



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Schoolbooks Grant

Guidance for Post-Primary Schools 2025/26

# Contents

<b>Document control</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Foreword from Minister for Education Helen McEntee TD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Benefits for parents/guardians</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3. Benefits for post-primary schools</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Scope of the scheme</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 Use of grant by schools	10
4.2 Schoolbooks	11
4.3 Classroom resources	13
4.4 Students in second, third or sixth/LCA2 year in the 2025/26 school year	14
4.5 Special classes in post-primary schools	14
4.6 Teacher generated resources and content	15
4.7 Surplus funding	16
<b>5. Funding arrangements</b>	<b>17</b>
5.1 Allocation to schools	17
5.2 Payment of grant	17
5.3 Post-primary schools under the patronage of education and training boards (ETBs)	18
5.4 Developing schools	18
5.5 Exceptional circumstances	19
5.6 Administration Support Grant	20
<b>6. Administration of the scheme</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1 Key principles	25
6.2 Selection of schoolbooks	25
6.3 Digital	25
6.4 Resources that support the teaching of Irish	26
6.5 Early Planning	27
6.6 Ownership	27
6.7 Deposits	28
6.8 Reduce waste	29
6.9 Communication with parents/guardians	30
<b>7. Procurement</b>	<b>31</b>
7.1 Dynamic purchasing system (DPS)	31
7.2 Schools procurement unit	32
7.3 Post-primary schools under the patronage of education and training boards (ETBs)	32

7.4	Green public procurement	32
7.5	Annual booklists	33
7.6	Template for quotations where total contract is under €50,000 (exclusive of VAT)	33
7.7	Irish Education Publishers Association (IEPA) code of practice	34
7.8	Irish Copyright Licensing Agency	34
7.9	Schoolbook shops and schoolbook suppliers	35
<b>8.</b>	<b>Financial management</b>	<b>36</b>
8.1	Financial administration	36
8.2	Surplus funding	37
8.3	Financial support services unit	37
8.4	Payments to suppliers	38
<b>9.</b>	<b>Scheme evaluation</b>	<b>39</b>
9.1	School review and reporting	39
9.2	Department of Education governance and auditing	39
<b>10.</b>	<b>Review of this guidance</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Queries</b>	<b>42</b>
	<b>Appendix 1 – Core Classroom resources</b>	<b>43</b>
	<b>Appendix 2 – Draft communication to parents/guardians of students enrolled in recognised post-primary schools.</b>	<b>45</b>
	<b>Appendix 3 – School task list</b>	<b>47</b>
	<b>Appendix 4 – Procurement requirements</b>	<b>49</b>
	<b>Appendix 5 – Irish Educational Publishers’ Association (IEPA)</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>Useful links</b>	<b>53</b>

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# Document control

Version Number	Details of change	Changed section
V1.0	Published	
V1.1	Typographical error on PRSI rate Clarification on funding for supplementary support days payment	5.6.2 5.6.3

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## Foreword from Minister for Education Helen McEntee TD

I am very pleased as the newly appointed Minister for Education to extend the Free Schoolbooks Scheme to all students in Senior Cycle, including Transition Year from this September. This means that for the first time in the history of the State all children and young people enrolled in primary, special and post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme will be provided with free schoolbooks from the start of the 2025/26 school year.

I want to thank and express my sincere appreciation to all school leaders, school staff and boards of management for implementing the Free Schoolbooks Scheme for all children and young people enrolled in the Junior Cycle years this past year. All Junior Cycle students were provided with schoolbooks and classroom resources for the 2024/25 school year and the scheme has reduced back to school costs for many families.

Education is at the heart of all of our ambitions as a country. Excellent and innovative education and training are essential to delivering a fair society and a strong economy.

By providing children and young people with schoolbooks, we are enhancing their educational experience, not just in the classroom but at home and as they prepare for life after school. The Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme will ensure that students are provided with essential materials and resources. It will ensure the financial burden, experienced by many families at back-to-school time, is reduced.

The extension of this scheme to Senior Cycle, including Transition Year, will benefit approximately 185,000 students, across every county in Ireland. This brings to some 400,000 the total number of post-primary children and young people benefitting from free schoolbooks across Ireland.

This guidance has been developed to assist post-primary schools to implement the scheme in advance of the 2025/26 school year. It was written with the assistance of the education partners and input from other key stakeholders, including schoolbook publishers and schoolbook suppliers. Again, I would like to express my appreciation to all partners for their work on the guidance.

The Programme for Government contains a commitment to *provide free schoolbooks to all children in the free education system and introduce changes as needed to the operation of this scheme*. I look forward to working with schools and other stakeholders in this regard.

Helen McEntee TD

Minister for Education



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# 1. Introduction

This guidance is designed to support post-primary school leaders in administering the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme. It should help to answer any questions about the scheme and support school planning for the 2025/26 school year and the overall implementation of the scheme.

The cost of preparing children and young people for going back to school can be challenging for many families who are under increased financial pressure each year to provide the range of items required for the return to school. One of the significant outlays is the cost of providing schoolbooks\* and classroom resources. The Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme is being extended for the 2025/26 school year to cover all years in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme. It was introduced for the 2024/25 school year for Junior Cycle students and will, from the start of the 2025/26 school year, remove the cost from families of funding schoolbooks and core classroom resources for all post-primary school students in the Free Education Scheme.

Parents/guardians will no longer be required to make any contribution towards the cost of schoolbooks, including the cost of core classroom resources, in the school year 2025/26. Schools will be required to communicate with parents/guardians in relation to the scope of the scheme in their school.

The key principles of the scheme are:

- Schoolbooks and classroom resources will be chosen to support the implementation of the teaching and learning in the school and the provision of the post-primary curriculum to students.
- Schools will retain ownership of schoolbooks. While schoolbooks remain the property of the school, students should be allowed to bring schoolbooks home in order to complete homework or to allow parents/guardians stay connected with their child's learning in school.
- All students will have access to the schoolbooks and classroom resources provided for by this scheme.
- No costs for schoolbooks and core classroom resources will be sought from parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians will not be asked to purchase schoolbooks and core classroom resources provided for by this scheme.

\*where the word “**schoolbooks**” is used throughout this document it encompasses all relevant textbooks, including ebooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including

Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers.

## 2. Benefits for parents/guardians

The main benefit for parents/guardians is that the cost of schoolbooks and core classroom resources is now removed from parents and will be borne by the State. Parents/guardians will also have peace of mind that their child/children will have the same schoolbooks and core classroom resources as all other students in their class.

The Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme will provide schoolbooks and core classroom resources to all children and young people enrolled in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme. The extension of the scheme to Senior Cycle, including Transition Year, will remove the cost of schoolbooks and core classroom resources for these families and will ease the financial burden facing families at back-to-school time.

The scheme will ensure equity of access, where all children and young people enrolled in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme can commence the new school year in 2025/26 with the same schoolbooks and core classroom resources as other children and young people in their class.

The Department has produced an information leaflet for parents/guardians which is published at [www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes](http://www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes) and has been emailed to all post-primary schools. Schools must circulate this information leaflet to all families with children entering or currently enrolled in the school.



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### 3. Benefits for post-primary schools

Providing funding directly to schools to purchase schoolbooks and classroom resources for students has many benefits for schools.

Post-primary schools will retain the discretion to implement the curriculum by choosing the schoolbooks and classroom resources that best meet the needs of their students.

All children and young people will now start the new school year having a full set of schoolbooks and core classroom resources. Where the funding allows, some schools may also be able to provide additional classroom resources (see section 4.3 Classroom resources).

Post-primary schools that previously operated book rental schemes will no longer need to collect book rental charges from parents/guardians of students enrolled in their school.

