of the withdrawal of the DES SLS grant on public library services to primary education. All 32 library authorities responded to the survey.

5.2.1 *Primary Schools and Students Served by Library Authorities*

In all, the 32 library authorities claimed to serve a total of 3,269 primary schools, including 821 DEIS, 183 Gaelscoileanna and 111 other special schools. The average number of schools served by a library authority was 102 (maximum 304, minimum 21). A total of 484,492 students were registered in the 3,269 schools and the average number of students served by a library authority was 15,140 (maximum 43,912, minimum 3,400). These results are summarised in Table 5.2.1.

Table 5.2.1 *Primary Schools Served by Library Authorities 2009*

Response from 32/32 Library Authorities	Primary Schools Served by 32 Library Authorities	DEIS School (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools)	Gaelscoil	Other Special School (e.g. in a Hospital, Special Needs etc)	Students Served by 32 Library Authorities
Total (All respondents)	3,269	821	183	111	484,492
Average	102	26	6	4	15,140
Maximum	304	106	41	32	43,912
Minimum	21	21	0	0	3,400

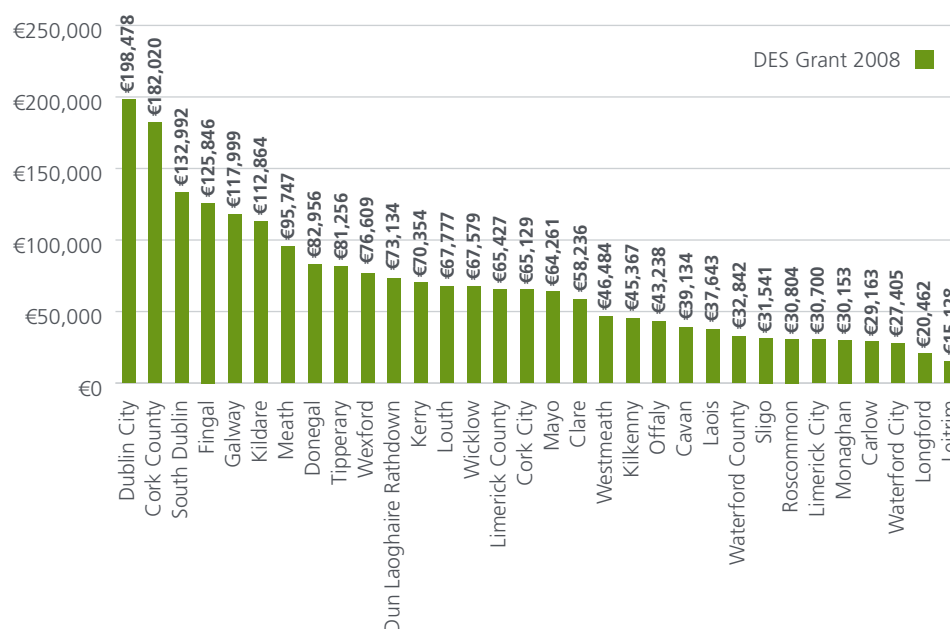
5.2.2 *Library Expenditure on Service to Primary Education in 2008*

32 library authorities reported a total spend of €2.9 million from their general library budgets on services to primary education (Table 5.2.2A). This was supplemented by a DES grant of just under €2.2 million amounting to a total expenditure of over €5 million on services to primary education in 2008. These figures indicate that 58% of the total spend on the SLS in 2008 was borne by the library authorities and the remaining 42% was covered by the DES grant. Twelve authorities reported that they spent a total of €313,488 from their 2008 library acquisitions budget (i.e. over and above their DES grant income) on books and other learning resources which were directed specifically into primary schools (see Table 5.2.5A below). The additional funds committed from general acquisitions budgets for this purpose varied from €3k to €98k with an average spend of €26.1k.

Table 5.2.2A *Expenditure on Service to Primary Education 2008*

Response from 32 Library Authorities	Spend from General Library Budget 2008	DES Grant 2008	Total Spend on Service to Primary Education 2008
Total (All respondents)	€2,991,444	€2,198,727	€5,190,170
Average	€93,483	€68,710	€162,193
Maximum	€253,597	€198,478	€382,020
Minimum	€1,000	€15,128	€16,128

The total annual SLS per capita grant received by each library authority from the DES is summarised in Figure 5.2.2A. This grant was withdrawn in the October 2008 budget and the figures therefore represent the loss in direct, ring-fenced revenue that has been incurred by each authority for the provision of SLSs in 2009.

Figure 5.2.2A Total SLS DES Grant per Library Authority 2008

Details of total expenditure, in ranked order, by each library authority on services to primary education in 2008 are presented in Table 5.2.2B below.

Table 5.2.2B Total Expenditure by Library Authorities on Services to Primary Education 2008

Library Authority	Spend from Library Budget 2008	DES Grant 2008	Total Spend on SLS 2008
Cork County	€200,000	€182,020	€382,020
Kildare	€253,597	€112,864	€366,461
Fingal	€217,986	€125,846	€343,832
Dublin City	€96,371	€198,478	€294,849
Galway	€160,000	€117,999	€277,999
South Dublin	€123,000	€132,992	€255,992
Kerry	€140,853	€70,354	€211,207
Donegal	€112,469	€82,956	€195,425
Meath	€93,000	€95,747	€188,747
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	€112,000	€73,134	€185,134
Mayo	€120,000	€64,261	€184,261
Wexford	€105,000	€76,609	€181,609
Roscommon	€150,000	€30,804	€180,804
Kilkenny	€129,824	€45,367	€175,191

Library Authority	Spend from Library Budget 2008	DES Grant 2008	Total Spend on SLS 2008
Tipperary JLC	€69,785	€81,256	€151,041
Louth	€79,000	€67,777	€146,777
Cavan	€104,720	€39,134	€143,854
Limerick County	€78,365	€65,427	€143,792
Westmeath	€66,529	€46,484	€113,013
Wicklow	€42,421	€67,579	€110,000
Limerick City	€78,000	€30,700	€108,700
Monaghan	€77,000	€30,153	€107,153
Longford	€85,000	€20,462	€105,462
Clare	€45,000	€58,236	€103,236
Waterford County	€70,000	€32,842	€102,842
Cork City	€35,000	€65,129	€100,129
Offaly	€50,829	€43,238	€94,067
Carlow	€35,000	€29,163	€64,163
Sligo	€30,000	€31,541	€61,541
Laois	€15,000	€37,643	€52,643
Waterford City	€14,695	€27,405	€42,100
Leitrim	€1,000	€15,128	€16,128
Totals	€2,991,444	€2,198,727	€5,190,170

5.2.3 Planned Public Library Policy for Service to Primary Education in and from 2009

Following the withdrawal of the SLS grant by DES, almost two thirds of library authorities (20 = 63%) reported that they intend to refocus the delivery of services to the primary education sector by means of the general public library service from 2009 onwards. One third (11 = 34%) of authorities propose to continue the SLS as it was operated in 2008, but do not intend to purchase any new materials. Five authorities (16%) reported that they will deliver an SLS via the mobile library service while the same number intend to close down the SLS completely. Only three library authorities (9%) propose to continue the SLS to the 2008 standard.

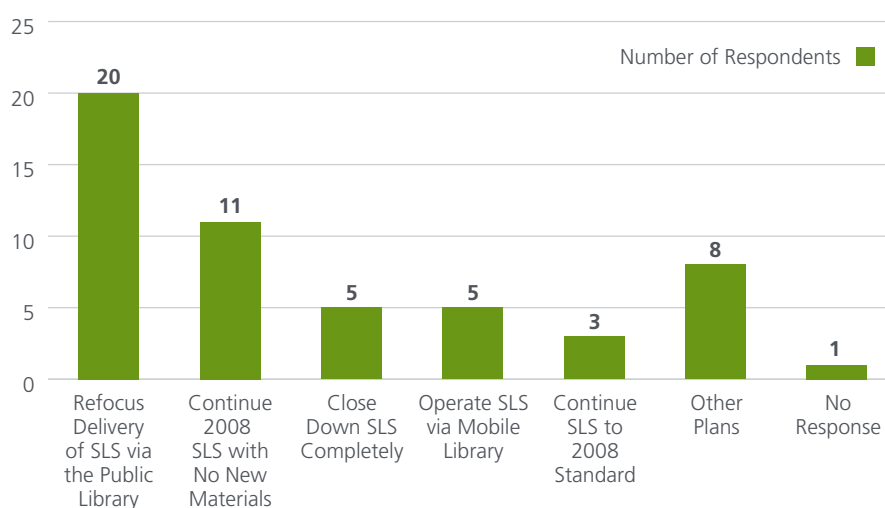
Other proposed policies to be implemented from 2009 following the withdrawal of the DES grant include the development of “linkages to schools via the branch library network, class visits, events promotion etc.”, provision of “limited special collections for teachers in HQ”, making block loans available for teachers and schools either from HQ or via small exchanges from branch libraries and an “expansion of the public library’s general services for children with a focus on education”.

These results are summarised in Table 5.2.3 below.

Table 5.2.3 *Planned Public Library Policy for SLS in 2009 in Absence of DES Grant*

Planned Action in 2009 and beyond	No of Respondents	% Respondents
Refocus delivery of SLS via the Public Library	20	63%
Continue 2008 SLS with no new materials	11	34%
Other plans	8	25%
Close down SLS completely	5	16%
Operate SLS via Mobile Library	5	16%
Continue SLS to 2008 standard	3	9%
No response	1	3%

Figure 5.2.3 *Planned Public Library Policy for SLS in 2009 in Absence of DES Grant*



5.2.4 Plans for Public Library Services to Primary Education in and from 2009

When questioned on plans for services to primary education in 2009 and beyond, the vast majority of library authorities reported that they intend to refocus delivery of the SLS via the general library service (28 = 88%) and by class visits to the public library's headquarters and/or the branch library network (27 = 84%). Approximately two thirds of authorities propose to assist and/or advise schools on stock selection and library organisation. One in three authorities (31%) will provide research support services for SESE activities and approximately one in five authorities (7 = 22%) will provide continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers. The results are summarised in Table 5.2.4 below.

Table 5.2.4 Public Library Plans for Services to Primary Education in/from 2009

Proposed Action by Library Authority	No of Respondents	% Respondents
Refocus delivery of SLS via the Public Library	28	88%
Class visits to Public Library	27	87%
Assist/advise schools on stock selection	22	69%
Assist/advise schools on library organisation	20	63%
Provide research support services for SESE activities	10	31%
Provide CPD for teachers	7	22%
Other services	7	22%
No response	1	3%

5.2.5 Likely Library Authority Expenditure on Children's Services in 2009

Likely Expenditure on Books and Other Learning Materials Specifically for Primary Schools in 2009

Twelve library authorities reported that they expect to spend a total of €174,564 from their 2009 general acquisitions budgets on books and other learning resources which will be directed specifically into primary schools. The estimates of additional funds that are likely to be committed from much reduced general acquisitions budgets for this purpose varied from €2.2k to €25k with an average spend of €14.7k. The remaining authorities will not be committing any funds for the purchase of books and other learning materials specifically for primary schools.

Details of likely expenditure in 2009 are presented in Table 5.2.5A and actual expenditure for this purpose in 2008, totalling €313,488 (equivalent to an average spend of €26.1k by 12 authorities), is also presented for comparison. Library authorities not included in the table did not allocate funds for this purpose in 2008 and/or do not anticipate expenditure in this category in 2009.

Table 5.2.5A *Estimated Likely Expenditure on Books etc for Primary Schools 2009*

Library Authority	Likely Spend – Books for Primary Schools 2009	Expenditure – Books for Primary Schools 2008
Roscommon	€25,000	€15,000
Waterford County	€23,000	€40,000
Westmeath	€23,000	€0
Limerick County	€20,352	€0
Tipperary JLC	€20,000	€25,000
Cork City	€17,000	€0
Meath County	€15,000	€0
Kildare	€13,758	€0
Louth County	€7,500	€0
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	€5,000	€20,000
Monaghan	€4,774	€0
Kilkenny County	€2,180	€37,956
Fingal County	€0	€97,986
Sligo	€0	€30,000
Longford	€0	€20,000
Wexford	€0	€11,000
Waterford City	€0	€7,500
Donegal County	€0	€5,964
Cavan	€0	€3,082
Totals	€176,564	€313,488

Likely Expenditure on Books and Other Information Resources for Children in 2009

The 32 library authorities expect to spend a total of approximately €2.6 million in 2009 on books and other resource materials for their general collections for children of primary school age. These resources are intended for distribution throughout their branch libraries. This compares with an estimated expenditure of €3.17 million for this purpose in 2008. Details of likely expenditure in 2009, and actual expenditure in 2008, on books and other information resources for children are presented in Table 5.2.5B.

Table 5.2.5B *Estimated Likely Expenditure on Books, etc, for Children's General Collections in 2009*

Library Authority	Likely Spend – Books for Children's Collection 2009	Expenditure – Books for Children's Collection 2008
Dublin City	€290,000	€292,358
Fingal County	€200,000	€215,465
Kildare	€175,000	€170,497
Cork County	€153,000	€261,381
Wexford	€140,000	€110,000
South Dublin	€135,000	€155,000
Limerick County	€127,862	€64,936
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	€126,000	€181,000
Donegal County	€120,000	€67,725
Laois County	€120,000	€115,480
Kerry Library	€100,000	€100,000
Cork City	€95,000	€127,600
Meath County	€85,000	€85,000
Westmeath	€85,000	€86,000
Clare	€77,800	€94,800
Tipperary JLC	€70,000	€70,000
Wicklow	€65,000	€70,245
Mayo County	€55,000	€80,000
Offaly	€45,000	€43,000
Roscommon	€45,000	€54,000
Waterford County	€40,000	€40,000
Cavan	€35,000	€25,591
Longford	€35,000	€40,000
Galway County	€30,000	€235,000
Kilkenny County	€26,078	€50,702
Monaghan	€25,000	€60,000
Louth County	€22,500	€46,164
Waterford City	€20,906	€11,675
Carlow	€19,500	€125,000
Limerick City	€18,500	€35,370
Sligo	€15,000	€49,800
Leitrim	€10,000	€10,000
Totals	€2,607,146	€3,173,789

5.2.6 Comments on the Withdrawal of the DES Grant

Twenty-nine (91%) of the 32 library authorities commented on the withdrawal of the DES grant. The general consensus was that it was a short-sighted, retrograde and regrettable step on the part of DES and that it will have a negative, detrimental impact on literacy levels and will adversely affect rural communities and the less well off.

The following are some examples of comments:

- *An absolute disgrace and a short-sighted decision.*
- *This is a retrograde step for learning and information skills in children.*
- *Shocked and dismayed that such a 'value for money' essential grant was abolished.*
- *Children in schools that are not located near public libraries, and families in remote areas with low literacy levels, will be badly affected.*
- *Totally regrettable – cannot understand the logic of withdrawing such a service – DES need to provide support for library resources as part of enhancing primary school education.*
- *The withdrawal of the grant will devastate the school library with the subsequent negative impact felt by generations of school children.*
- *The withdrawal of this service will impact heavily on our already overstretched branch libraries that will have to cater for some schools.*
- *Withdrawal (of the grant) is contrary to the stated aims and objectives of both the DES and the Library Service including literacy (particularly for young children), social inclusion and cultural integration.*
- *The withdrawal of funding will leave classes seriously under-resourced as DES funded books have become a key support for the curriculum.*
- *The withdrawal of the DES grant has collapsed the SLS in the County in view of the current climate. Already the staff and resources previously assigned to the SLS are getting sucked into other areas of service and/or lost in cut-backs.*

5.2.7 Comments on Possible Opportunities created by the Withdrawal of the DES Grant

Twenty-nine (91%) of the 32 library authorities made comments under this heading. Although some respondents found it difficult to perceive the withdrawal of the DES grant as an opportunity of any kind, a large proportion of respondents were of the view that the removal of the grant, together with the recent onset of an economic recession, has precipitated a need for “a reassessment of all services and service development plans”.

