



Electricity and Natural Gas contracts for Schools

Protection from the Autumn 2021 Gas & Electricity Price Changes

Please note that increasing charges for electricity supply and natural gas can be mitigated by joining the OGP's utilities contracts. For any school wishing to join either of the Utilities contracts – electricity supply and natural gas, the registration form is available on the SPU website at this link -

<https://www.spu.ie/electricity-gas-registration-form/>

The Office of Government Procurement's (OGP) contracts for the supply of natural gas and electricity supply to Primary and Post-Primary Schools commenced from **1 April 2021** and **1 May 2021** respectively.

Electric Ireland have been awarded the contract for electricity supply, and under the new contract against current market rates, Electric Ireland will be supplying **100%** renewable electricity to all the schools who have renewed their contracts or sign-up to join the school bundle. **SSE Airtricity**, remain as the natural gas supplier to schools.

If you require further information on any aspects of the renewal exercise, or an enquiry about registering to join either contract, please contact the SPU at procurementssupport@spu.ie

In this issue

Utilities/Energy

- Electricity and Natural Gas contract for schools
- SEAI Energy Updates, Autumn 2021

Latest Frameworks/Contracts available to schools

DCG Devices – Update!

T4 Subjects Update & Procurement Guidance

New Guidance on Green Public Procurement

Sustainable Procurement Tips for Schools

School Payment Solutions for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Early Engagement with the Procurement Process

Top Tips for Using eTenders

Latest Testimonials

“Stay in touch” Help us to keep in touch with you. Update your contact details by emailing procurementssupport@spu.ie

Email subject: **“update”** followed by **roll number**.

Energy in Education for members Autumn 2021

SEAI Energy Updates, Autumn 2021

SEAI Supports Help Schools Save Energy & Take Climate Action

Register for a free online Energy Management Course!

The Energy in Education programme offers a range of supports developed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) in partnership with the Department of Education designed to help schools to improve energy management practices, reduce school operating costs and protect the environment.

Register for a free online energy management course in Spring 2022 and you'll be given access to a range of resources and expert advice over the course of 3 x 2 hour live workshops. You'll also have opportunities to network with other schools and apply for a site assessment and support in identifying and implementing energy saving opportunities. **To register your interest go to:** http://www.energyineducation.ie/Energy_In_Education/Information_for_Schools/Energy_Management_Courses/index.html.



SEAI has also launched free e-learning courses on the **SEAI Energy Academy** to help businesses, schools, and farms reduce their energy use. The "Saving Energy in Schools" module introduces the main energy consumers in schools, energy management principles, tips, and advice for saving energy in schools.

**Join the SEAI Energy Academy to start learning:
<https://www.seai.ie/energyacademy/>**

Teaching Resources

Post-primary teachers can use a range of online activities. They are designed to support the teaching and learning of energy and sustainability in Junior Cycle. Learning outcomes for various subject specifications are highlighted in each section.

Free **teacher CPD and student workshops** are available in school, online or outdoor. These hands-on, interactive workshops will help to bring the themes of energy, climate action and sustainability to life. See the [SEAI website](#) for full details and how to book.

Monitoring and reporting energy use

Schools can **save energy** by monitoring and reporting their energy use annually via SEAI's online system. Last year over 77% of schools reported which is a significant growth on previous years and an achievement given the challenges faced. When schools report their energy use they are provided with a scorecard which identifies any changes in the schools' energy consumption. It can help plan what action might need to be taken to reduce energy and emissions as well as saving money on bills. This data can also be used as a teaching resource e.g., analysing increases or decreases in energy and CO2 consumption for use in maths, science or geography. In order to help schools to complete their annual report, SEAI offers free online workshops every February to show how to use the online system.

School upgrades

Since 2017 SEAI have worked with the Department of Education to select a number of schools to take part in a national building retrofit pathfinder programme. Schools are typically selected from those that have reported their energy use to SEAI and participated in Energy Management training. This year will see 9 schools undergoing deep retrofit to a Building Energy Rating (BER) of B with renewable heating systems. The programme will target energy use and CO2 reductions of 50%. The pathfinder programme aims to demonstrate the best practice for energy efficiency and low carbon investments in schools.

Recently published Frameworks/ Contracts available to schools

The following new frameworks have been published by the Office of Government Procurement and are available for the use of schools now:

Laboratory/Research Chemicals and Reagents, including but not limited to –

- Solvents
- Bulk / GPR Chemicals
- Acids

Disposable Catering Consumables and Meal Containers, including –

- Disposable or renewable tableware
- Items used in the preparation, preservation, transportation or presentation of food

ICT Consumables, including –

- Ink and Toner Cartridges
- Fusers
- Imaging Drums
- Maintenance Kits
- Re-Manufactured Toners
- Data Storage Devices
- Cables
- Other ICT Sundries

Bulk Liquid Fuels, including –

- Unleaded Petrol
- Automotive Diesel
- Low Sulphur Gas Oil (10ppm Sulphur)
- Kerosene

Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) in Bulk and Cylinder Format

Legal Services, including –

- Multi-Disciplinary Legal Services
- Property, Estates & Conveyancing Legal Services
- Employment Legal Services (including Pensions)
- Corporate & Commercial Legal Services
- Procurement & Competition Legal Services
- Information Legal Services

Full details, including the contract engagement form – NAGF – available to download by **registered users**, can be found behind the Schools' 'tab' within the BuyerZone at

<https://www.buyerzone.gov.ie>

Any queries should be directed to support@ogp.gov.ie or
Tel: **076 100 8000**, or
procurementsupport@spu.ie



un-Availability of DCG Laptops – Alert!