Schools may be able to achieve cost savings by purchasing in bulk and by re-using schoolbooks in future years. Schools are also permitted to purchase second-hand schoolbooks where possible.

Schools will own the schoolbooks and classroom resources, and they will be provided on loan to students. Schools can decide on which system works best in their context, and can loan the schoolbooks to students for;

- the duration of a school year, or the entire three years of Junior Cycle
- the duration of Transition Year
- the entire two years of Senior Cycle.

While schools own the classroom resources provided under the scheme, it is acknowledged that some of the resources cannot be reused by other students in subsequent years. Some classroom resources, such as calculators and dictionaries, may remain with the student for the duration of each programme of their post-primary education. Schools must collect schoolbooks from students so that they will be available for re-use in subsequent years or cycles as appropriate. This means that post-primary schools will not usually need to buy a complete new set of schoolbooks for each school year (see Section 7.7 on the IEPA Code of Practice).

## 4. Scope of the scheme

### 4.1 Use of grant by schools

Schools are permitted discretion in how the schoolbook grant funding is used to achieve its core aim. This discretion is based on the understanding that the grant eliminates the overall cost of schoolbooks and core classroom resources for parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school.

For the 2025/26 school year the grant funding is set at a per capita rate per student as indicated below.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Per capita rate 2025/26 (€)</b>
Junior Cycle	€309
Transition Year	€142
Senior Cycle	€295

The total funding provided to a school will be calculated based on validated enrolments at 30 September 2024 (developing schools see Section 5.4 and for exceptional circumstances see Section 5.5).

This funding provides for the cost of all schoolbooks (see definition of schoolbooks in Schoolbooks section 4.2) and the cost of classroom resources as outlined in this guidance (see Classroom resources section 4.3 and Appendix 1). Section 4.2 and 4.3 clearly outline what the minimum requirements are for each programme that is, Junior Cycle, Transition Year and Senior Cycle.

However, where teacher-generated resources are provided in lieu of schoolbooks, the school may use the grant to meet any costs associated with the provision of teacher-generated resources, once all schoolbooks and core classroom resources, used by the school, have been provided (see section 4.6 for post-primary schools using teacher generated resources).

The Post-primary Schoolbook Scheme does not include any costs associated with mock exams.

The scope of the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme focuses on schoolbooks, materials to write on, materials required for practical subjects and project support equipment where the costs for these items were previously borne by parents/guardians, either by purchasing the item or by paying a fee to the school for the item.

## 4.2 Schoolbooks

### 4.2.1 Schoolbooks for Junior Cycle students

The scheme will provide schoolbooks for all students enrolled in recognised post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme. It will eliminate the cost of schoolbooks for parents/guardians of children and young people enrolled in each year.

The term 'schoolbooks' includes all relevant textbooks, including eBooks, and workbooks identified by schools as necessary for completion of the curriculum for each subject. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers. Schools should determine whether it is more practical or cost effective to print/photocopy examination papers, which are available from the State Examination Commission's website, or to purchase these.

Parents/guardians of students will not be asked to purchase schoolbooks or to make a financial contribution to the school towards the cost of schoolbooks.

### 4.2.2 Schoolbooks for Transition Year students

Transition Year (TY) is a one-year optional programme available to all post-primary schools. Almost all post-primary schools currently offer the programme to their students.

Schools have autonomy and flexibility to design their TY programme within the parameters of the TY Programme Statement published by the NCCA. Under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme, schools can provide TY students with items and resources that support teaching and learning under the four curriculum dimensions and the four student dimensions.

This is insofar as the costs associated with items provided to students would normally be borne by parents/guardians.

Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme funding does not include or cover costs associated with school trips or conferences (e.g. Young Scientist, Young Social Innovators, Student Enterprise Programme etc).

Parents of TY students should not be asked to provide, pay for or pay a contribution towards:

1. Schoolbooks
2. Workbooks

3. Copybooks
4. Learning Portfolio/ePortfolio

#### **4.2.3 Schoolbooks for Senior Cycle students;**

The scheme will provide schoolbooks for all students enrolled in Senior Cycle years in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme. It will eliminate the cost of schoolbooks for parents/guardians of young people enrolled in each of these years.

As outlined above the term ‘schoolbooks’ includes all relevant textbooks, including eBooks, and workbooks identified by schools as necessary for completion of the curriculum for each subject a student studies within the school. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English.

Schools should determine whether it is more practical or cost effective to print/photocopy examination papers, which are available from the State Examination Commission’s website, or to purchase these.

Parents/guardians of students in Senior Cycle years will not be asked to purchase schoolbooks or to make a financial contribution to the school towards the cost of schoolbooks.

Under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme, schools are not obliged to provide Senior Cycle students with schoolbooks, or other associated items, relating to a subject if the subject is not delivered by the school and the student has undertaken to study the subject independently and outside the school. Where a local arrangement exists between schools, to allow a student to study a subject in a different post-primary school in the Free Education Scheme to the school that they are enrolled in during the school day, the provision of the items to the student should be provided by the school the student is enrolled in. This is on the basis that the per capita grant funding under the scheme in respect of the student has been provided to the school they are enrolled in.

## 4.3 Classroom resources

**4.3.1 Core classroom resources;** For 2025/26 the scheme will cover, at a minimum, core classroom resources, which includes copybooks, hardback notebooks, school journals and calculators, required for all subjects as well as subject-specific resource items such as lab copybooks for science subjects or dictionaries for language subjects.

A detailed list of the core classroom resources for which costs have been provided under the scheme is included at **Appendix 1**. At a minimum, these are the items which must be provided by schools.

**4.3.2 Additional classroom resources;** In any given school year, post-primary schools will have different needs under the scheme, taking into account schoolbooks already in stock, the need to update or replace schoolbooks and various requirements for classroom resources. When all schoolbooks and core classroom resources under this scheme are provided, schools should use any surplus funding to purchase additional classroom resources. Expenditure under additional classroom resources should be based on expenditure that, up to the commencement of the scheme, was borne by parents/guardians, either by providing the item or paying a fee to the school to provide the item.

Schools have the discretion to provide additional classroom resources where funding permits.

Additional classroom resources covers resources used in subjects that may have a practical element. In essence, additional classroom resources are the supporting materials for any prescribed subject or short course required by students to complete projects and practical elements of the curriculum, beyond schoolbooks and core classroom resources.

Additional classroom resources does not include any items currently provided in post-primary schools through existing funding streams, either from the Department of Education or from other Departments and agencies (e.g. ICT grant, Assistive Technology Grant). When deciding what items to purchase under additional classroom resources and where surplus funding permits, schools are requested to consider providing items across a range of different subjects.

## 4.4 Students in second, third or sixth/LCA2 year in the 2025/26 school year

Students commencing second, third and sixth/LCA2 year in the 2025/26 school year should already have the majority of their required schoolbooks and some classroom resources as these will have been purchased or provided previously.

However, post-primary schools must provide under this new scheme, any additional schoolbooks and core classroom resources required by students commencing second, third or sixth/LCA2 year in the 2025/26 school year.

**When planning and budgeting each year, schools must prioritise costs for schoolbooks and core resources required for every student in every year before considering expenditure in other areas such as additional classroom resources or book covering and labelling.**

## 4.5 Special classes in post-primary schools

The Department recognises that in some circumstances students enrolled in special classes in mainstream post-primary schools may not use schoolbooks or classroom resources as listed in **Appendix 1**.

A broader range of schoolbooks and classroom resources may be required in these settings to meet the educational needs of the students, including the need to provide an audio version of a schoolbook alongside the text version of the book or resource to allow students to access a more individualised curriculum.