The following were identified by respondents as the main opportunities for public library service developments: i.e. opportunities to:

- Re-evaluate public library services to primary education.
- Redefine the SLS with a view to standardisation.
- Integrate the SLS within the main library service.
- Reconsider and refocus the area of service delivery to children.

- Encourage branch libraries to develop closer ties with teachers and pupils in local schools.
- Introduce the wider public library system directly to children and promote more broadly based study and leisure reading.
- Engage more directly in delivering information skills to teachers and children.
- Distinguish between the roles of DES and the public library authority.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The results of the 2008 and 2009 surveys of public library authorities are summarised below.

5.3.1 The 2008 Survey

The survey of the 32 public library authorities in mid-2008 revealed the following:

Provision of Reference Materials

Fourteen authorities (44%) provided reference materials specifically for use by schools while the remainder did not. Examples of reference materials supplied included encyclopaedias, dictionaries, maps and atlases, bibliographies, remedial textbooks, special needs materials and electronic resources such as *World Book* and *Britannica Online*, available on library PCs.

SLS Materials and Formats

All 32 authorities loaned books to primary schools under the SLS scheme and 20 also loaned CDs. 9 authorities (28%) loaned DVDs and 7 (22%) loaned software packages. Other materials made available on loan included audiotapes, audio-books, book/CD packs, tactile books, literacy packs, reading kits, flash cards, educational toys, maps, AV materials, videos (including storytelling on video), large format books, games, learning puzzles, musical instruments and scores.

Loan Arrangements

Twenty authorities (63%) offered permanent block loans of SLS materials to schools and 19 (59%) offered temporary block loans. In the case of the latter arrangement, where materials were exchanged, the frequencies varied from once a term to twice a year. 15 authorities (47%) provided short-term loans over periods ranging from one week to a year.

Collections to Meet Specific Needs

A wide range of special collections was made available to schools on a short-term loan basis. These included teacher resource collections, the "class novel", multicultural collections, project materials, reading schemes, special needs materials, dual-language books, local studies, games and musical instruments.

Support Services for Teachers

All authorities provided some level of support for teachers. These included the following in ranked order – advice on setting up a school library (29=91% of authorities), talks/lectures (23=72%), current awareness (19=59%), training activities (7=22%) and workshops on information skills (5=16%). Current awareness services included annual visits and awareness raising sessions either in the school or the library, promotional materials and postings on library websites.

Support Services for Parents and Children

One third of authorities (11=34%) provided talks/lectures for parents on a wide range of topics such as the importance of books and reading. Four authorities organised workshops on information skills for parents and 6 offered current awareness services. In the case of children, almost half of authorities offered talks/lectures by library staff and/or authors either in the library or the school. Class visits to the library were a regular feature of the SLS and in some authorities children's workshops on information skills for project work were also arranged in cooperation with the schools.

Additional SLS Services and Activities

The majority of authorities (29=91%) provided resource materials in support of reading development and almost half (14=44%) supported activities specific to the SESE curriculum, as well as offering assistance and facilities for homework, book clubs etc. and supplying library stationery to schools. Twenty authorities (63%) included SLS information on their websites.

Dedicated SLS Catalogues

Although only 5 authorities (16%) had a separate catalogue of SLS materials in electronic, online and/or hardcopy formats, half of them had produced a guide to the resources offered by their SLS. In many authorities library staff could access details relating to their SLS stock by means of the library management system.

Structure of the SLS Within the Library Authority

More than two thirds (22) of the 32 library authorities operated their SLSs as a separate service.

SLS Staff

Sixty-five full-time and part-time library personnel, together with 19 drivers, were engaged nationwide in providing the SLS. Of the 65 library staff, 38 (58%) were professionally qualified librarians. In all cases library staff and drivers were not necessarily dedicated full-time to SLS services and had other assignments and responsibilities. These figures do not take account of other professional and managerial staff with overall responsibilities for the SLS.

Dedicated Centralised SLS Facility

Twenty-eight authorities (88%) provided a centralised facility dedicated to SLS book processing and/or display and/or an SLS collection.

Selection of SLS Materials

Selection of SLS materials (books, CDs etc.) was made at either the purchasing stage or the stage at which materials were allocated to schools. At the purchasing stage the selection was made exclusively by library staff in 24 authorities (75%) and by both teachers and library staff in 7 authorities (22%). At the allocation stage materials were selected by both teachers and librarians in 17 authorities (53%), exclusively by teachers in 9 authorities (28%) and exclusively by library staff in 6 authorities (19%).

Delivery/Collection of SLS Materials

SLS materials were delivered directly to schools by 13 library authorities (41%). In the case of 6 authorities (19%), teachers collected materials from the library and a combination of both methods applied in 13 authorities (41%). Deliveries and collections were made using delivery vans, the mobile library service or staff members' private vehicles.

Cooperation with Educational Bodies

Twenty-three authorities (72%) stated that they cooperated with local, regional and/or national educational bodies citing a wide range of organisations including local community, youth, family learning and adult education centres, county education boards, teacher organisations such as teacher focus groups and the Teachers' Centre of Ireland, professional bodies such as SLARI, local urban regeneration projects, VECs, children's book publishers and national government agencies such as DES and the HSE.

5.3.2 The 2009 Follow-up Survey

The follow-up survey, undertaken in 2009 to assess the impact of the withdrawal of the DES per capita grant to local authorities for the provision of books and other resource materials to primary schools, revealed the following:

Primary Schools Served by Library Authorities

The 32 library authorities were responsible for managing and administering the SLS to a total of 3,269 primary schools throughout the country with a total student enrolment of 484,492.

Library Expenditure on Services to Primary Education in 2008 and 2009

National expenditure on the SLS in 2008 amounted to €5,190,170, composed of €2,991,444 allocated from the general budgets of the 32 library authorities (58% of total SLS expenditure) and a DES per capita grant of €2,198,478, amounting to 42% of the total expenditure on the SLS. In addition to the DES grant, 12 library authorities spent €313,488 in 2008 on books and other learning materials which were specifically allocated and purchased for delivery to primary schools. In 2009, 12 authorities expect to spend a total of €176,564 on books and other learning materials for primary schools. The remaining 19 authorities will not be allocating any funds for this purpose.

Library Authority Expenditure on Children's Services in 2008 and 2009

Expenditure in 2008 by all 32 library authorities on books and other library materials for general children's collections in library headquarters and throughout the branch libraries amounted to €3,173,789. The corresponding figure for 2009 is expected to be €2,607,146.

Planned Library Authority Policy for Service Provision to Primary Education in 2009 and Beyond

In the absence of the DES grant, two thirds of library authorities (20=63%) planned to refocus the delivery of an SLS via the general public library service and one third (11=34%) intended to continue the 2008 SLS with no new additional materials. 5 authorities (16%) proposed to close down the SLS completely while another 5 intended to operate the SLS via the mobile library service. Only 3 authorities (9%) proposed to continue the SLS to the same standard as in 2008.

Planned Library Authority Services to Primary Education in 2009 and Beyond

Most library authorities (28=88%) planned to refocus delivery of the SLS via the general public library service and most (27=84%) indicated that they will support class visits to the library. Approximately two thirds of respondents (22=69%) intended to assist or advise schools on stock revision (22=69%) or on the organisation of a school library (20=63%). One in three authorities (10=31%) indicated that they will provide research support services for the SESE curriculum and one in five authorities (7=22%) will offer CPD for teachers.

Comments on the Withdrawal of the SLS Grant by DES

The general consensus was that it was a short-sighted, retrograde and regrettable step on the part of DES and that it will have a negative, detrimental impact on literacy levels and will adversely affect rural communities and the less well off.

Comments on Possible Opportunities Created by the Withdrawal of the SLS Grant by DES

Although some respondents found it difficult to perceive the withdrawal of the DES grant as an opportunity of any kind, a large proportion of respondents were of the view that the removal of the grant, together with the recent onset of an economic recession, has precipitated a need for *"a reassessment of all services and service development plans"*. Some authorities considered that it would encourage branch libraries to develop closer ties with teachers and pupils in local schools and would serve to introduce the wider public library system directly to children and promote more broadly based study and leisure reading.

Chapter 6

POLICIES AND PROSPECTS FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOLS LIBRARY SERVICE IN IRELAND: A SURVEY OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

As part of the second phase of this project, a survey of school principals and teachers was undertaken in early September 2008 to obtain feedback on the Schools Library Service (SLS) provided to schools. Principals and teachers from schools in the catchment areas of the five library authorities represented on project Steering Group Committee (SGC) (Dublin City, Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow) were asked to complete a postal questionnaire.

The survey of school principals and teachers sought to collect information on the following in relation to the SLS:

- Teacher profiles – schools and classes in which they teach.
- Usage of the SLS by schools.
- Schools' assessment of the range of library loan materials provided by the SLS.
- Levels of satisfaction among schools regarding information resources and formats made available via the SLS.
- Logistics and local arrangements for collecting library materials from the SLS.
- Uses of SLS materials by the school.
- Sources used by students to find information for SESE projects.
- Schools' views on advisory services offered by public libraries.
- Frequency of class visits to the local public library.
- Schools' participation in activities organised by the public library.
- Information on libraries in schools, including staffing of the library.
- Additional views and comments on the SLS.

In 2008, the SLS was supported by a DES per capita grant of €4.52 per primary school student which was allocated for book stock and other resource materials for primary schools. However, this grant was withdrawn in the October 2008 budget and, although library authorities had received the grant for the 2008-2009 academic year, it was clear that no such grant would apply from the 2009-2010 session onwards.

Because of this important development, it was necessary to undertake a follow-up survey of school principals and teachers in June 2009 to ascertain the impact of the withdrawal of the DES grant on their plans, if any, for an alternative to the SLS in the 2009-2010 school year and beyond.

This chapter reports on the findings of both the 2008 survey and the 2009 follow-up survey of school principals and teachers in the catchment areas of the five library authorities represented on the project's SGC.

6.1 A Survey of School Principals and Teachers (2008)

In September 2008, 449 questionnaires (see Appendix 3) were issued to the five library authorities represented on the project's SGC. This number represented 75% of the school population in the catchment areas of the five authorities. 260 Irish language questionnaires were also distributed to facilitate those wishing to respond in Irish.

The five authorities represented a cross section of urban and rural-based schools and the responses reflect the difficulty of access to library services for many rural schools, both for library visits and for online resources in areas with limited broadband provision.

A target quota for questionnaire completion was set at 50% and within one month responses were received from 307 schools, representing 51% of the total school population under investigation. Details of the responses returned by each library authority are presented in Chapter 2.

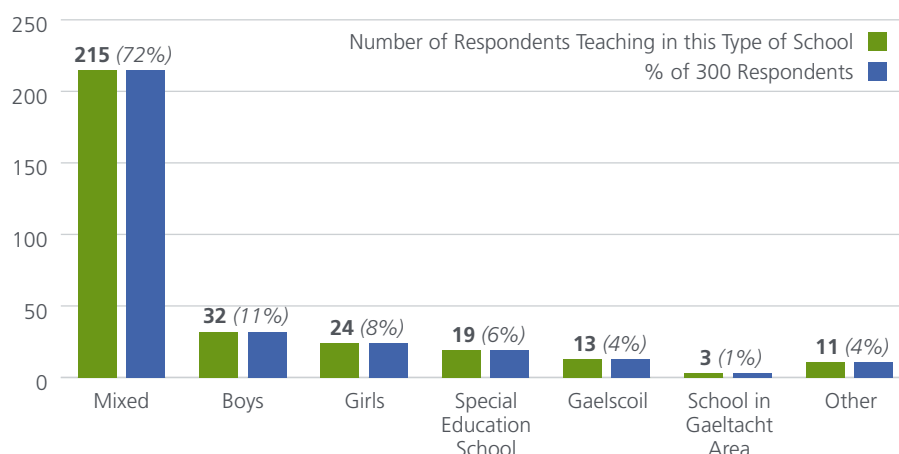
The results of the survey are presented in the following sections.

6.1.1 Types of School

Most respondents taught in mixed schools (68%) with relatively small numbers employed in single gender schools (boys' schools 10% and girls' schools 8%). Most of the special education schools (16/19) were located in Dublin.

Table 6.1.1 *Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2008*

Type of School (More than One Type May Apply)	No. of Respondents Teaching in this Type of School	% of 300 Respondents
Boys	32	11%
Girls	24	8%
Mixed	215	72%
Special Education School	19	6%
Gaelscoil	13	4%
School in Gaeltacht area	3	1%
Other	11	4%
Number of responses to the question	300	
No answer	7	

Figure 6.1.1 *Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2008*

A quarter of the schools in which respondents were employed were designated disadvantaged schools (see table below).

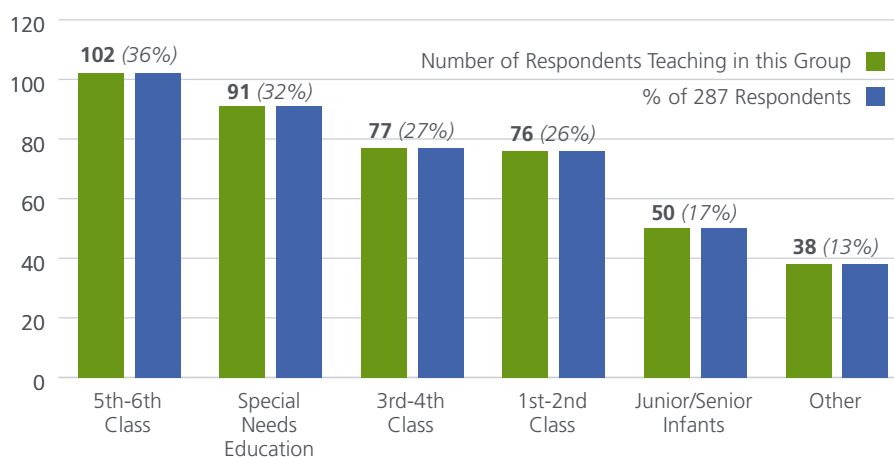
Is Your School a Designated Disadvantaged School?	Number of Responses	% of 291 Respondents
Yes	70	24%
No	221	76%
Number of responses to the question	291	
No answer	16	

6.1.2 Class Groups Taught by Respondents

Of the 287 responses to the question, the largest group (102/287 = 36%) was teaching 5th and 6th classes, both of which included SESE in the curriculum. Special needs group teachers also featured significantly (91/287 = 32%) and there was an equal distribution among the 1st-2nd (26%) and 3rd-4th (27%) class group teachers who responded. Details are presented in Table 6.1.2 and in ranked order in Figure 6.1.2 below.