The Department-approved Dell laptop option for DCG subjects is no longer available from the supplier **Capita**. The other approved DCG device, a mini-tower PC available from Datapac, remains as the sole option for post-primary schools at the time of publication. The Department is currently engaging with the Office of Government Procurement towards making a new arrangement available for a suitable laptop at the earliest possible juncture.

Post-primary School News: T4 Subjects Update & Procurement Guidance

The following subjects list of equipment required for these practical subjects have been updated over the last year by a Department of Education Inspector to facilitate the new junior certificate curriculum.

- **Applied Technology/Technology**
- **Wood Machining and Preparation Room**
- **Construction Studies/Wood Technology**
- **Engineering**
- **Graphic Design Lab** (known previously as Technical Graphics)
- **Design and Communication Graphics (DCG room)**

Each of the above new lists, contain a minimum specification and warranty for the items required. The guidance on the lists highlights that not all items are best procured from a single supplier, but from those who are best suited depending on the category of item(s) required. It is important that the teacher reviews the list(s), editing the quantities, upgrading the specification(s), warranties, greener, more energy efficient alternatives, where appropriate.

Important to note:

There are items on the T4 lists that do not need to be tendered for, for example, those items highlighted in 'blue' by the Inspector; most of the health and safety section items (information on www.ogp.gov.ie); the laptop required (currently only the mini-tower is available (information on www.spu.ie); and most of the electronic components (contact the SPU for a copy of those approved by the Inspector to order direct from RS Ireland).

New School & New Subject: The requirements for the equipment will most likely be approved by the Department pending a procurement project. The furniture and storage will be a separate tender, as will an interactive touch screen, where needed.

Existing School: In respect of old equipment in need of replacing and or upgrading/trading-in, it is advised that you schedule an appointment with the Inspector. The Inspector will undertake a review and provide a report to the school to facilitate an application for funding for those specific items, pending a procurement project.

Recommended Procurement Lotting Strategy: Where appropriate, group like-for-like items across more than one subject, rather than seeking each item on a subject list from a single supplier.

Step 1: For example:

Requirement: Graphic Design Lab & or DCG room & one or more of the T4 subjects, which also have some of the exact same drawing and design items.

Action: Group all of these together, giving, a total requirement quantity of T-Squares. Instead of 30 for one subject, the figure may now be 60 across two subjects or more. This allows for the same quality of item, brand, warranties etc. per item from the one supplier across the T4 subjects, rather than the different T4 subjects having different quality, brands etc. of items from different suppliers.

Contact the SPU in relation to how best to group the remaining items on the Graphic Design Lab/DCG list, along with a list of suppliers popular with schools.

Step 2: Group other like for like items across the T4 lists required by the school. For Example:

Lot 1: Tools & Equipment i.e. general tools and equipment between two or more lists, (Handsaws and Chisels, Turning and Carving Tools, Hand Planes, Knives & Oilstones, Precisions Tools, Screwdrivers, Wood Boring Bits, Drills & Braces, Vices, Cramps, Spanners & Plumbing, Portable Power Tools, Paint, Sweeping Brushes & Dispensers, General Workshop Equipment & Tools, Power Tools)

Lot 2: Construction Specific Equipment & Machinery

Lot 3: Engineering Specific Equipment & Machinery

If a Lot grouping is estimated to be below 25k, consider including that group with another to bring it over the 25k, where it is known that all those items are available from the same supplier(s).

For further support with understanding lotting strategies, templates most appropriate to suit your own school's requirements; advise on award criteria upon which to score the suppliers - including green & sustainable criteria; review of your tender document before issue, evaluation support, feedback letter support, please contact procurementssupport@spu.ie.

Green Public Procurement: Guidance for the Public Sector (including Schools)

The Environmental Protection Agency recently published its 2021 *Green Public Procurement: Guidance for the Public Sector* document and it's now available for download from <https://www.epa.ie/publications/circular-economy/resources/green-public-procurement-guidance.php>

This guidance and accompanying criteria support the inclusion of sustainable and green practices into public sector procurement procedures. They are aimed primarily at public sector procurers in central and local government, state agencies and other public bodies such as universities, hospitals and schools. They are also relevant for utility sector procurers and will be of interest to private companies whether they are responding to tenders or applying green criteria in their own procurement.

