

Free School Book Scheme - Primary School Policy

Introduction:

As part of Budget 2023, it was announced that primary school children would be provided with all necessary textbooks and workbooks free of charge from September 2023. This Free School Book Scheme is to be built on the existing Book Rental Scheme previously provided in the school. The Free School Book Scheme is to provide a grant of €80 per student in the Primary School to cover the cost of textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery (subject to available funds).

Aims:

- To provide textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery (where funds permit) to all students in School of the Holy Spirit.
- To ensure, in so far as possible, that all students will have access to all necessary school textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery (where funds permit) from the beginning of the school year.

Administration of the Scheme:

The Free School Book Scheme will be administered by a committee consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal and members of staff under the guidance of the Book Scheme Coordinator. This committee, in conjunction with the Book Scheme Coordinator, will make decisions regarding the Free School Book Scheme on an ongoing basis.

Operation of the Scheme:

Book lists, copy lists and stationery lists will be provided by each class teacher to the Book Scheme Coordinator in either June or September of each year. The timing will be predicated by factors relevant to class configuration and other factors at the time. After they have been approved by the Principal, the Book Scheme Coordinator will organise and place orders for any required textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery, subject to funds available. These will be distributed to the relevant classes.

Textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery (where funds permit) will be given to the students on the first day of each school year and at different times during the school year. Any stationery provided to the students as part of the Free School Book Scheme will be considered classroom resources and therefore will be kept in school. Students will need to have their own stationery materials such as pencils, erasers, pens, etc. at home to be able to complete homework tasks. Textbooks will be collected from the pupils in June and will be checked for damage. All textbooks will remain the property of School of the Holy Spirit, but students may keep workbooks and copies that have been written into. Textbooks will be stored over the summer holidays in the relevant classrooms.

Provisions under the Free School Book Scheme:

The Free School Book Grant will cover the provision of all required textbooks, workbooks and copies to all students in School of the Holy Spirit. If funds from the grant for the Free School Book Scheme remain, they may then be spent to provide stationery items to be used in the classroom setting. A list of possible stationery items that may be provided to students is available in Appendix A. Funds left over after this may be used to pay for Art and Crafts materials and/or photocopying and may also be used for online and digital resources if they replace books. Additionally, any remaining funds may be retained by the school to replace textbooks in the following year. An account of expenditure will be forwarded to the Department of Education annually.

Ownership of the Books:

Textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery provided under the Free School Book Scheme will always remain the property of School of the Holy Spirit and may be subject to inspection at any time by a member of school staff.

Stationery:

The Free School Book Scheme allows for the provision of stationery. This is subject to the availability of funds after the costs of providing textbooks, workbooks and copies are considered. Therefore, any stationery provided by the school is subject to change annually, as it will be dependent on the availability of funds, and parents/guardians may receive a list of stationery items to be purchased for their child for use in school. **If stationery items are provided by the school, they are categorised under classroom resources, and therefore, such items are to be kept for use in school only and will not go home. This includes pencils, pens, erasers, colours, Pritt Sticks and so on. For this reason, all students must have such items available to them at home to complete their homework tasks.** Some items, such as folders and display books may be taken home when required for homework tasks. Stationery items may

change from year to year. A list of potential stationery items that may be provided to pupils is included in Appendix A.

Payments from Parents/Guardians

The Free School Book Grant will cover the following:

- Textbooks
- Workbooks
- Copies
- Stationery (when funds are available)

Parents/Guardians **will not** be asked to buy textbooks, workbooks or copies, or to contribute to the school towards the cost of these.

The Free School Book Grant may also go towards paying for Art and Crafts materials and photocopying, but realistically, having paid for the items listed above, there will be little to no money left to fund them. Therefore, as in previous years, parents/guardians can be asked for a payment to cover the costs of these items.

The Free School Book Grant does not cover co-curricular activities such as swimming, basketball, gymnastics, etc. Therefore, as in previous years, parents/guardians will be asked to pay for these activities.

Opting Out of the Free School Book Scheme:

There is no requirement on the part of parents/guardians to take part in the Free School Book Scheme. If parents/guardians do not wish to avail of the Scheme, they will be provided with a book list and can make their own arrangements regarding the purchase of textbooks, workbooks, copies and stationery. The school is not obliged to refund the parents/guardians the cost of such purchases.

Leaving School of the Holy Spirit mid-year:

If a student leaves School of the Holy Spirit during the school year, all books and any related classroom resources the pupil has been using are to be returned to the class teacher before he/she departs.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Principal

Appendix A

List of Possible Stationery Items That May Be Provided to

Pupils This list is not exhaustive, and provision of the items on this list is subject to:

- The requirements of the pupil's class teacher
- The availability of funds in any particular year

HB Pencil	Display Book A4 20 Pockets
Sharpener with Tub	Display Book A4 40 Pockets
Eraser	Display Book A4 60 Pockets
Pritt Stick 40g	Lever Arch File
Red Biro	Set Of Dividers
Blue Biro	Plastic Holder A3 with Handles
Black Sharpie Marker	Tin Whistle in the Key of D
Twistables 12 Pack	Whiteboard
Whiteboard Marker	Whiteboard Wiper
Coloured Card	Mathematical (Geometry) Set
30cm Plastic Ruler	Calculator
Highlighter Marker	Scissors Right Hand
A4 Project Holder	Scissors Left Hand
Plastic Button Document Wallet A4	Card Document Wallet A4
Plastic Button Document Wallet A5	Play-Doh
Mesh Ziploc Bag B4	Polypockets
Mesh Ziploc Bag A4	Ring Binder
Mesh Ziploc Bag A5	

Items of stationery are considered classroom resources and are for use in the

classroom only. All pupils will need to have their own stationery items at home that will be required to complete homework tasks. These items may include pencils, colours, rulers, Pritt Stick, etc.