Table 6.1.2 *Class Groups Taught by Respondents 2008*

Class Group (More than One Type May Apply)	No. of Respondents Teaching this Group	% of 287 Respondents
Junior/Senior Infants	50	17%
1st-2nd Class	76	26%
3rd-4th Class	77	27%
5th-6th Class	102	36%
Special needs education	91	32%
Other	38	13%
Number of responses to the question	287	
No answer	20	

Figure 6.1.2 *Class Groups Taught by Respondents 2008*

Class groups classified under 'other' included the following:

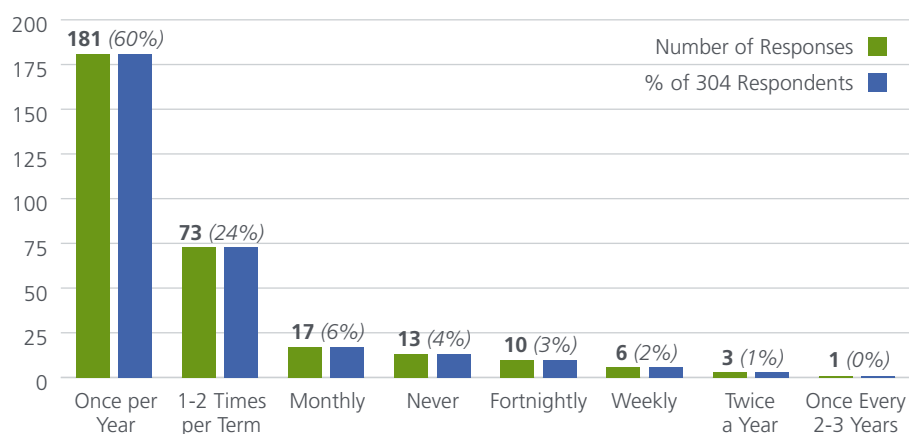
- English as an additional language
- Resource teacher for travellers (RTT)
- Pre-school pupils (3-5 years)
- Music teacher
- Learning support
- Language support

6.1.3 Frequency of Contact with the SLS

Most respondents (181=60%) reported that they had contacted their SLS only once in the past year (i.e. during 2007-8) and the next significant group reported a frequency of 1-2 times per term (73 = 24%).

Table 6.1.3 *Frequency of Contact with SLS 2007-8*

How Often have You had Contact with Your School Library Service in the Past Year?	Number of Responses	% of 304 Respondents
Once per year	181	60%
1-2 times per term	73	24%
Monthly	17	6%
Never	13	4%
Fortnightly	10	3%
Weekly	6	2%
Twice a year	3	1%
Once every 2-3 years	1	0%
Number of responses to the question	304	
No answer	3	

Figure 6.1.3 *Frequency of Contact with SLS 2007-8***6.1.4** *Requests for Materials for Purchase from the SLS*

More than three quarters of teachers (230 = 77%) had not requested materials for purchase from their SLS in the past year (2007-8). Some respondents indicated that they were unaware that this facility was available to them (see table 6.1.4 below).

Table 6.1.4 *Requests for Materials for Purchase from the SLS 2007-8*

Have you requested materials for purchase from your School Library Service in the past year?	Number of Responses	% of 299 Respondents
No	230	77%
Yes	69	23%
Number of responses to the question	299	
No answer	8	

6.1.5 *Satisfaction Ratings for Choice of Loan Materials Provided by the SLS*

Teachers were asked to give a satisfaction rating for the choice of material available for loan from their SLS under the following headings:

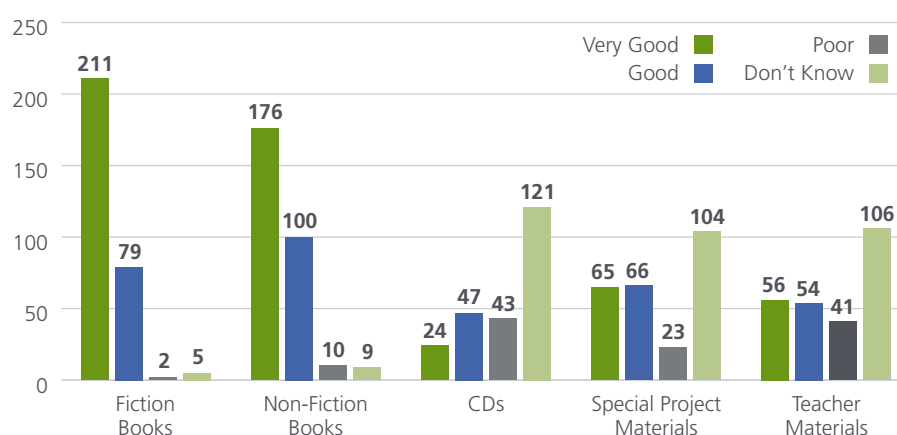
- Fiction books
- Non-Fiction books
- CDs
- Special project materials e.g. multicultural resources
- Teacher materials e.g. special needs materials

The results are summarised in Table 6.1.5 and Figure 6.1.5 below:

Table 6.1.5 *Teacher Satisfaction Rating for Choice of Loan Materials Available from the SLS 2008*

Satisfaction Rating	Fiction Books for Students		Non-Fiction Books for Students		CDs		Special Project Materials (e.g. Multicultural Resources)		Teacher Materials (e.g. Special Needs Materials)	
	Response	% of 297	Response	% of 295	Response	% of 235	Response	% of 258	Response	% of 257
Very good	211	71%	176	60%	24	10%	65	25%	56	22%
Good	79	27%	100	34%	47	20%	66	26%	54	21%
Poor	2	1%	10	3%	43	18%	23	9%	41	16%
Don't know	5	2%	9	3%	121	51%	104	40%	106	41%
Number of responses to question	297		295		235		258		257	
No Answer	10		12		72		49		50	
Total	307		307		307		307		307	

Figure 6.1.5 *Satisfaction Ratings for Loan Materials Available from SLS 2008*



An Overview of the Response on Loan Materials

The majority of teachers considered the choice of fiction books available from the SLS to be either *very good* (211/297 = 71%) or *good* (79/297 = 27%). The choice of non-fiction books also rated highly with 60% (176/295) of teachers regarding them as *very good* and 34% (100/295) rating them as *good*.

The reaction to CDs was less favourable – 72 of 307 schools (24%) did not respond to this part of the question, 51% of those who responded (121/235) did not have a view (*don't know*), and there was an almost equal division between those who considered the CD selection either *good* (20%) or *poor* (18%). Only 10% of respondents rated the choice of CDs available from the SLS as *very good*.

The choice of special project materials was rated as *very good* by 25% of the 258 respondents and was considered to be *good* by 26%. Four in ten teachers (104/258 = 40%) did not have a view (*don't know*) and 49 of 307 schools (16%) did not respond.

In the case of teacher materials, the counts for the '*don't knows*' (106/257 = 41%) and the non-respondents (50/307 = 16%) was almost identical to the feedback on special project materials. Approximately one fifth of teachers considered the choice of teacher materials to be *very good* (56/257 = 22%) and a further fifth rated them as *good* (54/257 = 21%). Teacher materials available from the SLS were rated as *poor* by 16% of respondents.

Fiction and Non-fiction Books

The overall results of the survey on the range of fiction and non-fiction books available from the SLS indicated that the variety of materials was considered to be very satisfactory and many respondents complimented the library authorities on their excellent services. However, there was evidence of an increasing demand for more new reading materials and for more information to be provided to teachers on the various formats and categories of resources provided by the SLS.

Some suggestions for improved and extended reading content included the following:

- Gaeilge books
- High interest, low reading age books
- Current popular fiction for 5th and 6th classes
- Books on fiction, sport and quizzes for children of 9 to 12 years.
- History and science books for classwork
- Dual language books
- A better selection of books for multi/inter-cultural lessons for younger children
- Non-English to English dictionaries
- Books on comprehension, thinking skills and problem solving
- Books with accompanying CDs
- Music and art materials

CDs, Special Project and Teacher Materials

There was a high proportion of non-response and *don't knows* in these categories which, on the basis of comments made by many respondents, was due to the fact that teachers were unaware that these materials were available from the SLS. In other words, the SLS was perceived primarily as a facility for providing books only. This would suggest that library authorities need to promote the SLS to a greater degree than at present and teachers also need to make themselves more aware of what is available to their schools.

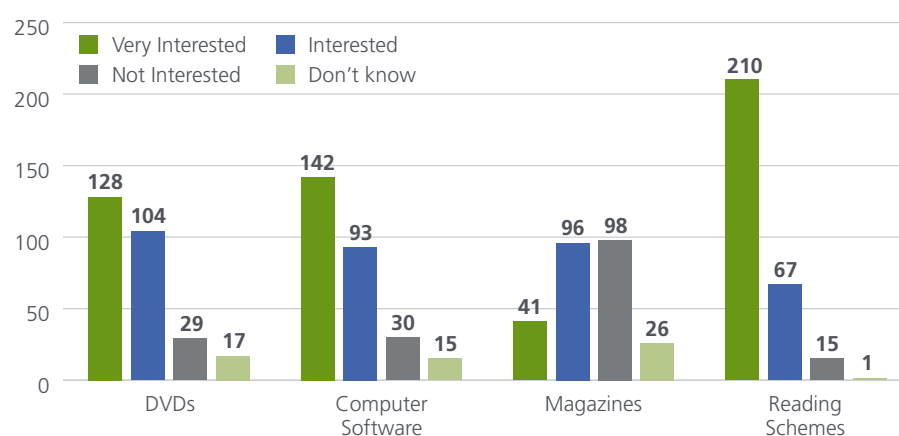
6.1.6 Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials

Respondents were asked to specify their levels on interest in a range of formats and resource materials and response rates to the question were relatively high, the lowest being 85% for magazines. The results are presented in Table 6.1.6 and Figure 6.1.6 below.

Table 6.1.6 Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials 2008

	DVDs		Computer Software		Magazines		Reading Schemes (e.g. Oxford Reading Tree)	
Interest Rating	Response	% of 278	Response	% of 280	Response	% of 261	Response	% of 293
Very interested	128	46%	142	51%	41	16%	210	72%
Interested	104	37%	93	33%	96	37%	67	23%
Not interested	29	10%	30	11%	98	38%	15	5%
Don't know	17	6%	15	5%	26	10%	1	0%
Number of responses to question	278		280		261		293	
No Answer	29		27		46		14	
Total	307		307		307		307	

Figure 6.1.6 Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials 2008



The highest level of interest was shown in reading schemes with a return of 72% of respondents saying that they were *very interested*. Taking all levels of interest into account, (i.e. *interested* and *very interested*) the results for each category were ranked as follows:

- Reading schemes (72% + 23% = 95%)
- Computer software (51% + 33% = 84%)
- DVDs (46% + 37% = 83%)
- Magazines (16% + 37% = 53%)

More than one third of respondents (38%) stated that they had no interest in magazines, which may reflect a perceived lack of relevance of magazines to the school curriculum compared to books and electronic media.

In addition to expressing their levels of interest in various information resources and formats, respondents were invited to make comments on the choice of formats available to the school through the SLS. The following are some examples of the responses received.

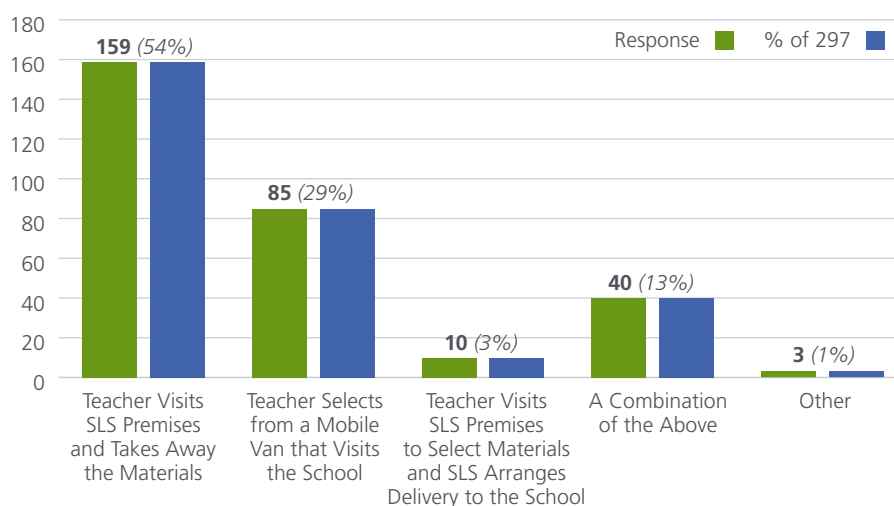
- *In general we tend to use books only, and the reading schemes.*
- *Mostly books (fiction, non-fiction, big books) are received – need more DVDs, computer software, magazines*
- *Didn't know DVD, computer software or magazines were available.*
- *Wide range of novels, reference books – could have a bigger selection of teacher resources.*
- *Interactive computer software would be very useful.*
- *Computer software for special needs teachers would be a welcome addition.*
- *As a Gaelscoil the availability of material 'as Gaeilge' is a tremendous resource.*
- *Excellent service*

6.1.7 Arrangements for Collecting Materials from the SLS

The most popular means of collecting library materials from the SLS was an arrangement whereby a teacher visited the SLS premises and took materials back to the school – this procedure was reported in the case of half (53%) of the responding schools. Only a very small number of teachers (3%) visited the SLS premises and arranged delivery by the SLS to the schools. Just over a quarter (29%) of schools acquired SLS materials by selecting stock from a mobile van that visited the school. A smaller number of respondents (13%) used a combination of the above arrangements. Details are presented in Table 6.1.7 and Figure 6.1.7.

Table 6.1.7 Arrangements for Collecting Library Materials from SLS 2008

Means of Collection (More than One Method May Apply)	What is your Arrangement for Collecting Materials from your SLS?	
	Response	% of 297
Teacher visits SLS premises and takes away the materials	159	54%
Teacher selects from a mobile van that visits the school	85	29%
Teacher visits SLS premises to select materials and SLS arranges delivery to the school	10	3%
A combination of the above	40	13%
Other	3	1%
Number of responses to the question	297	
No answer	10	
Total number of questionnaires returned	307	

Figure 6.1.7 Arrangements for Collecting Materials from SLS 2008

When asked if their arrangements for collection of library materials from SLS were satisfactory, three quarters of respondents (81%) were happy with the procedures in place and 19% considered them to be unsatisfactory (see table below).

Is this Arrangement Satisfactory?	Response	% of 291
Yes	237	81%
No	54	19%
Number of responses to the question	291	
No answer	16	

Some of the reasons given for teachers' dissatisfaction with arrangements for collection of SLS materials included the following:

- *Too far to travel. Teacher absent for half a day.*
- *Often takes a long time to get an appointment.*
- *Schools are getting busier each year and to have delivery of books would be a great help.*
- *Delivery to the school would be wonderful.*
- *If you get there late in the year the service is very limited.*
- *Mobile van should visit more often*
- *Mobile unit will not get to us until November and so choice may be limited*
- *Limited choice. Limited time to select materials.*
- *Too infrequent, annual visit is not enough.*
- *Tá sé deacair don mhúinteoir an rang a fhágáil agus am a chaitheamh ag roghnaigh leabhair (It is difficult to leave the class to spend the time choosing books)*

- Teachers working in different areas, subjects don't get to choose suitable books.
- We the teachers and pupils do not get to select.
- Not enough input into choice of books on mobile van allowed from teachers.
- It needs to be planned – teacher time out etc. A list of available material beforehand.
- Online service would be handy. Could see what schemes etc are available and arrange collection.