The main aim of the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme is to eliminate the costs of providing schoolbooks and classroom resources to parents/guardians. When this has been realised for students in special classes, any surplus book grant funding may be used to provide additional classroom resources. Schools operating special classes are best placed to identify additional classroom resources required for their individual setting and to meet the learning needs of their students.

## 4.6 Teacher generated resources and content

It is recognised that some post-primary schools have, over the past number of years, moved away from the use of schoolbooks, including eBooks. Teachers in these schools have generated their own bank of resources for students. Students access these resources in the main through digital devices. Such schools may still require a small number of schoolbooks each year, such as English plays and novels.

When schools that use teacher-generated resources and content have eliminated the cost of all required schoolbooks and classroom resources as detailed in the preceding sections of this guidance, they may use the funding to cover other resources associated with teacher-generated resources such as purchasing or subscribing to educational apps. If surplus funding remains, schools may use the funding to facilitate the provision of a digital device loan scheme to students as required. Any digital devices provided by the school remain the property of the school and must be collected from students at the end of the school year.

Schools that are wholly or largely reliant on teacher-generated resources may be asked to provide details of their implementation of the scheme to the Department.

It is also recognised that some schools have a number of teachers, in certain subjects, who create their own resources and therefore such schools have a combination of schoolbooks and device-led teaching. As outlined above, when schools that use teacher-generated resources have met the cost of all required schoolbooks and classroom resources as detailed in the preceding sections of this guidance, they may use the funding to cover other costs associated with teacher-generated resources such as purchasing or subscribing to educational apps.

If schools, that use teacher-generated resources, have any query on how the funding can be applied they can contact [postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie](mailto:postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie).

## 4.7 Surplus funding

After the costs of schoolbooks, core and additional classroom resources, as set out in this guidance, have been met for all enrolled students the following options are open to the school to deal with any remaining grant funding.

The funding can be;

- carried forward to the next school year;
- where post-primary schools have recently introduced a book rental scheme and obtained a loan to meet the start-up costs, surplus funding from the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme may be used to meet the loan costs;
- used to purchase additional classroom resources that are not listed in Appendix 1 subject to the following three criteria. 1) the resource must be used for the purpose of the delivery of the relevant curricula, 2) the resource must not be allowable under other funding streams 3) the cost of the resource would previously or ordinarily have been provided by parents/guardians.

Funding under this scheme cannot be used for purposes other than those outlined in this guidance.

Post-primary schools that have unspent book grant remaining from years prior to the 2025/26 school year may use it for items allowed under this scheme in any of the Junior or Senior Cycle years, including Transition Year.

Schools should consider the need to provide, replace or purchase new and/or additional schoolbooks in the 2025/26 school year and in subsequent school years when deciding how to use any surplus funding. This may arise where a school wishes to change or offer an additional subject or replace full sets of schoolbooks in certain subjects.



## 5. Funding arrangements

### 5.1 Allocation to schools

The per capita rates for each programme in recognised post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme are listed below.

It is important to note that schools have discretion to disburse funding across the respective programmes as required taking into account the specific needs of the school.

Programme	Per capita rate 2025/26 (€)
Junior Cycle	€309
Transition Year	€142
Senior Cycle (including LCA1/2)	€295

Please note that this rate is applicable to the 2025/26 school year only.

### 5.2 Payment of grant

It is envisaged that the book grant for the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme will be paid to schools no later than March 2025 so that schools will have the necessary funding in place to implement the scheme in advance of the commencement of the 2025/26 school year.

The grant will be calculated based on validated September 2024 enrolment figures.

Worked example of funding provided under the Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme 2025/26	
On 30 September 2024 School A had the following enrolments:	
<b>Junior Cycle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 112 students in first year,</li><li>• 132 in second year and</li><li>• 128 in third year</li></ul>	<b>Senior Cycle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 85 Transition Year students</li><li>• 138 fifth/sixth year</li><li>• 40 LCA1/2 students.</li></ul>
The total grant that will be paid to this school in spring 2025 for the 2025/26 school year in respect of these 635 students is €179,528.	

## 5.3 Post-primary schools under the patronage of education and training boards (ETBs)

Book grants will issue directly to the relevant ETB, which will distribute the funding to those schools under its remit through its established funding administration processes.

## 5.4 Developing schools

The Department recognises a specific number of post-primary schools as developing schools. For the purposes of the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme for 2025/26 a developing school is a school that:

1. has newly opened since September 2020, and;
2. that has significantly increased their enrolment size each year.

The Department of Education maintains a list of developing schools for the purpose of this grant and will be in contact with relevant schools. An initial payment of the book grant will be made to all post-primary schools that have developing school status in March 2025, at the same time as all other schools receive payment of the grant, and this will be calculated based on September 2024 validated enrolment data.

When developing schools have provided the Department with projected September 2025 enrolment data, and where this enrolment projection shows an increase from the validated enrolment of September 2024, a “top up” book grant payment will issue. Where the validated September 2025 enrolments are less than the projected September 2025 enrolments, developing schools will be required to return the excess schoolbook grant to the Department. Schools in this situation should email [postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie](mailto:postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie) for instructions and bank details for making the repayment.

### Worked example of additional funding provided to developing school under the Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme 2025/26

For example, a school with developing school status has 350 students enrolled on 30 September 2024. The book grant will issue in February 2025 in respect of 350 students. The school projects September 2025 enrolments of 380 students. A top-up book grant will issue in respect of 30 students.

## 5.5 Exceptional circumstances

Like many grants, the payment structure for this grant is such that funding is paid to schools in advance of the coming school year (2025/26) and is therefore based on the previous September's validated enrolment figures, from September 2024.

Any increase or decrease in enrolment figures since the previous year will be captured in the next year's grant funding. It is important to be assured that, on this basis, funding is provided for each student for the full duration of their enrolment in the school.

While students who enrol in first year in the 2025/26 school year are not captured for Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme grant in 2025/26 (as it is based on validated enrolment on 30 September 2024) they are counted for the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme grant for the year after they have left the school/completed post-primary school.

Schools will be expected, for the main part, to absorb the cost of additional enrolments that occur within the normal course of fluctuations which take place throughout any given year in all schools. Schools will not receive additional funding for any increase to enrolments which might be considered in the normal operation of the school. Schools, therefore, that experience a decrease in enrolments since the previous September will not be asked to refund any excess grant funding (with the exception of developing schools: see section 5.4). Funding will, as outlined above, balance and will be accounted for year on year.

In certain and limited circumstances, however, where a school enrolls a large number of new students after 30 September 2024 and where funding was not originally allocated to take account of these students, the school may contact the Department to make an application for additional funding. As a general rule, an additional payment will only be made by the Department in situations where the number of new students enrolled after 30 September is equal to or greater than 10% of the 30 September enrolment figure or greater than 15 students, and where the school has insufficient Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme funding to meet the additional costs. Any additional funding approved will be paid at the rate appropriate to the cycle/year applicable to the additional enrolments.

Schools that wish to apply for additional funding under "exceptional circumstances" should email [postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie](mailto:postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie) to request an application form.

Such applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## 5.6 Administration Support Grant

For the 2024/25 school year post-primary schools were paid an administration support grant based on the size of the Junior Cycle enrolment in the school. This was to assist with any additional work required at school level to implement the scheme.

### 5.6.1 Administration Support Grant structure for 2025/26

Schools will receive payment of an Administration Support Grant (ASG) in 2025. Following extensive engagement with stakeholders, the Department has enhanced the level of administration support grant to ensure that schools are adequately supported in the work required to implement the scheme for the 2025/26 school year.

