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School Payments Pilot Project Update

The procurement exercise to appoint service providers for a range of payments options (internet or mobile phone app, proximity terminal, etc) for schools has now been concluded. The project implementation team will engage with the suppliers initially and then the pilot cohort of schools, to enable the schools to avail of the school payments services appropriate to their need. This will entail profiling the pilot cohort, and drawing up of service level agreements to underpin each supplier's offering. In this regard, it is anticipated that interaction between schools and the appointed service provider will begin in February 2018. The project implementation team will be working closely with both the pilot schools and the service providers to ensure that the service is delivered to the expectation of the schools and that any difficulties encountered are dealt with in a swift and satisfactory manner.





PC's and Laptops for Schools

Schools can now directly order their PC and Laptop requirements from two appointed suppliers. There is no requirement by schools to embark upon any procurement process because this has already been concluded on behalf of all schools. Simply identify which device meets your specific needs and order by the quantity you require. For full access to the User Guide and the Order Forms, ensure you are registered as a 'Buyer' on www.procurement.ie and you will find the documents at this link - <https://bz.procurement.ie/contracts/4212>



Electricity Supply for Schools – contract renewals

In September 2017, the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) sent information and contract documents in relation to the appointment of a new electricity provider to 1478 schools currently under contract within the OGP bundle. Further notifications issued to these schools reminding them to sign (i) the goods contract; (ii) confidentiality agreement; and (iii) the account set up form, and send all three to the new provider, Energia (smeAccountManager@energia.ie). To date only 818 schools (56%) have returned their documentation to Energia.

Please note that the new contract with Energia will commence from the 1st May 2018 and returning these three documents to Energia (smeAccountManager@energia.ie) by **31 January 2018** will facilitate the smooth transfer from the current supplier to the new supplier in May 2018. It is important to be aware that if you do not return the required documents and consequently fall out of contract in May, your school may incur costly default rates.

If you have any questions in relation to the renewal process or wish to add your school to the OGP bundle, please contact the OGP helpdesk on: 076 100 8000 or email them at support@ogp.gov.ie



Supporting non-cash payments in schools

The OGP concluded a framework, in two lots, for (1) Merchant Acquiring Services and (2) Payment Gateway Services. The services available for draw-down under the Merchant Acquiring Services and Payment Gateway Services Framework Agreement(s) provides support to schools in the processing of payments made by parents via credit and debit card(s) for school activities. The single supplier in Lot 1 is Elavon, with Realex payments the appointed supplier under Lot 2. These are obligatory services which your school will need to avail of if intending to deploy non-cash payment solutions.

The advantage of this framework is twofold. Schools can now benefit from the lower fees associated with these financial services, as their transactions will be bundled with the millions of public sector transactions. In addition, this framework regularises the procurement obligation for these services. Details of how to engage with the framework to achieve the benefit of the reduced transaction charges are available from here - <https://bz.procurement.ie/contracts/2977>

Revised Procurement Thresholds from January 1st 2018

Goods & Services </= €4,999.99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 3 written quotes required (e.g. email for example) • Select lowest price/most suitable
Goods & Services €5,000 - €24,999.99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 3 written quotes required. • Issue documented specification, outlining timeframe, assessment and award criteria. • Use a scoring sheet to evaluate offers. • Notify and provide written feedback to unsuccessful tenderers
Goods & Services €25,000 - €220,999.99 Must be advertised on www.etenders.gov.ie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up tender documentation. • Set criteria for award giving a weighting to each. • Use the weighted scoring sheet to evaluate offers. • Select highest scoring offer. • Notify and provide feedback to the winning tenderer and to those who were unsuccessful. • Award the contract.
Goods & Services > €221,000 Must be advertised on www.etenders.gov.ie AND Official Journal of the EU (OJEU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up tender documentation. • Set criteria for award giving a weighting to each. • Use the weighted scoring sheet to evaluate offers. • Select highest scoring offer. • Notify and provide feedback to the winning tenderer and to those who were unsuccessful. • Award the contract.
Works & Works Related Services </= €50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick Quote • Invite not required to be openly published on www.etenders.gov.ie Instead, see www.constructionprocurement.gov.ie • See DPER CWMF GN 2.3 Section3.2
Works & Works Related Services </= €50,000 - €5548,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See DPER CWMF GN 2.3 Section 3.2 • Open or restricted procedure with public advertisement www.etenders.gov.ie • Sourcing and expenditure approval for all capital projects (non-routine spend greater than €5,548,000) are conducted by the Planning & Building Unit of the Department of Education and Skills http://www.education.ie/en/School-Design/

News of the latest Frameworks available to schools

The Office of Government Procurement has recently concluded a number of new framework agreements which are available to all primary and post-primary schools for use. Full details of each framework, the range of goods and services covered, and the defined draw-down mechanism is available to 'registered' buyers on www.procurement.ie

Professional Photography and Videography Services

<https://bz.procurement.ie/contracts/4214>

Mobile Voice and Data Communications and Associated Products and Services

<https://bz.procurement.ie/contracts/4215>

Full details of all frameworks, the range of goods and services covered, and the defined draw-down mechanism is available to 'registered' buyers on www.procurement.ie. These details can be found on the dedicated Schools page within the Buyer Zone on www.procurement.ie



Previous copies of the SPU Newsletters

The archive of our previous newsletters is now available on the Department's website at:
<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Procurement/newsletter/>

The Irish versions are available at this link:
<https://www.education.ie/ga/Scoileanna-Coláistí/Eolas/Soláthar/nuachtlitir/>

Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices

Our 'Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices' is available for download from –
<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Procurement/Guidance-for-Schools-on-Good-Procurement-Practices.pdf>

The guide is also available as Gaeilge from here –
<https://www.education.ie/ga/Scoileanna-Col%C3%A1ist%C3%AD/Eolas/Sol%C3%A1thar/Treoir-do-Scoileanna-maidir-le-Dea-Chleachtas-Solathair.pdf>



COMING SOON

The latest OGP Schedule of Frameworks and Contracts (October 2017 – Q4 Update) has recently been published and is available at <http://ogp.gov.ie/3236-2/>
This schedule allows schools to see the range of contracts and frameworks, many of which will be available to schools to use, coming 'on-stream' within the next six months.

“ Latest Testimonial

I found the Unit most time saving for me and the reassurance that the school is getting value for money from reputable suppliers. It's brilliant. Keep up the excellent work. Staff most helpful, courteous and professional.

Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare

For your general enquires, specific feedback or suggestions on how we can improve our service to your school or to the schools sector generally, please see our contact details below.

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