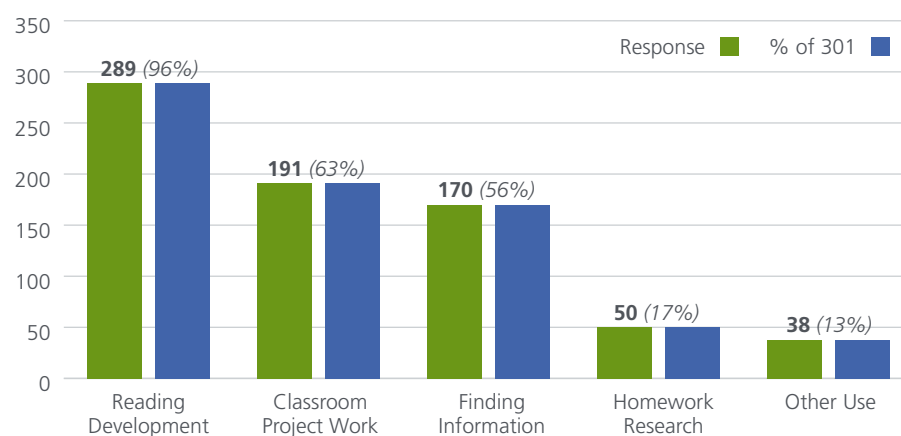
6.1.8 Schools' Use of the Materials Provided by the SLS

The main uses of the library materials acquired from the SLS were reported to be reading development (96%), classroom projects (63%), searching for information (56%) and homework research (17%) (see Table 6.1.8 and Figure 6.1.8 below).

Table 6.1.8 *Uses of SLS Materials 2008*

Use of SLS Materials (More than One May Apply)	Response	% of 301
Reading development	289	96%
Classroom project work	191	63%
Finding information	170	56%
Homework research	50	17%
Other use	38	13%
Number of responses to the question	301	
No answer	6	

Figure 6.1.8 *Uses of SLS Materials 2008*



Other uses of SLS materials included the following

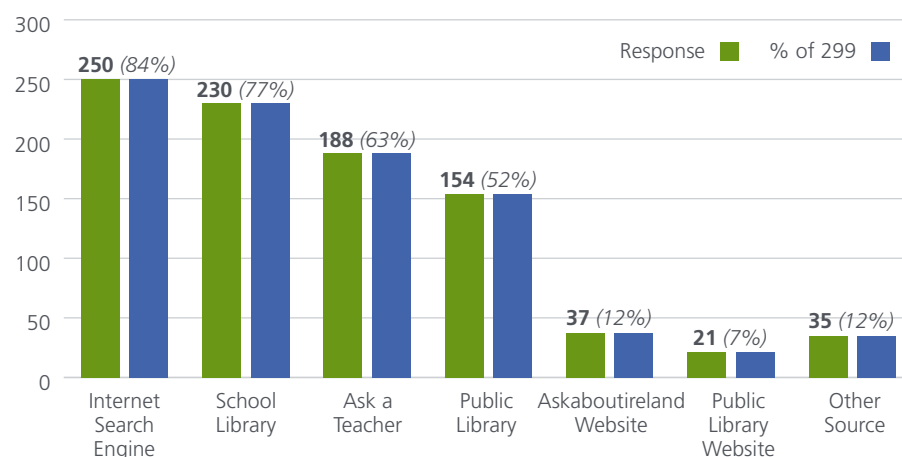
- Inclusion of SLS materials in the school/class libraries
- Supplementary readers for classrooms
- Parent/pupil reading initiatives
- Language. E.A.L. (English as an Additional Language) extension readers.
- Reading for pleasure
- Special education learning support
- Language development
- Teacher resource and reference.

6.1.9 Sources of Information Used by Students for SESE Project Work

Teachers were asked to identify sources used by students to find information for SESE work. The top three most frequently cited sources were Internet search engines (250 = 84% of respondents), followed by the school library (230 = 77%) and asking the teacher (188 = 63%). The public library also featured significantly as a source for SESE work and was cited by half of the respondents (52%), although public library websites were identified by only 21 respondents (7%). The *Askaboutireland* website was not widely used for this purpose and was cited by only 35 respondents (12%). Details are presented in Table 6.1.9 and Figure 6.1.9

Table 6.1.9 Sources Used by Students for SESE Work 2008

Sources Used by Students for SESE Work (More than One May Apply)	Response	% of 299
Internet search engine	250	84%
School library	230	77%
Ask a teacher	188	63%
Public library	154	52%
Askaboutireland website	37	12%
Public library website	21	7%
Other source	35	12%
Number of responses to the question	299	
No answer	8	

Figure 6.1.9 Sources Used by Students for SESE Work 2008

A small number of respondents (35 = 12%) indicated that students used sources other than those listed in Table 6.1.9. The following are some examples:

- Parents at home
- Reference sources, e.g. encyclopaedias
- Books in general use in the school
- Books at home
- Teachers' books
- Magazines and newspapers

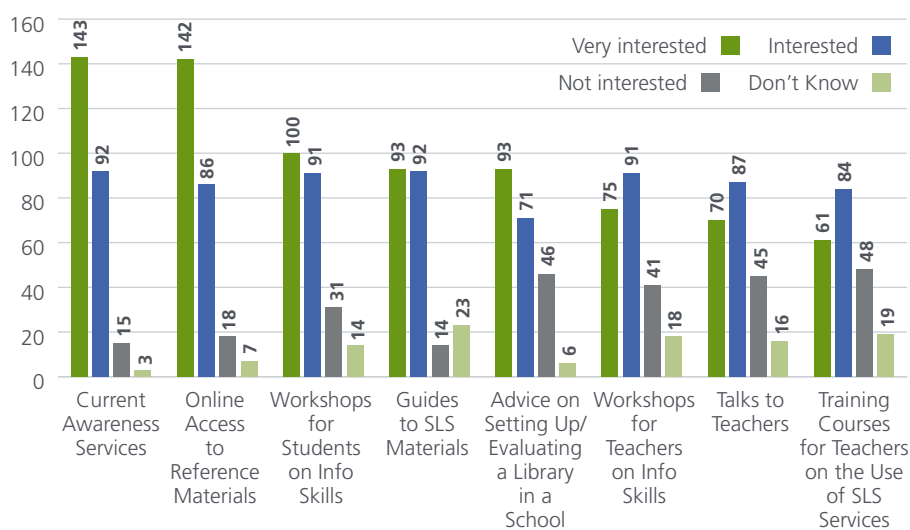
6.1.10 School Library Services of Potential Interest to Teachers

When teachers were asked about possible services and/or facilities that might be of interest to them, the top three identified by the 297 schools that responded were current awareness services (e.g. about public library events etc.), online access to reference materials (e.g. encyclopedias) and information skills workshops for students. The above three categories returned combined counts of 235, 228 and 191 respectively for those who claimed to be interested or very interested in the service.

There was also widespread interest in all the other services listed in the questionnaire with combined 'interested' and 'very interested' counts relatively high for each category (see Table 6.1.10 and Figure 6.1.10).

Table 6.1.10 *Services/Facilities of Interest to Teachers 2008 (Response 297/307)*

Service/Facility of Possible Interest to Teachers (More than One May Apply)	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested	Don't Know	Total Responses	Response as % of 297
Current awareness services	143	92	15	3	253	85%
Online access to reference materials	142	86	18	7	253	85%
Workshops for students on information skills	100	91	31	14	236	79%
Guides to SLS materials	93	92	14	23	222	75%
Advice on setting up/evaluating a library in a school	93	71	46	6	216	73%
Workshops for teachers on information skills	75	91	41	18	225	76%
Talks for teachers	70	87	45	16	218	73%
Training courses for teachers on the use of SLS services	61	84	48	19	212	71%

Figure 6.1.10 *Services/Facilities of Interest to Teachers*

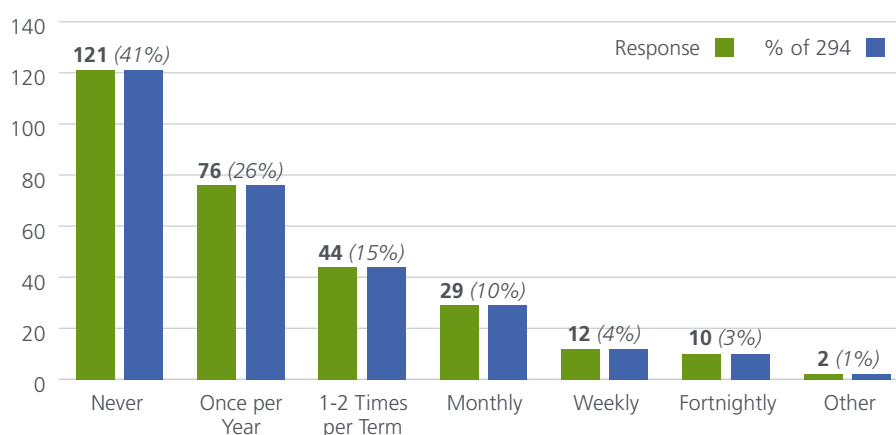
6.1.11 Frequency of Class Visits to the Local Public Library

Most schools (41%) had not arranged class visits to the local public in the past year (i.e. 2007-8) and of those that did, the most popular frequency was once a year (26%) followed by once or twice a term (15%). One in ten schools (10%) had made class visits once a month. The results are presented in Table 6.1.11 and Figure 6.1.11.

Table 6.1.11 Frequency of Class Visits to the Local Public Library 2007-8

Frequency of Class Visits to Local Public Library in the Past Year	Response	% of 294
Never	121	41%
Once per year	76	26%
1-2 times per term	44	15%
Monthly	29	10%
Weekly	12	4%
Fortnightly	10	3%
Other	2	1%
Number of responses to the question	294	
No answer	13	

Figure 6.1.11 Frequency of Class Visits to Local Public Library in the Past Year



Location and distance from the local public library were among the main reasons given for infrequent class visits. In some cases, frequent visits to the school by a mobile library or a library van served as a substitute for class visits to the library. It was also noted by some respondents that many students attend public libraries individually rather than as class groups.

6.1.12 Class Participation in Activities Organised by the Local Public Library

162 respondents (56%) reported that their classes had not participated in any activities organised by their local public library in the past year (i.e. 2007-8) and 128 (44%) had engaged with the library (Table 6.1.12).

Table 6.1.12 Participation in Activities Organised by the Local Public Library 2007-8

Did Your Class Participate in Any Activities Organised at Your Local Public Library?	Response	% of 290
No	162	56%
Yes	128	44%
Number of responses to the question	290	
No answer	17	

Examples of library organised events and activities which classes had attended included the following:

- Children's book week and 'readathons'
- Reading by authors, book signing
- Story-telling sessions
- Poetry reading
- Art, colouring, writing competitions
- Cultural events
- Book displays for children
- Music, drama, dance, book-making workshops
- Puppet sessions
- Book Detective reading schemes over the summer months

The main reasons given for not participating in library events focused on the difficulties caused by distance from the library and the need to make special and sometimes costly travel arrangements for groups of pupils.

6.1.13 Schools with a Designated Library

There was an almost equal divide between schools that had a designated library (47%) and those that did not (53%) (see table below).

Is there a Designated Library in Your School?	Number of Responses	% of 300 Respondents
No	158	53%
Yes	142	47%
Total number of responses	300	
No answer	7	

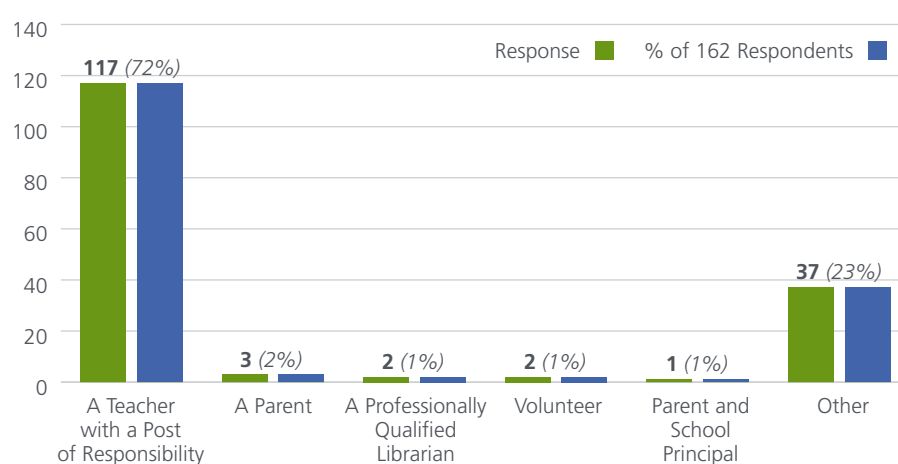
In cases where a school did not have a designated library, the most popular alternative arrangement was classroom libraries of fiction and non-fiction materials, usually organised and maintained by individual teachers in each classroom. Some schools also reported having teacher resource libraries. Some respondents highlighted the problem of limited accommodation as a barrier to allocating a designated library space.

In schools with a designated library, the library was usually managed by a teacher with a post of responsibility (see Table 6.1.13 and Figure 6.1.13).

Table 6.1.13 *Management of the School Library 2008*

Who Manages the School Library?	Number of Responses	% of 162 Respondents
A teacher with a post of responsibility	117	72%
A parent	3	2%
A professionally qualified librarian	2	1%
Volunteer	2	1%
Parent and School Principal	1	1%
Other	37	23%
Number of responses to the question	162	
No answer	145	

Figure 6.1.13 *Management of the School Library 2008*



Respondents who ticked the 'other' category (37/162 = 23%) referred not only to a designated library but also to classroom libraries which were managed mainly by teachers who were not designated as library managers. Special needs assistants also featured prominently as helpers in library organisation and management and in some cases students were involved in the process. In one case the school secretary managed the library.