While schools will receive only one payment, the Administration Support Grant (ASG) is made up of two parts (core administration days and supplementary support days).

### 5.6.2 Core Administrative Days

The core administration days will be allocated based on two key factors:

- the school sector applicable to the school, and,
- the total number of enrolments as of 30 September 2024.

The core ASG will provide support to schools under the following components:

- Core administration and procurement work including planning, ordering and logistics.
- One additional day for dynamic purchasing system (DPS) training (Voluntary, Community and Comprehensive schools only)
- Six additional days for procurement and administration work – (Voluntary, Community and Comprehensive schools only)
- One additional day for manual handling training (all schools)

In the ETB sector there is a centralised ETB framework for the purchase of schoolbooks. Procurement is carried out centrally by each ETB. Therefore, ETB schools will not be assigned additional administration support days for procurement work and training on the use of the Dynamic Purchasing System.

The person/s paid for this work can be an existing member of staff of the school/ETB such as: the principal/deputy principal, a teacher, a special needs assistant (SNA), the school secretary, or an individual deemed suitable by the school

management/ETB to carry out this role effectively. It is acknowledged that some post-primary schools have already appointed a post holder position to a staff member for the purposes of the operation of a book rental scheme. This additional support grant may be paid to the existing post holder, if appropriate, for additional work carried out to administer the new scheme, or it can be paid to a different person or persons as outlined above. No additional class time can be given to this role, outside of existing time allocated to post holders.

It is at the discretion of schools to determine the duties and time required on any given day to administer the scheme.

### **Rate of payment for Core Administration Support Days 2025/26**

The core administration days may be used to employ a person to work for a specified number of days in advance of, or during, the 2025/26 school year to carry out administrative work on the scheme. The daily rate sanctioned by the Department for this work is €167.54, which includes holiday pay. The Department will provide an additional 11.15% to cover the employer PRSI cost. The payment must be processed by the school as it would the payment of any person carrying out work for, or in, the school.

Although the rate is based on a daily rate, schools have the autonomy to use the equivalent number of hours over the course of the school year as they consider most suitable for their needs.

### **Duties**

The specific duties of the those being paid for the core administration days are to be determined by the school management but can include procuring schoolbooks and classroom resources, checking delivery of orders from schoolbook shops and suppliers, preparing and tracking sets of schoolbooks and classroom resources for individual classes/students, liaising with schoolbook shops and suppliers and subject teachers, organising distribution of schoolbooks and classroom resources to students and supervision of people employed under supplementary support days.

### 5.6.3 Supplementary Support Days

The Department accepts that in many schools additional support was required in 2024 to implement the scheme and that very often this support was provided by students in the school. The ASG has been further enhanced to provide supplementary support days to employ students/others to assist the school with the implementation of the scheme, including arranging packs of schoolbooks and resources for individual students and assisting with schoolbook collection days in schools. These additional support days are allocated based on the size of the school in line with the total validated enrolments in September 2024.

#### Rate of payment Supplementary Support Days 2025/26

The supplementary support days may be used to employ students/other individuals to help the school with the implementation of the scheme. Students/other individuals will be paid the current minimum wage appropriate to their age. Schools will be allocated funding of €13.50 per hour. For the purposes of the supplementary support days grant calculation, a day is taken to mean 7 hours. The Department will provide an additional 8% to cover holiday pay and an additional 11.15% to cover the employer PRSI cost.

#### Duties

The specific duties to be undertaken by students/others employed through the Supplementary Support Days are a matter for individual schools but can include work over the summer such as sorting schoolbooks and classroom resources into individual packs for students and assisting in schools during schoolbook collection days.

Allocation tables are outlined in section 5.6.4 below.

**Appendix 3** contains a list of some of the key tasks involved in the implementation of the scheme at school level. This is not an exhaustive list and will differ from school to school.

Where a post-primary school does not need to pay a person or persons for additional administrative support to implement the new scheme, the school may use the Administration Support Grant for other administrative purposes associated with the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme, including but not limited to, the purchase of a tracking/barcode system or schoolbook covering,

### 5.6.4 Administration Support Grant allocations 2025/26

The number of days allocated are based on the enrolment size on 30 September 2024.

Voluntary, Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools 2025/26			
Size of school (Student enrolment September 2024)	Core administration days	Supplementary support (students/ other individuals)	Total Days
0 – 300	18	10	28
301 – 600	21	15	36
601 – 1000	24	20	44
1001 – 1600	26	25	51

**Table 1.** Administration support grant allocations for Voluntary, Secondary and Community and Comprehensive schools for 2025/26.

Education and Training Board Schools 2025/26			
Size of school (Student enrolment September 2024)	Core administration days	Supplementary support (students/ other individuals)	Total Days
0 – 300	11	10	21
301 – 600	14	15	29
601 – 1000	17	20	37
1001 - 1600	19	25	44

**Table 2.** Administration support grant allocations for Education and Training Board schools for 2025/26.

The operation of and the requirement for the Administration Support Grant will be reviewed as part of the ongoing evaluation of the scheme.

For developing schools, the grant for administrative support will be calculated based on projected enrolment figures for September 2025.

The Administration Support Grant will be paid separately to the schoolbook grant and will issue to post-primary schools before the end of April.



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## 6. Administration of the scheme

### 6.1 Key principles

The board of management/ETB will be responsible for ensuring the effective administration of the scheme within the following key principles:

- Schoolbooks and classroom resources will be chosen to support the implementation of the teaching and learning in the school and the provision of the post-primary curriculum to students.
- Schools will retain ownership of schoolbooks. While schoolbooks remain the property of the school, students should be allowed to bring schoolbooks home in order to complete homework or to allow parents/guardians stay connected with their child's learning in school.
- All students will have access to the schoolbooks and classroom resources provided for by this scheme.
- No costs for schoolbooks and core classroom resources will be sought from parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians will not be asked to purchase schoolbooks and core classroom resources provided for by this scheme.

### 6.2 Selection of schoolbooks

Post-primary schools will continue to have autonomy to choose schoolbooks and classroom resources that meet curricular requirements. In the case of special classes in post-primary schools, they have autonomy to choose resources that meet the learning needs of the students.

A school's policy on the selection of schoolbooks should include consideration of the need for schoolbooks and/or workbooks, the criteria used in selecting schoolbooks and a commitment to keeping a schoolbook on the school booklist for a specified period of time.

### 6.3 Digital

Schools may use the funding for digital media support, which relates to teaching and learning within curricular requirements. Decisions regarding the use of digital technology, such as eBooks/etextbooks, in schools is a matter for the board of management/ETB of each school. Schools are advised to consult with members of

the school community, including parents/guardians, when planning for the introduction of digital technologies, with cost and other implications being fully considered.

You can access digital resources and advice on the use of digital media and related professional learning at; [www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-post-primary](http://www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-post-primary); [www.oide.ie](http://www.oide.ie) and [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie).

In the case of post-primary schools using teacher-generated resources and content in place of schoolbooks, those schools may implement a scheme to provide digital devices on loan to students. See section 4.6 and 4.7 above.

## 6.4 Resources that support the teaching of Irish

An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG), in collaboration with various educational publishers provides Irish-language versions of many textbooks (hard copies and digital versions). In addition, COGG compiles a comprehensive list annually which provides up-to-date information on publications and teaching materials that support the teaching of Irish and the teaching of other subjects through the medium of Irish in post-primary schools.

COGG's An Tairseach (or *online resource portal*) has been developed using digital resources from practicing teachers and will feature newly developed resources on an ongoing basis. Users can create an account and gain access to 1,600 resources across many subjects by logging on to .