The documents provide step-by-step instructions and criteria for implementing green public procurement and should be the go-to guide across the public sector when procuring goods, works and services.

Sustainable Procurement Tips for Schools

Sustainable Procurement means making sure that the goods and services which schools buy achieve value for money on a life-cycle cost basis, and generate benefits not only for the schools themselves, but also for the environment, society and the economy in which they are located. To procure in a sustainable way involves looking beyond short-term needs and considering the longer-term impacts of each purchase.

USE CENTRALLY PROCURED GOODS AND SERVICES WHERE AVAILABLE.

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT POLICY FOR YOUR SCHOOL

DO YOUR RESEARCH!

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SYNC

DON'T SPEND HOURS SAVING A EURO – CONSIDER THE TOTAL COST OF PROCUREMENT

IMPROVE YOUR BUYING POWER – WORK COLLABORATIVELY (WITH NEIGHBOURING SCHOOLS) WHEREVER YOU CAN.

LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES – BRANDED PRODUCTS MAY NOT ALWAYS BE THE BEST

INVOLVE THE WHOLE SCHOOL. GET STUDENTS INVOLVED.

KNOW YOUR OWN POWER – HOW MUCH CAN YOU SPEND - WHAT ARE THE LIMITS?

PLAN AHEAD – IDENTIFY YOUR REQUIREMENTS EARLY TO GET THE BEST DEAL

TRAIN RELEVANT STAFF/ DELEGATE AND GET BUY IN FROM STAFF.



School Payment Solutions for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

 easy payments plus



Way  Pay

Details of the Department of Education's framework providing payment solutions to schools, how to engage with it, are available at this link on the Department's website - <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Procurement/framework-agreement.pdf>

This framework expires early in 2022.

Engaging early with the procurement process

It is well recognised that accompanying the good news of approval of a grant to fund a new school build and/or other building projects comes onerous tasks and responsibilities for those school principals and Boards of Management. The procurement processes alone for fitting-out new classrooms, labs, offices and engaging with service providers for Utilities, IT Services, Telecoms, Catering, and Cleaning are technically involved and highly time consuming. Public procurement brings serious obligations in an arena that has become frequently more litigious as suppliers scrutinise and often challenge the award of contracts more often now than ever previously.

Principals and Boards of Management are best advised to engage with the Schools Procurement Unit at the earliest possible juncture so as to ensure that your school's requirements are serviced in the most timely and efficient manner possible; to illustrate, to ensure services are in place for the commencement of a new academic year, the procurement planning process should be starting immediately after the return from the Christmas break. Early engagement will secure your school the best advice on the course(s) of action to take, and will ultimately save on your time and effort, and help secure your school the best outcomes. Contact the School Procurement Unit at procurementsupport@spu.ie.

Top Tips When Using eTenders

Here is a short checklist and brief instruction that will help you provide consistent and accurate information when publishing competition notices on eTenders.

Contract Notice

1. Type of Contract

Select the correct type of contract to be advertised.
Options: Supplies, Services or Works.



2. Estimated Value

Provide an accurate estimate of the total value of the contract. It is not sufficient to enter '€0' or any value other than the actual estimated value.



3. Procedure Type

Accurately specify procedure type: OJEU or non-OJEU. Publication level is national for all tenders between €25,000 (ex. VAT) for goods or services, or €50,000 (ex. VAT) for works, and the relevant EU threshold.



4. Framework Agreement

Complete Section IV-Contract Notice (OJEU Form) - indicating whether the procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement.



5. CPV Codes

Select the correct Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes for each competition to ensure that suppliers are alerted appropriately. CPV codes are required for all above & below threshold competitions.



Contract Award

6. Contract Award Value

Provide an accurate estimate of the total value of the contract on the Contract Award Notice (OJEU Form).



7. Contract Award Notice

Publish a Contract Award Notice for every above threshold contracts and, where relevant, for contracts valued in excess of €25,000 (ex. VAT) for goods or services, or €50,000 (ex. VAT) for works.



8. Contract Finalisation

Through the contract management module, a contract is awarded when the contract is saved as final (for above and below threshold) and the Contract Award Notice (OJEU) is published.



Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais
Office of Government Procurement

Visit eTenders at www.etenders.gov.ie

Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices

Archive of previous Newsletters

The archive of our previous newsletters, available in both Irish and English versions, is now available on our website at:

<https://www.spu.ie/procurement-newsletters/>

Our 'Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices' is available for download in both Irish and English versions from – <https://www.spu.ie/publications-2/procurement-guide/>



Latest Testimonials

What our Clients say about us

The support received was invaluable; we sought support for the procurement of a new web application for the ASF initiative. The guidance we received ensured that our procurement process was legally compliant, clear, fair, transparent and gave us confidence that the process itself would ensure that we were contracting the best provider for our specific need. The support from SPU was thorough, timely and professional while also being friendly, approachable and very patient! We're very grateful to SPU (Fiona Coy in particular), and take great comfort from knowing that the support is there when approaching future procurements.

Mayo Education Centre

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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