6.1.14 General Comments on the SLS

The following are some examples of additional general comments by respondents:

Dublin City

- *A fantastic and very beneficial service for schools. Very helpful staff also.*
- *Yearly allocation of books has been greatly appreciated by schools, especially when funds were low.*
- *The staff are always very helpful and we appreciate their support.*
- *The service is very good. However, guides to the services would be extremely helpful as we were unaware of some of the choices of loan material and formats available to us until now.*
- *As the post holder in my school with responsibility for the school and class libraries, I would like more contact with a liaison person in the public library service where links could be developed to work together.*
- *We would be interested in the provision of literary events for our school in conjunction with the SLS.*
- *The school library service should continue to be well funded to continue to provide an excellent ancillary service to Irish primary schools.*

Kerry

- *I feel that the library is a great facility. The staff are extremely helpful at all times.*
- *Regarding our local library, they are great to keep us informed of different events and very welcoming and supportive any time we visit.*
- *School library service is valued resource for our rural primary school.*
- *Their range of books in the van could be increased.*
- *Regular visits from school library service would benefit the school, especially pupils who live long distances from Kenmare Public Library. Visits would be much appreciated.*
- *We're always looking for new books/CDs etc as Gaeilge.*
- *Librarian might come to schools and talk to children about the service. Some children are not using the library. Should encourage children to take parents.*
- *Mobile Library very satisfactory especially when school not located in or near town.*

Longford

- *A welcome and useful service.*
- *Invaluable to schools.*
- *Whereas the library in our area may have limited resources, the staff are excellent, knowledgeable and helpful.*
- *Ba mhaith liom go mbuailfeadh an leabharlannaí le múinteoirí agus daltaí chun a fháil amach na leabhair a bhfuil spéis acu iontu agus chun déan cur síos ar seirbhísí na leabharlainne (It would be nice for the librarian to meet the teachers and students to find out what books they are interested in and to give an account of the library services).*

- *Is áis iontach atá ann do pháistí agus múinteoir araon. Ba chóir más féidir níos mó iarrachtaí a dhéanamh, páistí a mhealladh le ballrasacht a ghlacadh sa leabharlann áitiúil (It is a wonderful resource for children and teachers. If possible more effort should be made to encourage local library membership).*
- *I would be very interested in a CDROM educational software that could be made available through the library.*
- *It comes once per term. Maybe more frequent visits would help.*
- *A wonderful service for children – perhaps mobile libraries could be made more accessible for children by improving access (steps) to van. Make them friendly and safe.*

Wexford

- *Excellent service – would like if a mobile service was in operation to schools too. Wexford SLS provides an excellent service.*
- *It's a wonderful service and the kids love getting the books from it.*
- *Staff in SLS and local library staff (where we have block loan) are exceptionally helpful.*
- *There is a need for a qualified librarian to run an effective library service especially in schools on the edges of towns which are 25 minutes walk from the library.*
- *Reinstate library budget.*
- *The staff who run the local mobile library service to our area in North Wexford are excellent with students and staff. They always follow up any queries staff or students have. Extremely helpful and friendly.*
- *Most interested in (1) mobile library (2) author visits (3) story telling activities in school (4) information of SLS.*
- *Most valuable contribution apart from the book supply is the professional advice given to teachers by specialist librarians in children's books. For rural schools transport costs are a deterrent to visit town libraries.*

Wicklow

- *Very valuable service to have in a rural community.*
- *The mobile library service has worked really well for us. However I think the service available needs to be updated and expanded. Schools need to be made aware of services available. Assistance of the library service in setting up school book clubs would be appreciated.*
- *More liaison between library and school is required and much more frequent visits are essential.*
- *Would like more contact.*
- *Our knowledge of services from SLS seems very limited. We get and return books each year – that seems to be it! The school library has just recently been set up but it's not up and running as yet. Cataloguing and a borrowing method have to be discussed and finalised. Advice and guidelines would be most welcome.*

6.2 A Follow-up Survey (2009): School Library Services Following the Withdrawal of the DES Grant

The purpose of the follow-up survey in June 2009 was to elicit the views of school principals and teachers on the likely impact of the withdrawal of the DES capitation grant to local authorities on library services to primary schools, on proposed policies and strategies for library service provision within schools, on the roles of all stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents and public library authorities and to explore likely developments for the future of schools library services in the light of the new budgetary arrangements.

A response to a questionnaire survey (see Appendix 5) was received from 353 schools, representing 59% of the total school population of 595 in the catchment areas of the five public library authorities represented on the project's SGC i.e. Dublin City, Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow. Details of the responses from the five library authorities are presented in Chapter 2.

The results of the survey are presented in the following sections.

6.2.1 Type of School

Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents represented national schools (299) followed by DEIS schools (55), special education schools (27) and Gaelscoileanna (16).

Table 6.2.1 *Types of School in which Respondents were Employed 2009*

Types of School	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
National	121	70	21	47	40	299
DEIS	43	2	2	8	0	55
Special Education	21	2	1	2	1	27
Gaelscoil	8	4	1	2	1	16
School in Gaeltacht area	0	5	0		0	5
Other school	4	0	0	0	0	4
No response to question	0	0	0	0	0	0

6.2.2 Number of Registered Students

The total student population recorded by the response to the survey was 53,263. The actual number of pupils represented by the 353 schools is greater than this figure because of the non-response by 29 schools to this question. It was not possible to provide an overall breakdown of gender distribution because only a very small proportion of respondents in one local authority provided this information.

Table 6.2.2 *Number of Registered Students 2009*

Number of Students (N.B. Totals Nos. of Boys + Girls May Not Compute to Total Nos. of Students Due to Non-Response Re Gender Balance)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Boys	14216	3766	1573	4318	859	-
Girls	8863	3647	1358	4492	927	-
Total*	27519	7445	2931	9852	5516	53263
No response to question*	17	7	0	5	0	29

6.2.3 Access to Telecommunications

Virtually all schools reported having access to broadband (348 of the 352 responses).

Table 6.2.3 *Access to Telecommunications 2009*

Telecommunications	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Access to broadband	158	76	22	52	40	348
Access to dial-up				2		2
No access to bb/dial-up		2				2
No response to question	0	1	0	0	0	1

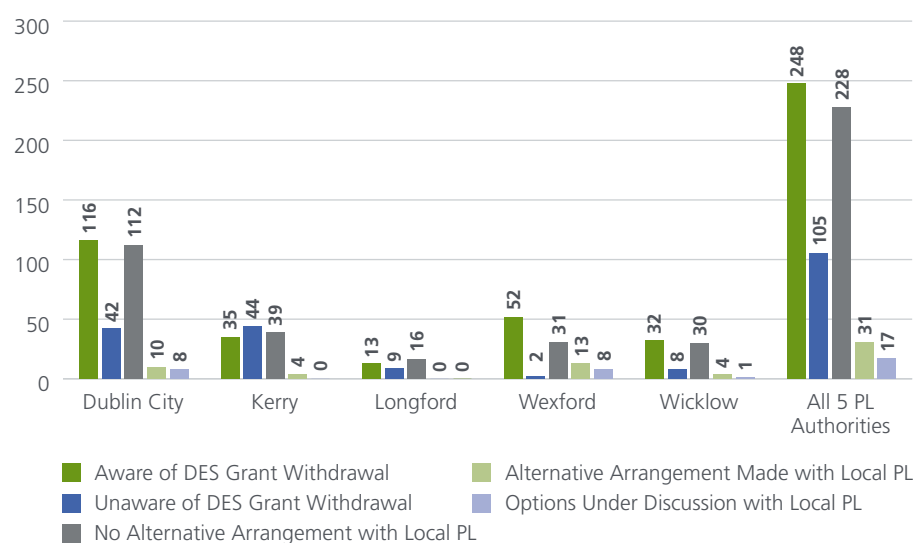
6.2.4 Awareness that the DES Funding for the Local Authority Library Service was Withdrawn in the October 2008 Budget

70% of respondents (248/353) were aware of the cessation of the DES grant. Almost two thirds of schools (228/353 = 65%) had not made any arrangements with their local public library to operate an alternative to the SLS. Only a small number had made any progress in this regard – 31 schools (9%) had already made arrangements and 17 schools (5%) were in discussions with their local libraries.

Table 6.2.4 Awareness of Withdrawal of DES Grant/Alternative to SLS

Awareness of Grant Withdrawal by DES	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Aware	116	35	13	52	32	248
Unaware	42	44	9	2	8	105
No alternative arrangement made with local Public Library	112	39	16	31	30	228
Alternative arrangement made with local Public Library	10	4	0	13	4	31
Options under discussion with local Public Library	8	0	0	8	1	17
No response to question on awareness of grant withdrawal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 6.2.4 Awareness of DES Grant Withdrawal/Alternative to SLS



6.2.5 School Plans for an Alternative to the SLS Previously Provided by the Public Library Authority

Of the 341 schools that responded to this question, the vast majority (291 = 85%) did not have any clearly defined plans in place as an alternative to the SLS. The remaining 50 respondents (15%) reported that they have formulated a plan to deal with the change in circumstances.

Table 6.2.5 School Plans for an Alternative to the SLS 2009

Does the School have Any Plans in 2009-2010 for an Alternative to the SLS Previously Provided by the Library Authority?	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
No	136	66	20	34	35	291
Yes	22	6	2	16	4	50
No response to question	0	7	0	4	1	12

6.2.6 2009-2010 Budget Allocation for Purchase of Books and Other Library Materials

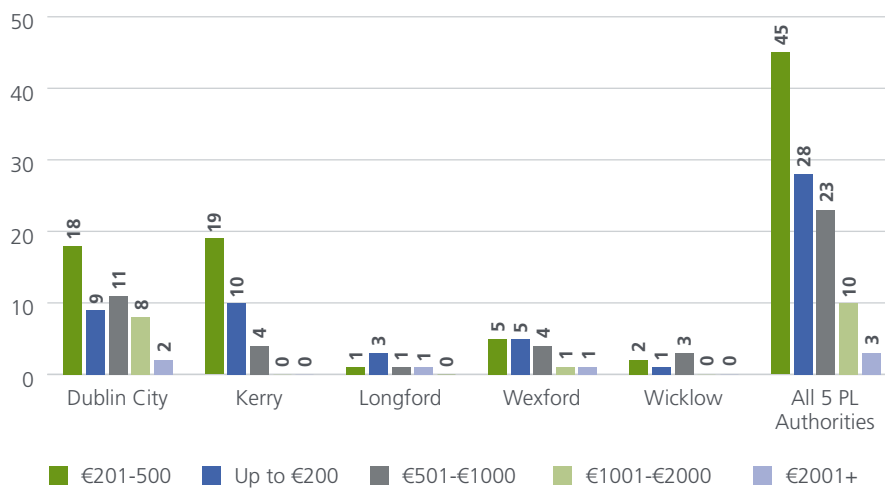
The majority of respondents (134/348 = 39%) did not intend to purchase books and other library materials from the school's capitation grant, mainly because the latter was already over-stretched in meeting general school overheads. There was also a sizeable proportion of "don't knows" (102/348 = 29%), presumably because of the many uncertainties facing schools in the current economic climate. The remaining 112 (32%) intended to allocate relatively small budgets of less than €1,000 for this purpose (see Tables 6.2.6A and 6.2.6B).

Table 6.2.6A Intention to Purchase Books/Library Materials from School Capitation Grant 2009

Do you Intend to Purchase Books and Other Library Materials from the School's Capitation Grant?	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
No	58	23	6	22	25	134
Yes	48	35	7	15	7	112
Don't know	48	21	9	16	8	102
No response to question	4	0	0	1	0	5

Table 6.2.6B *Expected Budget Allocation for Purchase of School Library Materials 2009-2010*

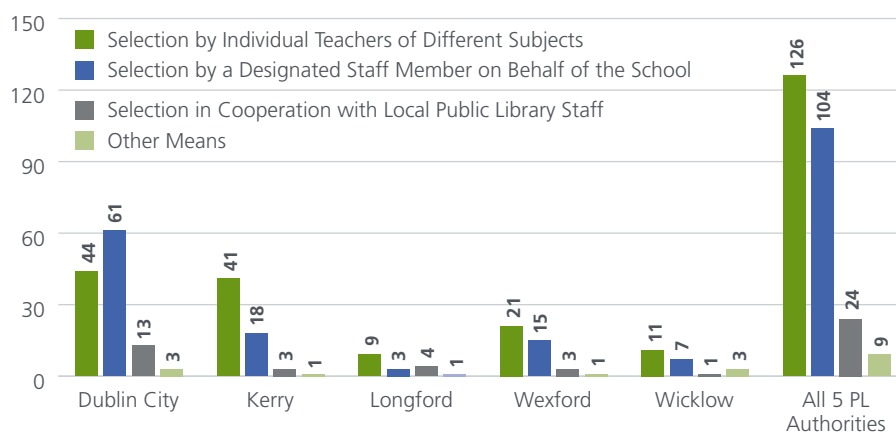
Expected Budget Allocation for Purchase of School Library Materials in 2009-2010	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
€201-500	18	19	1	5	2	45
Up to €200	9	10	3	5	1	28
€501-1000	11	4	1	4	3	23
€1001-2000	8	0	1	1	0	10
€2001+	2	0	0	1	0	3
No response to question	110	46	16	38	34	244

Figure 6.2.6B *Expected Budget Allocation for Purchase of Library Materials 2009-2010***6.2.7 Selection Procedures for Purchase of Library Materials**

Because of the limited number of schools intending to buy books etc., only one in every two schools responded to this question ($198/353 = 56\%$). Of these, two thirds ($126 = 64\%$) favoured selection by individual teachers of different subjects while approximately half ($104 = 53\%$) intended to allow a designated staff member to act on behalf of the school. A relatively small number ($24 = 12\%$) intended to work in cooperation with local public library staff. It should be noted that some respondents indicated that they intended to employ two or more of the above methods of selection.

Table 6.2.7 *Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase 2009*

Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase (More than One Option May Apply)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Selection by individual teachers of different subjects	44	41	9	21	11	126
Selection by a designated staff member on behalf of the school	61	18	3	15	7	104
Selection in cooperation with local public library staff	13	3	4	3	1	24
Other means	3	1	1	1	3	9
No response to question	76	21	10	24	24	155

Figure 6.2.7 *Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase*

6.2.8 School Plans for a Library Service in 2009-2010

Although only 50 respondents indicated that their school had a plan for an alternative to the SLS (see Table 6.2.5 above), 271 responded to the options listed in Table 6.2.8 below as a means of providing an alternative to the SLS. Presumably this means that although a firmed up plan may not have been in place at the time of the survey, one or more of the options in Table 6.2.8 would be the most likely means of dealing with the situation in the 2009-2010 school year.

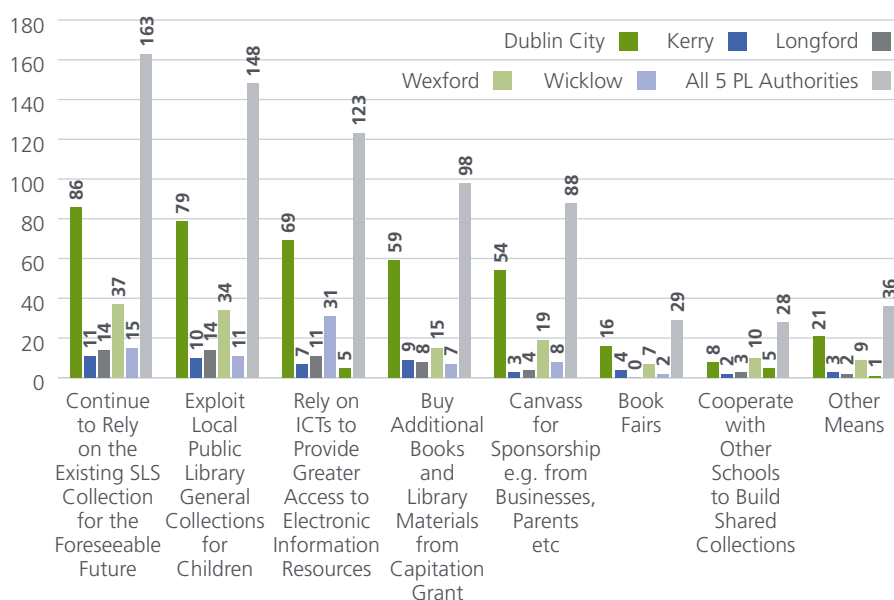
The top three options favoured by schools were

- Continued reliance of the existing SLS collection (60% respondents)
- Exploitation of the public libraries' general collections for children (55% respondents)
- Reliance on ICTs to more fully exploit electronic information resources (45% respondents)

It should be noted that many respondents chose more than one option.