COGG also regularly organises information webinars, workshops and exhibitions to inform teachers about the material available for Gaeltacht and Irish-medium schools. This information can be very valuable when decisions are being made on possible schoolbooks for individual subjects/class groups.

At post-primary level, there are a number of prescribed texts for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle English and Irish. The decision on which particular text to use rests with the school itself. Schools can choose whichever text best suits the context of their teaching. More information on the above can be found at: [www.cogg.ie](http://www.cogg.ie).

## 6.5 Early Planning

It can take time to procure schoolbooks and classroom resources and for suppliers to fulfil and deliver goods to schools. Schools need to engage in effective planning. It is important that subject teachers decide as early as possible what schoolbooks and classroom resources are required for their subjects to allow sufficient time for public procurement and delivery. The board of management/ETB and school management should ensure that all practical tasks relating to the administration of the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme are concluded in time for the beginning of the new school year. Some of these key tasks involved are outlined in **Appendix 3**.

Schoolbooks and classroom resources can be stored in classrooms or any other area of the school as deemed suitable by the school over the summer period.

## 6.6 Ownership

**All schoolbooks remain the property of the school and are provided on loan to students.** Schoolbooks can consist of both new and second-hand schoolbooks. Schools can engage with parents of students who are finishing each year/cycle to see if schoolbooks can be sourced second-hand to reduce costs, prevent wastage and ensure more schoolbooks are recycled.

Many schoolbooks and classroom resources used in this loan scheme will remain in use by a student for the full three years of Junior Cycle, Transition Year or the two years of Senior Cycle. Schools should decide whether they wish to collect all schoolbooks at the end of the school year and re-distribute them in time for the start of the next school year or leave the items in the care of the student and their family for the three years of Junior Cycle/two years of Senior Cycle (where schoolbooks are being used for more than one year).

Schools can devise a system for monitoring items such as name tags/barcodes (where used) which are placed on each book in advance. Students and parents/guardians should be reminded of the need to take care of schoolbooks and resources throughout the year. Schools should not prioritise the barcoding or labelling of items over providing all students with the minimum items as outlined in section 4.2 and **Appendix 1**.

At the end of the school year or at the end of Junior Cycle/Senior Cycle, schoolbooks and resources (where applicable) should be collected and checked. While schoolbooks remain the property of the school, pupils should be allowed to bring schoolbooks home in order to complete homework or to allow parents/guardians to stay connected with their child's learning in school.

## 6.7 Deposits

Schools may introduce a schoolbooks scheme policy. The schools' policy on care for, and loss or damage of schoolbooks must be developed in consultation with parents and students and must be reasonable and proportionate to the potential costs associated with loss or damage of schoolbooks.

Schoolbooks are owned by the school. It is important to ensure that students and their families are reminded of their crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the scheme - parents should realise that it is required that students return books, in good condition, to the school in accordance with the school policy, either at the end of the year or the end of the programme. Parents and/or students should also take responsibility for ensuring that schoolbooks have a durable cover throughout the term of use by the student.

While schools must not charge parents/guardians for the costs associated with schoolbooks and core classroom resources, schools are permitted to request a refundable deposit, which will be returned to parents/students when books are returned to the school in re-usable condition and in accordance with the school's schoolbooks scheme policy. This is to incentivise students and parents to take care of books and to ensure the sustainability of the book scheme over time.

This deposit is limited to no more than €50 per student per year/cycle. In relation to deposits, schools are also requested to take into consideration the number of students attending the school per family.

Where no replacement of schoolbooks is required, any deposit paid should be returned to parents/students in full. Schools should take into consideration the normal wear and tear when assessing returned books for issuing a deposit refund at the end of a year or programme.

While schools are permitted to request a deposit from parents to mitigate against the cost of replacement for lost and damaged schoolbooks, schools must not stop or hinder the provision of schoolbooks and core classroom resources, to any student for non-payment of this deposit or for non-payment of other school charges including but not limited to charges for school lockers, voluntary contributions or any other such charges levied on parents.

## 6.8 Reduce waste

As far as possible, schools should make every effort to reduce wastage under the scheme. Schools are expected to adopt a cost-conscious and environment-conscious approach to the selection of schoolbooks and classroom resources.

There are many ways in which schools can achieve this.

It is permitted to purchase second-hand schoolbooks in 2025 with funding provided under the scheme, for example, in schools where outgoing 6th year students own their schoolbooks in the 2024/25 school year. Schools may wish to proactively engage with parents of students regarding the purchase or the donation of second-hand schoolbooks.

When purchasing classroom resources, schools should consider what resources students already have in their possession. All students, in years other than first year, may not require items such as new calculators, log tables and dictionaries as they may already have them from use in previous years.

Schools continue to have the autonomy under this scheme when selecting textbooks, and resources to deliver the various subjects in the curriculum. Schools should consider the lifespan of schoolbooks and other resources giving particular consideration to the reduction of single use schoolbooks such as workbooks.

It is strongly recommended that a cover is placed on all schoolbooks. Schoolbook shops and suppliers may provide a book-covering service, or a school may decide to provide its own book-covering service. Schools must ensure that the cost of the minimum items required for all students is budgeted for before allocating grant funding to the cost of covering, barcoding or labelling schoolbooks. Parents and/or students should take responsibility for ensuring schoolbooks have a durable cover throughout the term of use by the student.

Parents should be reminded that schoolbooks are the property of the school and students are expected to take good care of their schoolbooks and classroom resources and keep them in good condition during the school year or cycle. This may be included as part of the school's Code of Behaviour.

## 6.9 Communication with parents/guardians

Post-primary schools are required to communicate as early as possible with parents/guardians in relation to this new scheme. This is to ensure all parents/guardians are fully aware of the new scheme and parents/guardians of students do not incur any unnecessary expenditure between now and the start of the 2025/26 school year.

The communication with parents/guardians **should only reference the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme**. To avoid any confusion the communication should not include reference to any other fees or charges levied on parents/guardians of students, for example, fees for school trips or school activities. Where they exist, other fees and charges should be covered in a separate communication from schools to parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians must be informed of the classroom resources now covered under the scheme.

Where additional classroom resources are required but cannot be covered under the scheme, parents/guardians must be advised of how these items will be provided. Schools should either provide parents/guardians with a list of the specific items that they are required to purchase or provide them with information of the fee that the school will charge and a list of items that the school will provide for this fee. A draft communication to parents/guardians is available at **Appendix 2**.

Parents/guardians must also be informed of the arrangements in place for the distribution of schoolbooks and classroom resources to students.

## 7. Procurement

Schools have obligations that stem from both EU and national public procurement rules when sourcing goods and services.

Schools have access to the Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services published by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). These Guidelines promote good practice and consistency of application of the public procurement rules in relation to the purchase of goods and services. The guidelines are available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c23f5-public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/>.

The Office of Government Procurement also aims to promote schemes to facilitate Small and Medium sized Enterprise (SME) participation in Public Procurement. DPER Circular 05/2023 refers to initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement and outlines the schemes which schools may consider as part of their procurement process. It can be accessed here <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/9e7bf-circular-05-2023-initiatives-to-assist-smes-in-public-procurement/>.

Schools can use the Office of Government Procurement Office Supplies Framework for stationery requirements including classroom resources (<https://buyerzone.gov.ie/> or contact the helpdesk at [support@ogp.gov.ie](mailto:support@ogp.gov.ie)). Some items which may be required by schools under this scheme are listed on the framework and schools are encouraged to engage the services of the Office Supplies Framework which aims to achieve value for money on the items included on the framework.

Further information and assistance on accessing the OGP Office Supplies Framework as well as a summary of procurement thresholds is set out at **Appendix 4**.