Table 6.2.8 *School Plans for a Library Service in 2009-2010*

Plans for a Library Service in 2009-2010 (More than One Option May Apply)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Continue to rely on the existing SLS collection for the foreseeable future	86	11	14	37	15	163
Exploit local public library general collections for children	79	10	14	34	11	148
Rely on ICTs to provide greater access to electronic information resources	69	7	11	31	5	123
Buy additional books and library materials from capitation grant	59	9	8	15	7	98
Canvass for sponsorship e.g. from businesses, parents etc	54	3	4	19	8	88
Book fairs	16	4	0	7	2	29
Cooperate with other schools to build shared collections	8	2	3	10	5	28
Other means	21	3	2	9	1	36
No response to question	25	32	4	3	18	82

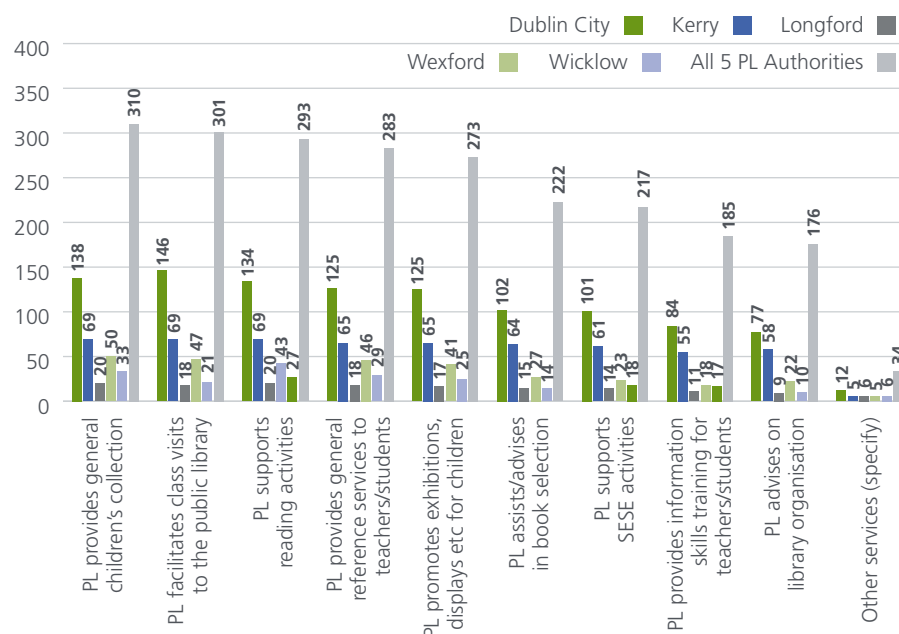
Figure 6.2.8 *School Plans for Library Services in 2009-2010*

6.2.9 The Future Role of the Public Library in Supporting the Information Needs of Schools

All except nine schools responded to the question on the role of the public library in relation to the information needs of primary schools. As can be seen from Table 6.2.9A, the top five roles identified for public libraries included the provision of a general children's collection (90% respondents), class visits to the public library (88%), support for reading activities (85%), provision of general reference services for teachers and pupils (83%) and promotion of exhibitions etc. for children (79%). The other roles listed were confirmed by more than half of respondents. It should be noted that many respondents chose more than one option.

Table 6.2.9A Teachers' Views on the Role of the Public Library 2009

Role of Public Library (More than One Option May Apply)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Public Library provides general children's collection	138	69	20	50	33	310
Public Library facilitates class visits to the public library	146	69	18	47	21	301
Public Library supports reading activities	134	69	20	43	27	293
Public Library provides general reference services to teachers/students	125	65	18	46	29	283
Public Library promotes exhibitions, displays etc for children	125	65	17	41	25	273
Public Library assists/ advises in book selection	102	64	15	27	14	222
Public Library supports SESE activities	101	61	14	23	18	217
Public Library provides information skills training for teachers/students	84	55	11	18	17	185
Public Library advises on library organisation	77	58	9	22	10	176
Other services (specify)	12	5	6	5	6	34
No response to question	3	0	0	1	5	9

Figure 6.2.9A Teachers' Views on the Role of the Public Library 2009

When asked to identify the most important roles of the public library the predominant reaction was that it should provide a general children's collection (see Table 6.2.9B below).

Table 6.2.9B Teachers' Views on the Most Important Role of the Public Library 2009

Most Important Role(s) of the Public Library (More than One Option May Apply)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Public Library provides general children's collection	61	52	13	18	22	166
Public Library facilitates class visits to the public library	37	16	5	8	6	72
Public Library supports reading activities	27	7	6	6	1	47
Public Library provides general reference services to teachers/students	17	7	5	5	0	34
Public Library promotes exhibitions, displays etc for children	17	5	1	4	1	28
Public Library assists/advises in book selection	15	4	2	3	2	26
Public Library advises on library organisation	10	9	1	3	1	24

Most Important Role(s) of the Public Library (More than One Option May Apply)	Dublin City (Response = 158 Schools)	Kerry (Response = 79 Schools)	Longford (Response = 22 Schools)	Wexford (Response = 54 Schools)	Wicklow (Response = 40 Schools)	All 5 Public Library Authorities (Total Response = 353 Schools)
Public Library provides information skills training for teachers/students	10	4	2	2	1	19
Public Library supports SESE activities	11	5	1	2	0	19
Other services (specify)	2	1	1	3	1	8
No response to question	48	12	6	21	7	94

6.2.10 General Comments

The concluding section of the questionnaire invited school principals to include any general comments that they wished to make. The majority of respondents, representing schools in areas covered by all five library authorities, did comment on the decision to withdraw the DES capitation grant and described it by the use of words such as appalling, disappointing, disgraceful, disgusting, deplorable and regrettable. Many respondents were very concerned about the negative impact that the cessation of the grant would have on pupils' reading attainment and general education since in many cases the SLS was the only source of books and library materials for the school. It was widely perceived as a retrograde step and, in particular, problems of isolation and access to books in both rural and generally disadvantaged areas were highlighted by many respondents. As regards alternative means of funding for the provision of books and library materials, most respondents could not see any possibility of drawing down funds from the already over-burdened school's capitation grant for this purpose.

On the positive side, many schools expressed great satisfaction with the services provided by the library authorities, including the provision of block loans, class visits to the library as well as visits by library staff to the school. Mobile library services were also much appreciated by teachers and pupils alike and in many cases library staff were complimented on their attentiveness, assistance and courtesy to teachers and students.

6.3 Summary of Findings

The results of the 2008 and 2009 surveys of school principals and teachers are summarised below.

6.3.1 The 2008 Survey

The findings of the 2008 survey were as follows:

Types of School Covered in the Survey

Of the 307 schools that participated in the survey, the majority (215) were mixed schools. The survey also included small numbers of boys (32) and girls (24) schools, together with special education schools (19), Gaelscoileanna (13) and schools in Gaeltacht areas (3). 70 schools were designated disadvantaged schools.

Class Groups Taught by Respondents

Most respondents (102=36%) taught in 5th-6th classes, followed by those teaching special needs students (91=32%). There were almost equal numbers teaching 3rd-4th and 1st-2nd classes (77 and 76 respectively) and junior/senior infant classes were staffed by 50 respondents.

Frequency of Contact with the SLS

The most common frequency of contact between the school and the SLS was once a year (181=60%). A quarter of respondents (73=24%) reported a frequency of once or twice a term while 17 (6%) made contact on a monthly basis. Sixteen respondents (5%) interacted with the SLS either on a weekly or fortnightly basis and 13 (4%) never made contact.

Requests for Materials for Purchase from the SLS

More than three quarters of teachers (230=77%) had not requested materials for purchase from their SLS in the previous year. Some respondents indicated that they were unaware that this facility was available to them.

Satisfaction Ratings for Choice of Loan Materials Provided by the SLS

Teacher satisfaction ratings were high for fiction and non-fiction books provided by the SLS – 98% of respondents considered fiction works to be good or very good and the corresponding figure for non-fiction books was 94%. There was a high proportion of non-response and “don’t know” responses to the questions relating to CDs, special project materials and teacher materials which would appear to reflect a low level of use or a low awareness among teachers that these materials are available under the SLS scheme.

Levels of Interest in Information Resource Materials

95% of respondents were interested or very interested in reading schemes such as the *Oxford Reading Tree*. High levels of interest were expressed in DVDs and computer software with 83-84% of respondents stating that they were interested or very interested. Magazines generated the lowest rating in which only half of the respondents (53%) expressed an interest.

Arrangements for Collecting Materials from the SLS

The most popular means of collecting library materials from the SLS was an arrangement whereby a teacher visited the SLS premises and took materials back to the school (159=53% of schools). Just over a quarter (85=29%) of schools acquired SLS materials by selecting stock from a mobile van that visited the school. A smaller number of respondents (40=13%) used a combination of the above arrangements. Most respondents (237=81%) stated that they were happy with current arrangements for collecting materials from the SLS.

Schools' Use of the Materials Provided by the SLS

The main uses of the library materials acquired from the SLS were reported to be reading development (289=96% respondents), classroom projects (191=63%), searching for information (170=56%) and homework research (50=17%).

Sources of Information Used by Students for SESE Work

The top three most frequently cited sources were Internet search engines (250 = 84% of respondents), followed by the school library (230=77%) and asking the teacher (188=63%). The public library also featured significantly as a source for SESE work and was cited by half of the respondents (52%), although public library websites were identified by only 21 respondents (7%). The www.askaboutireland.ie website was not widely used for this purpose and was cited by only 35 respondents (12%).

School Library Services of Potential Interest to Teachers

The top three services in which respondents were either interested or very interested were current awareness services (e.g. about public library events etc.), 235 respondents, online access to reference materials (e.g. encyclopedias) 228 and information skills workshops for students 191. Respondents also expressed interest in a range of other services such as guides to SLS materials, advice on setting up and/or evaluating a school library and information skills workshops and talks for teachers.

Frequency of Class Visits to the Public Library

Most schools (121=41%) did not arrange class visits to the public library in the year prior to the survey in 2008. A quarter of respondents (76=26%) reported that classes visited the library once in the previous year and 44 (15%) visited once or twice per term. Monthly class visits were arranged by 29 schools (10%) and 22 (7%) visited either weekly or fortnightly.

Class Participation in Activities Organised by the Public Library

More than half of respondents (162=56%) reported that their classes had not participated in any activities organised by their local public library in the previous year. The remaining 44% had attended a wide range of events such as children's book week, story-telling and poetry sessions and various arts and cultural sessions.

Schools with a Designated Library

There was an almost equal divide between schools that had a designated library (142=47%) and those that did not (158=53%). In cases where a school did not have a designated library, the most popular alternative arrangement was to have libraries in each classroom, usually organised and maintained by individual teachers. Some schools also reported having teacher resource libraries. In schools with a designated school library, the library was usually managed by a teacher with a post of responsibility.

General Comments on the SLS

Comments on the SLS were generally very positive and it was clear that the service provided by the public library network under the SLS scheme was much appreciated by primary schools. Some respondents, however, commented on the need for more books and other learning resources, more frequent visits by the mobile service and more class visits to the library.

6.3.2 The 2009 Follow-up Survey

The follow-up survey of school principals and teachers, undertaken in 2009, yielded the following results:

Types of School Covered in the Survey

Of the 353 schools that participated in the survey, the majority of respondents represented national schools (299). Forty-three DEIS, 21 special education schools and 8 Gaelscoileanna were also included in the response. A total student enrolment of 53,263 was notified by the 324 schools that provided details of student numbers.

Access to Telecommunications

Virtually all schools (348) had access to broadband and two reported that they had dial-up facilities.

Awareness of Withdrawal of DES Grant

248 respondents (70%) were aware and 105 (30%) were unaware of the withdrawal of the DES grant.

Arrangements with the Public Library for an Alternative to SLS

276 schools responded to this question (78% response). Of these, 228 (83%) had not made any arrangements with their local public library for an alternative to the SLS, 31 (11%) had arranged an alternative to the SLS and 17 (6%) were in discussion with the local public library.

School Plans for an Alternative to the SLS

Only 50 schools (15%) had a plan for an alternative to the SLS while the remaining 291 respondents (85%) did not. Twelve schools did not respond to the question.

Plans to Purchase Books and Library Materials from the School Capitation Grant

Of the 348 schools that answered the question (99% response), only 112 (32%) planned to purchase books and other library materials from the school capitation grant. 134 respondents (39%) indicated that their school did not intend to draw down funds from the school grant for this purpose and 102 (29%) reported that they did not know.

Likely Budget for Purchase of Books and Library Materials

Only 109 schools responded to this question (31% response). Of these 96 (88%) expected to allocate up to €1000, 10 (9%) intended to assign €1001-2000 and 3 (3%) anticipated that more than €2000 was likely to be spent on books and other library materials.

Proposed Means of Selecting Library Materials for Purchase

Of the 254 schools that responded (56% response), 126 (64%) intended to allow individual teachers of different subjects to select library materials for the school. In the cases of 104 schools (53%), selection will be made by means of a designated staff member and the remaining 24 (12%) proposed to select materials in cooperation with local public library staff.

Top Three Plans for a Library Service in the School in 2009

272 schools answered this question (77% response) and most indicated that they had several plans in place for the provision of a library service in their school. The top three plans were

- continued reliance on the existing SLS collection (163=60%),
- exploitation of the public libraries' general collections for children (148=55%) and
- reliance on ICTs to more fully exploit electronic information resources (123=45%).

Top Three Roles of the Public Library in Supporting the Information Needs of Schools

342 schools answered this question (97% response) and most indicated that public libraries have many roles to play in supporting the information needs of schools. The top three roles identified by respondents were that the public library should

- provide general children's collections (310=90%),
- facilitate class visits to the public library (301=88%) and
- support reading activities (293=85%).

Of the 259 respondents, who answered the question on the most important role of the public library in meeting the information needs of schools, almost two thirds (166=64%) considered it to be the provision of a general children's collection.

Chapter 7

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

A review of international practice in the provision of library services to schools has identified the key components of a modern Schools Library Service (SLS) (Box 1). These elements were also confirmed in interviews with SLS stakeholders in the Republic of Ireland.

The status of the Public Library SLS throughout the country (Box 2), based on countrywide surveys in 2008 and 2009, is also summarised and the main conclusions of the study are presented below.

Box 1

Components of a Modern Public Library SLS (Schools Library Service)

- A loan collection of children's books with a proportion exchanged on a school term basis annually.
- Specific collections borrowed for a short-term period to assist and support school project work and/or teaching e.g. multicultural collections, teachers' resource collections, multiple copies of the 'class novel', reading schemes and materials supporting reading projects, including special needs collections, dual language books, local studies information and other materials to encourage reading habits.
- A centralised facility for book ordering, binding and processing.
- Provision of a good reference service for school use, including electronic resources such as online dictionaries, encyclopaedias, current and historic newspaper and map archives.
- Access to local studies content, both online and in libraries, to support research and project work.
- A compilation of book lists and other bibliographical aides and services.
- Advisory services for teachers, e.g. talks, lectures, training courses, current awareness sessions and advice on setting up and evaluating school libraries.
- Talks for parents on a wide range of topics such as the importance of reading, literacy resources and book selection.
- Services to children such as talks/workshops for children, joint efforts by teachers and librarians to arrange informal class visits by children to the public library.
- Additional school library services including support for reading development, activities supporting the SESE (Social Environmental Scientific Education) curriculum, collection building for special needs students.
- Cooperation building between public libraries and schools to develop an efficient comprehensive SLS.
- Formulation and publication of guidelines/standards of good practice for school libraries.

Box 2

The Public Library SLS in the Republic of Ireland

A library service, known as the SLS, has been delivered nationwide to all primary schools in the Republic of Ireland by the local authority public library network since the late 1960s. In 2008, the SLS served 3,269 schools, 484,492 pupils and 31,349 full-time teachers.

Until 2008 this service was funded by a DES per capita grant supplemented by funding from the local authority public library service operating a shared services model. Total funding for the SLS was 5.19 million in 2008, of which 42% was provided by the DES and 58% was provided by local authority public library services. In addition to the DES grant, 13 of the 32 library authorities spent a total of €313,488 in 2008 on books and other learning materials which were specifically allocated and purchased for delivery to primary schools.

Expenditure in 2008 by all 32 library authorities on books and other library materials for general children's collections in library headquarters and throughout the branch libraries amounted to €3.17 million. The corresponding figure for 2009 is expected to be in the region of €2.6 million.

To determine the range and extent of service, and to assess satisfaction levels with the SLS, two sets of surveys were undertaken. Local authority SLSs countrywide and primary schools in five representative local authority areas contributed to the study. Both groups were surveyed in 2008 and, approximately six months after the withdrawal of the DES grant, follow-up surveys of the two groups were undertaken in 2009.

The main conclusions and findings of the study are as follows:

- The Schools Library Service (SLS) as delivered by the public library service internationally is a core element within education provision.
- Provision of school library services to primary education in the Republic of Ireland is in line with international practice, in so far as public libraries are an integral partner with education and other bodies, regardless of the delivery model adopted.
- The DEHLG has supported the policy of library authorities delivering the SLS to schools in the Republic of Ireland, as defined in the *Branching Out* Reports.
- There is currently no joint national policy on a SLS in the Republic of Ireland, although through its funding support for the SLS from 1971 to 2008 inclusive, the DES has recognised the need for provision of a library service to schools.
- As a result of the measures in the autumn 2008 budget, the DES has stated that regretfully the grant for this service was withdrawn. The DES provides a general per capita management support grant, paid annually to individual schools, with directions to schools to spend a proportion of the grant on teaching materials and resources.
- The removal of the annual DES grant of €2.2 million, which represented 42% of the total expenditure on the SLS in 2008, has collapsed the established SLS model.
- The DES has stated, as part of this research that it considers that it has no direct role or responsibility in the provision of public library services to schools. This is a key finding in the context of the continued funding of the service for 37 years.

- The DES has recommended the inclusion of public library authorities on national and regional bodies involved in curriculum design and implementation.
- No universal standard of good practice for the provision of a SLS applies in the Republic of Ireland.
- All stakeholders agree that the SLS provision has been uneven throughout the country.
- The areas of service with which teachers were most satisfied were the quality and range of fiction and non-fiction books available within SLS and the delivery service, which was tailored to individual schools.
- Teachers identified a range of services of interest to themselves and to students including current awareness services, online access to reference materials, information skills training and advice on setting up library services in a school. These customised services were available to varying degrees in SLSs around the country
- Both teachers and librarians surveyed stated that the loss of the €2.2 million annual spend on reading materials will have a detrimental impact on reading and learning opportunities of young students and on provision of professional development support materials for teachers.
- In view of the withdrawal of the DES grant, many public library services have expressed an intention to refocus support to primary schools via the public library and mobile library network. Others propose to continue the 2008 SLS model without new stock. A very small number expressed a wish to maintain the 2008 SLS model from within existing public library funding.
- Many schools were aware of the loss of the DES grant by the time of the second survey, but none had activated an alternative to the SLS service as previously provided.
- There is a very close similarity between the expressed needs of schools and their plans for 2009 and the policies and plans of the library authorities in 2009. For example, the top three roles of the public library in supporting the information needs of schools, as perceived by schools principals and teachers, conformed closely with the policies and plans articulated by the library authorities i.e. to (1) provide general children's collections, (2) facilitate class visits to the public library and (3) support reading activities.
- Public libraries intend to refocus delivery of the SLS via the general collection and schools intend to make greater use of the general collections in public libraries. Both public libraries and schools propose to rely on 2008 SLS materials in 2009 and both parties expect to make greater use of ICTs to more fully exploit electronic resources.
- A large proportion of schools expressed a need for general reference services for teachers and students, information on library events and activities and advice and assistance in organising and maintaining schools libraries. All of these issues were on the agendas of public libraries, to varying degrees, in 2009.
- Finally, a common view among all stakeholders was that closer cooperation and interaction is likely to develop between schools and their local public libraries and, while this may place a strain on the resources and facilities of the local branch network, it is likely to be a positive development for all concerned.

Chapter 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

Bundy, in a report on a 2006 survey of Australian public libraries, concluded with the following observations on the relationship between the public library and the school and on the desirability and the means of achieving effective interaction between the two for the benefit of the student and the teacher:

“School libraries and public libraries should be pivotal to the 21st century educational experience, and the base for a positive attitude by young people towards information skills development, lifelong learning and enhancing their life chances. For this to occur requires that schools and local authorities/state governments fund and staff their school and public libraries well to maximize the enduring benefits to students and teachers of their educational partnership. It also requires connected national, state and local government policy frameworks, and an expectation that schools and public libraries cooperate in supporting students”. (Bundy, 2006)

Bundy’s observations on Australia have a universal application and are particularly relevant to Ireland in present circumstances.

In the past, recommendations on an Irish national policy for a Schools Library Service (SLS) have been made in several reports by a variety of organisations. For example, a Schools Libraries Working Group (SLWG), with representation from the DES, DEHLG, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (ACL) and City and County Librarians, reported in 2002 and recommended a three tier model for the delivery of a nationwide library service to primary schools (SLWG, 2002). At national level, the setting up of a Steering Group was recommended to develop and implement a national school library and information strategy. At local authority level it was suggested that the SLS be delivered through a partnership arrangement between schools and the library authority and at school level, a school library plan should be prepared and a designated teacher should be made responsible for the school library and liaison with the public library service.

A report by the Library Association of Ireland (LAI), also published in 2002, recommended that the then existing arrangement of shared responsibility between the DES and the local authorities for the delivery of the SLS should continue and the management and administration roles of the public library authority in this regard should be retained, supported and strengthened (LAI, 2002). It also recommended that the DES per capita grant to local authorities be increased to an appropriate level (€38 by 2004) and be reviewed and adjusted annually thereafter to meet changing needs.

A more recent policy report by DEHLG, *Branching Out – Future Directions* (DEHLG, 2008), recommended that the DEHLG should continue *“to develop cooperative opportunities with the DES with a view to maximising the value that the public libraries can provide to support education at primary, secondary and continuing adult learning levels”* and that *“the DES (should) maintain, and increase where feasible the current level of grant aid for the provision of the school library to library authorities”*.

The recommendations made in each of the above reports continue to be relevant to current circumstances and the issues raised need to be revisited by an appropriate mechanism without delay.

The following specific actions are required to promote cooperation and interaction between the public library and the primary school with a view to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of the public library network in meeting the needs of the student and the teacher:

1. In the light of the withdrawal of the DES grant and the assertion by DES that it has no direct role and responsibility for the provision of a SLS, it is incumbent on the DEHLG and the local authorities, as the main drivers of the SLS, to review and reassess their policies on providing support to primary education.
2. Current SLS policy and practice should be referred back to the Branching Out Steering Committee (BOSC) for review and reassessment.
3. The BOSC should develop and champion a revised national policy on the provision of library and information services to primary and secondary schools with a view to meeting the needs of students and teachers (a) at curriculum level and (b) in the area of library and other information related services and support to schools. A national SLS policy should clearly define the role of the public library system in supporting primary and secondary education and would require joint coordination at policy and senior levels by both the DEHLG and the DES. National SLS policy and programmes should be informed by, and should accommodate, the school curriculum and should exploit where possible the following in order to provide effective and efficient services and support to schools:
 - a) Print and electronic information resources which are identified as core services by principals and teachers.
 - b) Recent national and global developments in ICTs.
 - c) Current initiatives by the NCTE in delivering information services to schools.
 - d) The emergence of relevant new websites such as *www.askaboutireland.ie*, and public library websites which are of direct relevance to schools by providing access not only to key information resources but which also offers access to information skills, learning and research tools.
 - e) Public library websites delivering increased access to local content and to electronic information resources such as *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *World Book*, *the Irish Times Archive*, *Ordnance Survey* maps etc.
 - f) Support services to parents and teachers in areas such as innovations in education, user education, development of research skills by class visits to the local library, support homework, advisory sessions for parents on choosing books and support for special needs.

4. Public libraries should further develop services to children, including a general children's collection, as well as collections which support the curriculum.
5. Public libraries should keep themselves informed of curricular content and developments. This could be achieved by regular interaction between the public libraries and bodies such as the NCCA and the PCSP. Speakers from Colleges of Education and/or other appropriate educational bodies could be invited to give presentations on the curriculum to library staff.
6. Public libraries should undertake regular information resource mapping to meet the curricular needs of children and these needs should be reflected in the general children's collection and in support services to school goers. For example, the public library is well positioned to provide information resources of relevance to the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) curriculum via local branch library collections and access to a wide range of electronic resources.
7. Public libraries should seek and secure representation on national and regional bodies responsible for educational policies and programmes and, in particular, those involved in curriculum design and implementation.
8. Public libraries should be proactive in promoting their services to schools and in raising awareness among teachers and students.
9. Public libraries should further promote their local studies collections to schools. Local studies material containing historical content on all aspects of the student's county, city, town or local area is a key resource in education and is central to the SESE curriculum.
10. Local branch staff should be encouraged and supported to foster closer links with local schools thereby benefiting the curriculum-focused role of the school and the wider educational and 'reading for leisure' role of the public library.
11. DES, through the NCTE is delivering enhanced electronic services to schools via the Schools Broadband Network while, at the same time, public libraries are providing an increasing volume of content online. This is an area in which the potential for further cooperation between schools and libraries should be explored.
12. Students should be encouraged to join their public library in order to support their curricular and general educational needs and to more fully exploit the resources of the public library.
13. The www.askaboutireland.ie website, which is managed by ACL, is clearly an excellent example of the potential role of the public library sector in supporting the needs of primary (and secondary) education. ACL should continue to develop this and other resources and to promote nationwide integration of electronic resource platforms for 24/7 access by children, in cooperation with agencies such as the NCTE, information service providers and publishers and other relevant bodies.

Ask About Ireland

Content on the www.askaboutireland.ie website, which was attracting up to 26,000 visitors per week in November 2009, will also be searchable through the www.scoilnet.ie website in order to encourage maximum use by schools and children. The Ask About Ireland *Learning Zone* has been developed to support both the primary and post-primary school curricula in cooperation with the NCCA and the PCSP (now called PPDS, since September 2008). In addition to sections on history, geography and science, other features in the primary section include *How to do Research* pages, the *Media Bank* and a *Looking at Places* section providing local information on each county. The *Secondary Students'* element offers a wide variety of content across many different topics and provides students with primary source content, including digital copies of Irish national and local histories and archive film clips. The new ENFO section of the site provides information on key environmental topics, current news, initiatives and events. Other features include *ENFO Kids*, *How To* and *Who Does What*, FAQ pages, and environmental leaflets and posters for download.

References

- Bundy, A., (2006). "Supporting students: the educational contribution of Australia's public libraries." *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*. Vol 19 (3) 126-135. See also – Bundy, A., (2006) "Supporting students: the educational contribution of Australia's public libraries: A report to the nation by Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA), Melbourne, 2006. Online. Available at: <http://www.fola.org.au/pdfs/supportstudents.pdf> (Accessed 30/12/2009).
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (1998), *"Branching Out: a new public library service"*, Stationery Office, Dublin, ISBN 0-7076-6174-40-X.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2008), *"Branching Out: Future Directions"*, Stationery Office, Dublin, ISBN 978-1-4064-2132-3.
- Library Association of Ireland, School Library Development Adhoc Committee (1994), *"School libraries: Guidelines for good practice"*, 20p, pbk, RCN 0946037248.
- Schools Libraries Working Group (2002), "First Report of the Schools Libraries Working Group. Unpublished.

Appendix 1

INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

List of Interviewees

Department of Education and Science (DES)

Mr. Pádraig MacFhlannchadha,
Coordinator of Inspectorate Advice on Curriculum and Assessment Policy.

Primary Professional Development Service (PPDS)

Ms. Ciara O'Donnell, Deputy Director.

Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland (ATECI)

Mr. Gerry McHugh, Director, Dublin West Education Centre, PRO ATECI.

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG)

Mr. David Corcoran, Assistant Principal.

National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA)

Ms. Kathryn Crowley, Director, Curriculum and Assessment.

National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE)

Ms. Anne White, National Coordinator.

Appendix 2

SURVEY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITIES (2008)



Dublin City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath

The Public Library in Support of the Primary School

Questionnaire for telephone interviews with SLS – Schools Library Service librarians

July 2008

SLS Structure

Q.1 How does your SLS operate?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| (a) as a separate School Library Service | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) as part of children's and school's services | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) as part of the mobile library services | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) included as part of another service | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If (d), please describe | |
-

Q.2 How many SLS staff are there in total?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| (a) Full time professional | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grade |
| (d) Part time professional | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grade |
| (e) Non-professional full time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grade |
| (h) Non-professional part time | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grade |
| (i) Drivers | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Comment:

Q.3 Is there a centralised SLS facility for book processing, display and collection?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comment:

Services – Selection, Collection and Delivery services**Q.4 Who mainly selects resources at the *purchasing* stage?**(a) SLS staff only ☐ (b) Teachers ☐ (c) Both ☐**Q.5 Who mainly chooses from resources previously *acquired* by library staff?**(a) SLS staff only ☐ (b) Teachers ☐ (c) Both ☐**Q.6 How are resources *delivered* to schools?**

- (a) Teachers visit and collect resources from the SLS department ☐
- (b) SLS arranges delivery of resources to schools ☐
- (c) Both (a) and (b) ☐

Comment: _____

Q.7 If Yes to (b) and (c), how are the resources delivered?

- (a) dedicated shelved van ☐
- (b) delivery van ☐
- (c) the mobile library vehicle ☐
- (d) other ☐

If (d), please describe _____

Reference Services**Q.8 Is there a library catalogue of SLS resources distinct from the main library database?**Yes ☐ No ☐Is it (a) online ☐ (b) hardcopy ☐ (c) electronic? ☐**Q.9 Do you have any reference resources specifically for school use?**Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please list: _____

Q.10 Do you offer schools *unique* user access to online resources (e.g. Britannica online, Credo Reference)?Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples: _____

Loan services

Q.11 What kinds of resources are available for loan

(a) Books ☐ (b) CDs ☐ (c) DVDs ☐ (d) Software ☐

Other: _____

Q.12 What type of loan service is offered to schools?

(a) Permanent Block Loan ☐

(d) Temporary Block Loan ☐

(e) *Short-Term Collections* Loan ☐

e.g. (multicultural collections, teachers resource collections, special education needs materials, projects material related to the curriculum etc.)

Q.13 Please list your short-term collections

Q.14 What is the loan period for your short-term collections?

Q.15 How often are temporary block loan resources exchanged?

(a) no exchange ☐ (b) once a term ☐ (c) twice a year ☐

Advisory Services

Q.16 Do you provide any of the following advisory services?