### 7.1 Dynamic purchasing system (DPS)

The Department in conjunction with the Education Procurement Service and the Schools Procurement Unit has developed a dynamic purchasing system to assist Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools meet their public procurement obligations from 2025. The DPS will be launched in March 2025.

Over the coming period the Department will contact all Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools and will offer bespoke resources and supports in relation to the DPS. All Voluntary Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools that have total schoolbook contracts in excess of €50,000

(excluding VAT) will be required to procure schoolbooks through the DPS. Where the total contract value is less than €50,000 (excluding VAT) schools will be encouraged to use the DPS. Please see Section 7.6 for more details on contracts less than €50,000.

## 7.2 Schools procurement unit

The Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) is the central support resource for providing guidance to all recognised primary schools, including special schools, and post-primary schools (except ETB schools) on any procurement-related issue. The SPU delivers free advice and practical support to schools to help them achieve improvements in their procurement processes, practices and outcomes.

Information and supporting guidance in relation to the DPS will be hosted on the Schoolbooks Section of the School's Procurement Unit website [www.spu.ie](http://www.spu.ie). Schools are advised to refer to the SPU website on a regular basis over the coming months where additional content and guidance videos will be posited.

## 7.3 Post-primary schools under the patronage of education and training boards (ETBs)

These schools are supported in their procurement activity by their local ETB.

## 7.4 Green public procurement

The public sector has a vital role to play in leading Ireland's transition to a sustainable and carbon-neutral economy and society. Public procurement is one of the primary ways in which public bodies will help to shape this transition, and to meet the 2030 targets for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improving energy efficiency.

The Green Public Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector provides step-by-step instructions and criteria for implementing green public procurement (GPP), in line with Irish and EU policy and legislation. All tenders using public funds must include green public procurement (GPP). For those schools using the DPS to source schoolbooks, the criteria on which contracts are awarded will have been predetermined and will have taken GPP into account.



Updated 2024 guidance is available at; <https://www.epa.ie/publications/circular-economy/resources/epa-gpp-guidance-for-the-public-sector-2024.php>.

A green criteria search tool developed by the OGP and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is also available which allows users to search for specific green criteria in relation to a particular item which they are buying. One of the main subcategories that schools review is the “Paper products and printing services” green criteria. The tool can be accessed here: <https://gppcriteria.gov.ie/>.

## 7.5 Annual booklists

Annual booklists should continue to be compiled by post-primary schools arising from the decisions of subject teachers and school management based on the requirements of the school. These should be maintained for audit purposes.

Annual booklists should continue to be made available to schoolbook publishers. This is to aid publishers in their yearly planning process including estimating demand for certain publications and printing sufficient stock. This will also ensure that any associated teacher resource materials and appropriate licences are provided by publishers to the school.

Schools should note that schoolbook publishers will require proof of purchase in order to provide teacher resources that accompany schoolbooks. Any cost associated with acquiring a teacher resource, where a school does not need to purchase the accompanying schoolbook, is a matter for schoolbook publishers. Schools will need to consider this and clarify with respective suppliers when budgeting and ordering each year.

Schools should continue to review their schoolbook requirements on an annual basis to maximise longevity and sustainability and reduce wastage by ensuring that schoolbooks and resources are not ordered each year unless they are required.

## 7.6 Template for quotations where total contract is under €50,000 (exclusive of VAT)

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Contracts under €50,000 (exclusive of VAT) may be awarded on the basis of written quotations from three suppliers.**

As outlined earlier for the 2025/26 school year a dynamic purchasing system (DPS) is being developed, and further details will issue to all voluntary secondary and

community and comprehensive schools in the coming weeks. Where a schoolbook contract is less than €50,000 in total value (excluding VAT) schools may procure through the DPS or by requesting three written quotations from three suppliers. For contracts less than €50,000 (excluding VAT) a quotation template has been developed by the Department, through engagement with key stakeholders, to standardise the quotation process used by schools to obtain three quotations.

The template is available at the following link [www.spu.ie](http://www.spu.ie). While schools are not obliged to use this template, it is considered beneficial to both schools and suppliers to increase efficiency in the procurement process where the total value of the contract is less than €50,000 (excluding VAT).

## 7.7 Irish Education Publishers Association (IEPA) code of practice

The main Irish educational publishers have agreed to apply a code of practice designed to help reduce the cost of schoolbooks for parents/guardians and schools. As part of this code, publishers have given commitments to maintain new editions of schoolbooks in print for a minimum of six years, to co-operate with individual schools in the development of schoolbook schemes and to have improved engagement with school communities, parents/guardians, teachers and other stakeholders. See **Appendix 5**.

## 7.8 Irish Copyright Licensing Agency

In Ireland, books, magazines, journals, digital publications and websites are protected by Irish copyright law, and that law applies to everyone. Therefore, when a teacher wants to provide copies of content from a website or a book or magazine for their students, they need permission to do so.

It is mandatory for any educational establishment wishing to make multiple copies of a variety of copyright-protected works to have a licence. As of September 2022, the Department of Education holds a central Educational Licence on behalf of all primary and post-primary schools recognised in the Free Education Scheme. This allows schools to re-use content in lessons without having to clear permissions to do so.

Further detail of what schools are permitted to use under the schools' license is provided at the following link <https://www.icla.ie/licences/primary-and-post-primary-schools-licences>.

## 7.9 Schoolbook shops and schoolbook suppliers

In the past, many parents/guardians purchased schoolbooks directly from schoolbook shops and schoolbook suppliers over a number of months. Schoolbook shops, schoolbook suppliers and suppliers of classroom resources will now engage directly with a number of schools in relation to the scheme. Such shops and suppliers may now be required to process large orders from a number of schools.

In order to ensure a smooth implementation of the scheme, post-primary schools are requested to finalise their booklists, tender requests and other requirements for the 2025/26 school year as early as possible to ensure that schoolbooks and classroom resources are available, delivered to schools and provided to students in advance of the new school year.

Schools must follow public procurement guidelines (see **Appendix 4**).

The funding will be released to schools in March 2025 to facilitate prompt payment to schoolbook suppliers. Schoolbook suppliers may charge a deposit to schools. This is at the discretion of the bookshop/supplier and should form part of any contract agreement between a school and a supplier.

It is accepted that there are certain circumstances where some post-primary schools may need to place orders after the start of the 2025/26 school year, for example, where there is a requirement to purchase additional schoolbooks or resources or in the case of finalising subject choices after completion of first year taster programmes.

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## 8. Financial management

### 8.1 Financial administration

Proper financial management procedures must be applied at all times to the funding provided to schools under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme. The schoolbook funding is ring-fenced for schoolbooks and classroom resources for students, as set out in this guidance. Transactions in relation to the scheme should be identified as such in the schools' accounts as with standard financial management procedures (see FSSU website for guidance).

If schools have surplus funding under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme at the end of the 2025/26 school year, such funding may be carried forward into the 2026/27 school year. It is important that schools consider their requirements to replace schoolbooks or purchase new schoolbooks in the following year when deciding how to use any surplus grant.

As with all Exchequer grant aid, school authorities must be able to provide detailed records on how funding, provided under this scheme, was spent. All expenditure in connection with the scheme must be vouched and schools must be able to prove that expenditure was used on the purchase of materials allowed under the scheme.

Invoices and receipts must be retained for the purposes of potential audit/inspection by the Department, the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU)/ Internal Audit Unit (ETB) as appropriate and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General. It is necessary for schools to retain, booklists, details of quotations received, invoices, receipts and any other relevant records in respect of all expenditure for a period of seven years.

Schools will be provided with an income and expenditure report for completion to enable outputs from the scheme to be determined. This will issue to schools in due course.

If a school closes permanently, any balance held by the school from this grant must be surrendered to the Department on the date that the school ceases operation. Where a school closes permanently, due to an amalgamation, any balance held by both schools from this grant shall transfer to the new school.

The Department reserves the right to recoup funding issued from other grant funding for non-compliance with any of the terms of this scheme. Schools must ensure compliance with [DPER Circular 13/2014](#), *Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds*.

## 8.2 Surplus funding

Any funds remaining from the previous book grant allocation should be carried forward to the 2025/26 school year. This includes any remaining book grant funding carried over from the Junior Cycle Schoolbook Scheme. This funding must be used to support costs of schoolbooks and classroom resources across any of the Junior or Senior Cycle years. Schools that have accumulated unspent book grant in their accounts from the previous year/s are encouraged to consider this as part of their overall expenditure when budgeting for books and resources requirements across all classes and years.

Schools should ensure that all carried over and surplus book grant funding is spent before requesting additional funding through the exceptional cases provision of this scheme.

## 8.3 Financial support services unit

In accordance with Department Circular 0002/2018, *Operation of the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU)*, the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) provides advice and support to Voluntary Secondary Schools and Community and Comprehensive schools in financial governance. This circular can be accessed here <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/df9bbc60ef4c49478d67bd7db173ad5f/>.

This includes standardising arrangements for compliance with accounting requirements under Section 18 of the Education Act 1998 and enhancing current financial support structures for schools. The FSSU also supports boards of management in meeting their compliance requirements to other regulatory and statutory bodies. The FSSU has produced guidance to assist schools with their accounting requirements. It can be accessed at the following link <https://www.fssu.ie/post-primary/>.

Schools may be subject to audit by the FSSU as part of its ongoing programme of work in supporting schools on financial governance matters and enabling them to comply with the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Funding to ETB schools may be subject to audit by the Internal Audit Unit (ETB).

## **8.4 Payments to suppliers**

Schools should be mindful of the importance of prompt payment of invoices to suppliers in line with financial management guidance provided by the FSSU. Funding will issue to schools early in 2025 to ensure schools have the capacity to purchase schoolbooks and other items in advance of the start of the school year. Schoolbook suppliers may wish to charge a deposit to schools.

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## 9. Scheme evaluation

### 9.1 School review and reporting

Schools should review their implementation of the scheme in line with the scheme guidance on an annual basis. This will also help schools in preparation for the reporting of information which will be required by the Department for governance and auditing purposes. This may include:

- Reviewing how effectively the scheme has operated during the school year
- Identifying possible improvements to the operation of the scheme
- Assessing the quality of service from the book provider(s)
- Examining school policy on minimising the replacement of textbooks and workbooks
- Considering measures to minimise future costs.

The view of school management, individual teachers, subject Departments, parents and students are central to such a review.

### 9.2 Department of Education governance and auditing

All post-primary schools will be required to complete and submit an income and expenditure return, each year, in respect of the scheme. The Department will communicate over the coming months with post-primary schools in relation to the Income and Expenditure Return for the 2025/26 school year. Schools will be asked to provide details relating to the administration and financial costs of the scheme and schools will be required to co-operate with the process.

The ongoing evaluation of the scheme may involve selecting a sample of schools to participate in further evaluation of the scheme.

Schools selected for any future evaluation will be informed in advance and will be required to co-operate with the process. The evaluation will aim to, among other things;

- review the operation of the scheme, including compliance with relevant legislation, Circulars and the scheme guidance
- identify possible improvements to the operation of the scheme;
- review expenditure under the scheme;
- consider measures to improve efficiency for future years;

- assess the wider impacts of the scheme in relation to (1) reducing the cost of education to households (2) removing barriers to education for some students (3) promoting value for money (4) promoting environmental and cost efficiency through the reuse of books.

The views of school management, teachers, parents/guardians and students, schoolbook publishers, schoolbook shops and other relevant stakeholders will be considered in the development of any evaluation.

It is essential that schools/ETB retain all documentation pertaining to the scheme including, proof of compliance with EU and national procurement rules, and details of all items purchased under the scheme, to ensure valid information is provided to the evaluation process.



## **10. Review of this guidance**

This guidance is applicable to the 2025/26 school year. The guidance will be reviewed ahead of the 2026/27 school year and/or as required. Any review will be notified to schools and education partners.

## 11. Queries

All queries on this guidance should be sent to [postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie](mailto:postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie).

The Department has produced a Quick Reference Guide for schools to assist with general queries on the scheme. It can be accessed at [www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes](http://www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes)

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## Appendix 1 – Core Classroom resources

The following resources are the items which **must** be provided by schools for all students in each respective programme as set out below (where the items are required based on particular subject choices and each school's own individual requirements).

The Department acknowledges that subject choices and combinations vary greatly in some schools. Schools have the discretion to provide additional items or substitute items on the lists below, but parents must not be asked to purchase any of these items.

Where core classroom resources are provided, the school is under no obligation to replace an item that has been lost or damaged by a student.

### Appendix 1.1 Junior Cycle students

- 1 school journal per student per Junior Cycle year
- 12 copybooks (or equivalent hard back notebook or refill pad) per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 display A4 plastic folder per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 plastic zip A4 folder/carry case per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 set of ledgers/journals/cash books required for accounting/business studies per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 science copybook per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 music copybook/manuscript per student per Junior Cycle year
- 1 set of grammar books per student (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Junior Cycle)
- 1 maths formulae & tables/log book (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Junior Cycle)
- 1 scientific calculator (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Junior Cycle)
- Dictionary/(ies) (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Junior Cycle)

### Appendix 1.2 Transition Year students

- 1 school journal per student
- 4 copybooks (incl. equivalent hard back notebook or refill pad) per student
- 1 display A4 plastic folder per student
- 1 plastic zip A4 folder/carry case per student

### **Appendix 1.3 Senior Cycle students including Leaving Certificate Established, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)**

Schools will be aware that students may already have some items from Junior Cycle and it is up to schools to determine the requirements of students.

The minimum items for Senior Cycle students (not including Transition Year students) are listed below:

Core classroom resources:

- 1 school journal per student per Senior Cycle year
- 16 copybooks to include 2 copybooks per examination subject (including equivalent hard back notebook or refill pad) per student per Senior Cycle year
- 1 set of ledgers/equivalent journals for business required for accounting/business subjects per student per Senior Cycle year
- 1 science specific copy/equivalent per student per Senior Cycle year required for science and applied science subjects
- 1 music copybook/manuscript per student per Senior Cycle year
- 1 ring binder folder and pockets or display A4 plastic folder (or equivalent) per student per subject per Senior Cycle year
- 1 plastic zip A4 folder/carry case per student per Senior Cycle year
- 1 maths formulae and tables/log book (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Senior Cycle)
- 1 mathematical geometry set (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Senior Cycle)
- 1 scientific calculator (to remain assigned to that student for the duration/remainder of the Senior Cycle)
- 1 dictionary/relevant grammar book per language studied per student for the duration of Senior Cycle

Where a school uses any of the items listed above, they must be provided by the school from within the grant funding.

Where a school does not intend to use some of the items listed above but uses similar or alternative items, for which parents/guardians were previously charged a fee or asked to purchase items, the school has the discretion to substitute items listed here to meet their own curricular needs in the various subjects. A school cannot, however, choose to use the funding for items not listed here and continue to charge or introduce a charge to parents/guardians or ask parents/guardians to provide the items listed above.

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## Appendix 2 – Draft communication to parents/guardians of students enrolled in recognised post-primary schools.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme for the 2025/26 school year.

For the 2025/26 school year all students in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme will receive free schoolbooks and core classroom resources. These will be in place in time for the start of the new school year.