(a) **Talks** for (a) teachers ☐ (b) parents ☐ (c) children ☐

If yes, give examples: _____

(b) **Workshops on information skills** for

(a) teachers ☐ (b) parents ☐ (c) children ☐

If yes, give examples _____

(c) **Training activities** for teachers? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples: _____

(d) **Current awareness services** for (a) teachers ☐ (b) parents ☐

If yes, give example: _____

(e) Advice to teachers on **setting up and evaluating school libraries?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.17 Have you compiled any guides to the resources offered by your SLS?Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples:

Q.18 Do you deliver any activities specific to the SESE (Social, Environmental and Scientific Education) curriculum?Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples:

Q.19 Do you provide any resources to support reading development i.e. teaching children how to read and advancing literacy?Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples:

Q.20 Please list any additional services (e.g. homework support activities etc)

Other Services**Q.21 Do you provide library stationery to schools with libraries?**Yes ☐ No ☐If yes, do you charge schools for these materials? Yes ☐ No ☐**Promotion and Co-operation****Q.22 Is there information about your SLS on your website?**Yes ☐ No ☐**Q.23 Do you co-operate with any local/national educational organisations?**Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give examples:

Public Library Linkages

Q.24 Have you ever undertaken an evaluation of your SLS by any of the following?

(a) students ☐ (b) teachers ☐ (c) other ☐

If yes, please specify:

Q.25 Does your SLS organise *reader development* activities through your public libraries?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give example:

Q.26 Does your SLS organise class visits through your public library?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.27 Have you compiled an annual report for 2007?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, can you send us the copy of your most recent SLS report?

Costings

Q.28 Can you provide an estimate of the annual operational costs of your SLS?

(a) SLS staff:

(b) Transport (vehicle & driver):

(c) accommodation overheads

(d) promotional activities:

(e) other

Total:

Appendix 3

SURVEY OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS (2008)



Name of Public Library Authority

Name and Location of School

Teacher Name (optional)

The Public Library in Support of the Primary School

Dublin City Public Libraries (DCPL) is managing a research project into how the public library supports primary schools. This project is nationally funded through the Public Library Research Programme. Dublin City Public Libraries, with the co-operation of the public library authorities in Kerry, Longford, Wexford and Wicklow, are interested in your views about the Schools Library Service as part of a cluster survey process. The School Library Service administers a grant from the Department of Education and Science and offers a range of services to primary schools. Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. (Irish language form available)

Use of School Library Service

Q.1 How often have you had contact with your School Library Service in the past year? *(Please tick one box only)*

Weekly ☐ 1-2 Times per term ☐
Monthly ☐ Once per year ☐ Never ☐

Q.2 Have you requested materials for purchase from your School Library Service in the past year?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Choice of Materials

Q.3 How would you rate the choice of loan materials provided by your School Library Service? *(Please tick one for each category)*

Type of material	Very good	Good	Poor	Don't know
Fiction books for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-fiction books for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CD's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special project materials (e.g. multicultural resources)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher materials (e.g. special needs materials)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.4 Comment on the choice of loan material available

Q.5 Please rate your interest in each of the following
(Please tick one box for each format)

Format	Very interested	Interested	Not interested	Don't know
DVDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer software	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading schemes (e.g. Oxford Reading Tree)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q.6 Comment on the choice of formats available to your school through the School Library Service

Q.7 What is your arrangement for collecting materials from your School Library Service? *(Tick one box only)*

- (a) Teacher visits School Library Service premises and takes away the materials ☐
- (b) Teacher visits School Library Service premises to select materials and the School Library Service arranges delivery to the school ☐
- (c) Teacher selects from a mobile van that visits the school ☐
- (d) A combination of the above ☐

Q.8 Is this arrangement satisfactory?Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, please say why not:

Q.9 What are the materials provided by the School Library Service mainly used for? (Tick all that apply)

Reading development ☐ Homework research ☐
 Finding information ☐ Classroom project work ☐ Other ☐

If other, please say what:

Finding Information**Q.10 How do your students find information for SESE projects? (Social, Environmental & Scientific Education) (Please tick all that apply)**

Public library ☐ School library ☐ Public library website ☐
 Use askaboutireland website ☐ Internet search engine ☐
 Ask the teacher ☐ Other ☐

If other, please say what:

Advisory Activities**Q.11 Which of the following services provided by your School Library Service would most interest you? (Please tick one box for each service category)**

Type of service	Very interested	Interested	Not interested	Don't know
Current awareness services e.g. public library events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online access to reference material e.g. encyclopaedias	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guides to SLS materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for students on information skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops for teachers on information skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice on setting up and evaluating a library in a school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training courses for teachers on using the SLS service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talks to teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talks to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public Library Linkages

Q.12 How often did your class visit the local public library in the past year?

Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ 1-2 Times per term ☐
Once per year ☐ Never ☐

Q.13 Did your class participate in any activities organised at your local public library?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give examples:

Your School

Q.14 In what class groups are you currently teaching? (Please tick all that apply)

Junior/Senior infants	<input type="checkbox"/>	1st to 2nd	<input type="checkbox"/>
3rd to 4th	<input type="checkbox"/>	5th to 6th	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Needs Education	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(Please specify)

Q.15 What type of school do you teach in? (Please tick all that apply)

Boys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Girls	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Education Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaelscoileanna	<input type="checkbox"/>	School in a gaeltacht area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(Please specify)

Q.16 Is your school a designated disadvantaged school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.17 Is there a designated library in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.18 If yes, is your school library run by:

(a) a professionally qualified librarian?	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) a teacher with a post of responsibility?	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) a parent?	<input type="checkbox"/>
(h) other?	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please say who?

Q.19 Do you have any additional comments to make about the School Library Service?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Appendix 4

FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITIES (2009)



Public Libraries in Support of the Primary School Project

A Survey of City and County Librarians on the Provision of Library Services for Schools

You responded to a survey on the schools library service in 2008 for the schools library research project. However, as no funds were allocated by the Department of Education and Science for a designated library service to schools in the October 2008 budget, the research project is undertaking a further survey to establish new practices and future plans for public library service provision to schools. We appreciate and thank you for your continued support with the schools research project under these circumstances.

In the October 2008 Budget, the Minister for Finance terminated the capitation grant of €4.52 per student paid by the Department of Education and Science (DES) to local authorities for the provision of the Schools Library Service (SLS) to primary schools. These funds were used by public library authorities, under the aegis of the local authorities, to purchase books and other library materials on behalf of, and in cooperation with, primary schools. All other costs of administering the SLS, including public library staff, accommodation and transport dedicated to the SLS, were borne by the public library authority.

The withdrawal of the DES capitation grant to local authorities means that public libraries no longer have dedicated funds available to operate a nationwide Schools Library Service and this will undoubtedly affect the level of service that public libraries can offer to schools.

The purpose of this study is to elicit the views of City and County Librarians on the likely impact of the above budgetary changes on library services to primary schools, on proposed policies and strategies for library service provision within schools, on the roles of all stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents and public library authorities and to explore likely developments for the future of school library services in the light of the new budgetary arrangements.

This study is being undertaken under the aegis of the Public Libraries Research Programme (PLRP), to examine the various means by which public libraries may support the primary school and to explore mechanisms by which these services might be maintained and improved under current economic circumstances.

We would appreciate a few moments of your time to complete this short questionnaire to support our research. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and we will be in contact with **you shortly**.

Library authority name and location
Respondent's name and position
Telephone
Email address
Date of telephone interview

Your Library and the Primary School

Q.1 How many primary schools are located in your local authority area?

Total number of primary schools

Q.2 Can you please indicate how many of these types of primary schools located in your local authority area? *(Please insert approximate numbers of schools under each heading)*

DEIS

Gaelscoil

Other special [e.g. in a hospital etc.,
school with as special education unit – Autism etc)

Q.3 How many students, in total, are enrolled in all primary schools in your local authority area?

Total number of primary school students

Q.4 Please give details of TOTAL expenditure, if any, on service to primary school education in the year 2008

Expenditure from general library budget (e.g. staffing,
transportation, printing, other overheads etc.) €

Comment

Plans for School Library Service in 2009

Q.5 In relation to the Schools Library Service in place to date, in the absence of the DES Grant in 2009, do you plan to *(Tick all that apply)*

- (a) Maintain the existing SLS to previous standard from local authority resources ☐
- (b) Maintain the 2008 SES service relying on the existing SLS collection (no new materials) ☐
- (c) Close down the SLS completely ☐
- (d) Operate a schools library service via the mobile library service ☐
- (e) Refocus delivery of services to primary schools through the public library ☐
- (f) Other means (specify) ☐

Comments (if any)

Plans for Public Library Services to Primary Education in and from 2009

Q.6 For the future (commencing year 2009), does your library intend to prioritise any of the following services in support of primary school education (please tick all that apply)

- (a) Refocus delivery of children's services through local public libraries (library exhibitions and displays, author visits for children etc.) ☐
- (b) Class visits to the public library ☐
- (c) Assistance/advice to schools on stock selection ☐
- (d) Assistance/advice to schools on library organisation ☐
- (e) research support services for SESE activities (incl information handling, skills) ☐
- (f) Provide Continuing Professional Development for teachers ☐
- (g) Other services (please specify) ☐

Comments (if any)

Q.7 Please give an estimate of your likely total expenditure (on children's services)

Likely expenditure 2009

€

Q.8 Please comment on withdrawal of the DES grant?

Q.9 What opportunities, if any, does the DES grant withdrawal create for public library service developments?

Comments

Appendix 5

FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS (2009)



School Name and location

Respondent's Name and Position

Telephone

Email address

Public Libraries in Support of the Primary School Research Project

A Survey of Primary School Principals on the Provision of Library Services for Schools

You or a colleague may have taken part in a survey in late 2008 as part of this research project. We are grateful for your input. Since that survey was undertaken the Minister for Finance terminated the capitation grant of €4.52 per student paid by the Department of Education and Science (DES) to local authorities for the provision of the Schools Library Service (SLS) to primary schools. These funds were used by public library authorities, under the aegis of the local authorities, to purchase books and other library materials on behalf of, and in cooperation with, primary schools. All other costs of administering the SLS, including public library staff, accommodation and transport dedicated to the SLS, were borne by the public library authority.

Public library authorities are fully committed to supporting primary school teachers and student education, however the withdrawal of the DES capitation grant to local authorities means that public libraries no longer have dedicated funds available to operate a nationwide Schools Library Service and this will undoubtedly affect the level of service that public libraries can offer to schools.

The purpose of this study is to elicit the views of School Principals on the likely impact of the above budgetary changes on library services to primary schools, on proposed policies and strategies for library service provision within schools, on the roles of all stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents and public library authorities and to explore likely developments for the future of school library services in the light of the new budgetary arrangements.

This study is being undertaken under the aegis of the Public Libraries Research Programme (PLRP), to examine the various means by which public libraries may support the primary school and to explore mechanisms by which these services might be maintained and improved under current economic circumstances.

We would appreciate a few moments of your time to read this short questionnaire and we will be contacting you shortly by phone to collect your responses. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

June 2009

Your School

Q.1 Type of school (Please tick all that apply)

- National School ☐
- Special Education School ☐
- Gaelscoil ☐
- School in a Gaeltacht area ☐
- Other ☐
- (please specify – DEIS, school, school in a hospital etc.)
-

Q.2 How many students are registered in your school?

Boys ☐ Girls ☐

Q.3 Does your school have access to broadband?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If NO, does your school have access to dial up? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.4 Were you previously aware that the DES funding for the Local Authority library service to primary schools was withdrawn in the October budget?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES, has the school come to any arrangement, as yet, with the local public library to continue to provide a library service to your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Options are under discussion ☐

If Yes, please give details

Alternative Plans for School Library Services in 2009-2010

Q.5 Does your school have any plans for an alternative to the Library Service previously provided by the Local Authority Public Library system?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments (if any)

Q.6 Do you intend to purchase books and other library materials from the capitation grant?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

If YES, please give an estimate of the amount you intend to allocate for this purpose during the 2009-2010 school year.

Up to €200 ☐ €201-€500 ☐ €501-€1000 ☐

€1001-€2000 ☐ €2001+ ☐

If over €2000 please specify range:

Q.7 If your school has prepared a plan for a school library service in the 2009-2010 session please indicate if any of the following apply
(Tick all that apply)

- (a) Continue to rely on the existing SLS collection for the foreseeable future ☐
- (b) Buy additional books and library materials from capitation grant ☐
- (c) Rely on ICTs to provide greater access to electronic information resources ☐
- (d) Exploit local public library general collections for children ☐
- (e) Cooperate with other schools to build shared collections ☐
- (f) Canvass for sponsorship e.g. from businesses, parents etc ☐
- (g) Other means (specify) ☐

Comments (if any)

Q.8 If you intend to purchase books and other library materials from the capitation grant, how do you intend to select items for purchase?
(Tick all that apply)

- (a) Selection by a designated staff member on behalf of the school ☐
- (b) Selection by individual teachers of different subjects ☐
- (c) Selection in cooperation with local public library staff ☐
- (d) Other means (specify) ☐

Comments (if any)

Q.9 For the future what role(s), if any, do you envisage for the public library (PL) in supporting the information needs of schools? (Please tick all that apply)

- (a) Public library provides general children's collection ☐
- (b) Public library provides general reference services to teachers/students ☐
- (c) Public library facilitates class visits to the public library ☐
- (d) Public library assists/advises in book selection ☐
- (e) Public library advises on library organisation ☐
- (f) Public library provides information skills training for teachers/students ☐
- (g) Public library supports SESE activities ☐
- (h) Public library supports reading activities ☐
- (i) Public library promotes exhibitions, displays etc for children ☐
- (j) Other services (specify) ☐

Which of the above is most important?

Q.10 General comments (if any)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Appendix 6

UPDATE SURVEY ON LIBRARY AUTHORITY EXPENDITURE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2008 & 2009 (CIRCULATED IN OCTOBER 2009)



Dublin City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath

Public Libraries in Support of the Primary School

City/County Librarians Survey Addendum

Dear Colleagues

Thank you for your contribution to date to the research project in respect of the Public Library supporting primary school children. The project team is currently in the final stages of data compilation and analysis, and your co-operation would be appreciated with one final piece of work. This relates to answering two very specific additional questions which will offer the opportunity of comparative analysis between expenditure from the Libraries acquisitions budget(s) in 2008 and 2009, in respect of books and other learning resources provided for the use of primary school children by your authority. I would appreciate therefore if you could respond to the following additional questions:

Additional Questions

Q.10a What level of grant aid was provided by the Department of Education and Science to your library authority in the financial year 2008?

€

Q.10b What monies, if any, additional to the DES (Department of Education and Science) grant, did your authority apply from the 2008 library acquisitions budget, to the purchase of books and other learning resources which were directed specifically into primary schools?

€

Q.10c What monies, from the Libraries 2008 acquisitions budget, did your library authority expend on books etc. which were distributed through the branch libraries for children of primary school age?

€

Q.11a What monies, if any, is your authority likely to apply from the Libraries 2009 acquisitions budget, to the purchase of books and other learning resources to be directed specifically into primary schools?

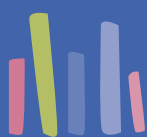
€

Q.11b What monies, from the libraries 2009 acquisitions budget, is your library authority likely to expend on books etc, for distribution through the branch libraries for children of primary school age?

€

Notes





AN CHOMHAIRLE LEABHARLANNA
The Library Council

ISBN 978-1-873512-38-8

© An Chomhairle Leabharlanna / The Library Council 2010