This scheme is being implemented by Minister for Education Helen McEntee TD. It is in recognition of the cost of preparing children and young people for the return to school. The cost of providing schoolbooks and core classroom resources will now be borne by the State. The scheme will ensure equity of access, where all children and young people enrolled in post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme can commence the new school year in 2025/26 with the same schoolbooks and classroom resources as other children and young people in their class.

“Schoolbooks” includes all relevant schoolbooks, including ebooks for all programmes at both Junior and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It covers workbooks in use in the school to support teaching and subject learning. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required, books of past examination papers for all subjects.

Funding for the scheme in 2025/26 is being provided directly to post-primary schools by the Department of Education. Schools now have responsibility for providing schoolbooks and core classroom resources to all students at the start of the 2025/26 school year.

**(Where parents/guardians of second and third year, sixth year and LCA2 students currently own their schoolbooks or were provided with schoolbooks under the Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme in 2024/25 these are to be used)**

Parents/Guardians of students commencing second, third, sixth year and LCA2 may already have purchased, or under the Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme students were provided with, a significant amount of the schoolbooks and classroom resources required. Any additional schoolbooks and core classroom resources required by students in these years will now be covered under the scheme.

All schoolbooks and core classroom resources provided under the scheme will remain the property of the school, so that they can be reused in future years (where applicable).

Schoolbooks will be provided on loan to students for the duration of the 2025/26 school year and must be returned to school at the end of the school year/at the end of the programme cycle (3 years for Junior Cycle, 2 years for Senior Cycle. **DELETE AS APPROPRIATE**)

Under the terms of the scheme, schools are permitted to charge a refundable deposit to cover lost, damaged and unreturned schoolbooks. The school has decided to charge a refundable deposit of €50 per student. When schoolbooks are returned to school the deposit will be refunded.

Please remind your children to take care of their schoolbooks and classroom resources and keep them in good condition during the period that they are in their possession. It is not permitted to write on schoolbooks. The school is under no obligation to replace an item that has been lost or damaged by a student.

There may be some additional classroom resources that are not covered by the scheme.

Further details of what, (if any), items parents/guardians will need to supply for the return to school in August/September 2025/pay a fee to the school for will be itemised and communicated to parents/guardians by the school in due course.

Yours faithfully

Chair of BOM

## Appendix 3 – School task list

- Recruit personnel to work on the administration of the scheme
- Compile booklist received from each individual class/subject teacher and the list of classroom resources required for each class/subject
- Complete an audit of the current stock of books and core classroom resources that can be reused
- Complete subject option choice process in sufficient time to enable school to establish quantities of books required.
- Establish, and list, the total number of schoolbooks and core classroom resource items that need to be purchased
- Establish budget breakdown for schoolbooks, core classroom resources and additional classroom resources
- Determine what additional classroom resources will be covered by the grant
- Adhere to public procurement guidelines including seeking the required number of quotes from schoolbook shops and suppliers and adhering to tendering requirements, where applicable
- Where contract for schoolbooks exceeds €50,000 (excluding VAT), participating in training and information sessions offered by the Department around the new DPS and become familiar with the DPS facility
- Where a contract for classroom resources is expected to exceed €50,000 (excluding VAT) contact the Schools Procurement Unit for specific procurement support
- Where contract for schoolbooks and or classroom resources is less than €50,000 (excluding VAT), decide on a supplier for schoolbooks and classroom resources and place order/s
- Furnish schoolbook publishers with booklists to satisfy requirements for digital supports in order to obtain eBook licences or teacher resources
- Ensure all the necessary teaching resources/copyrights are provided by the relevant publishers
- Liaise with schoolbook shops and suppliers in relation to any issues
- Check all invoices against orders
- Check stock delivered against orders/invoices
- Arrange a suitable place to store stock
- Arrange for payment to issue to schoolbook suppliers in a timely manner
- Decide if a cover should be placed on schoolbooks to help extend their lifespan
- Ensure that there is an adequate system in place to catalogue schoolbooks, for example, label/barcode/scanner system

- Sort schoolbooks and classroom resources as appropriate
- Distribute schoolbooks and classroom resources to students
- Maintain financial records and retain quotations, tender documents and proof of purchase of materials funded by the scheme
- Communicate with parents/guardians
- Cooperate with the Department if selected to participate in any evaluation of the scheme
- As required during the year, order additional stock (both schoolbooks and classroom resources)
- Organise for the return of schoolbooks from students at the end of each year or at the end of the relevant cycle, as appropriate.



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## Appendix 4 – Procurement requirements

Schools can register to access the OGP Buyerzone for full information on the Office Supplies framework. The Buyerzone is accessible to Public Sector Bodies only. It holds all the information about procurement arrangements that PSBs can use.

The Office Supplies Framework is designed with a number of geographical lots to allow more suppliers gain access to public sector business.

Public Sector Bodies sign up to the lot in which their offices/buildings are located.

Each school should choose the geographical lot in which their school is located. On the Buyerzone, you will find associated documentation which will explain, in detail;

- How to use the framework on the user guide document (by completing Notification to Activate Goods form or NAGF and sending it to the supplier to co-sign. You can then discuss how the contract will operate with the supplier and arrange payment method, delivery days, assigning contact person/persons)
- What items are available to purchase from this framework. Each Lot will have an Excel catalogue with line items and cost for each item. The items available range from foolscaps, pens, pencils to wallcharts and whiteboards.
- The suppliers' obligations as members of this framework are listed on the framework userguide on the OGP Buyerzone (such as delivery turnaround times, processing returned items)

Schools may only order products under this contract that are included in the catalogue.

If a school requires additional stationery items that are not part of the catalogue for the Lot, then they are required to follow proper public procurement guidelines in obtaining these items.

## How to use the OGP Stationery Framework



The below table sets out the procurement requirements when not using the OGP Stationery Framework.

Schoolbooks and Classroom Resources – Expenditure Threshold Guide (excluding VAT)			
Below €5,000	€5,000 to €50,000	€50,000 to EU Threshold (€220,999)	Greater than €221,000
Can be awarded on the basis of verbal or written quotes from one or more competitive supplier.	Minimum of 3 Quotes (or DPS)	<p>For schoolbooks - Dynamic Purchasing System</p> <p>DPS will also be used for schoolbook contracts that exceed the EU Threshold €220,999</p> <p>For Classroom Resources Contracts that are estimated to exceed €50,000 contact the Schools Procurement Unit for support</p>	Dynamic Purchasing System
Email request or RFQ Template	RFQ Template from SPU	Bespoke Support around the DPS will be provided to voluntary secondary and community and comprehensive school in early 2025.	
Quote submitted in writing or email	Submission response by email		
1 – 2 weeks to respond	14 days		
Lowest Price	Most economically advantageous tender (MEAT)		
Select Lowest Price	Evaluate offers against spec, qualification and award criteria		
Email results	Email results with reasons Publish contract award notice on eTenders for contracts above €25,000		

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## Appendix 5 – Irish Educational Publishers' Association (IEPA)

### IEPA CODE OF PRACTICE – Revised May 2022

**Members of the Irish Educational Publishers' Association subscribe to the following Code of Practice which is designed to help reduce the cost of schoolbooks and improve the education experience for parents and schools.**

- Publishers will not revise any text within at least four years – unless there is a change in the curriculum, the state examination or methods of assessment, or there is recognised teacher-led demand to do so.
- When a revised edition of a textbook is produced, the old edition will be kept in print for a two-year period, unless annual sales fall below 500 copies. This means that a new edition of a textbook will be available for a minimum of six years.
- Members of the IEPA will co-operate with the Department of Education and the various charitable organisations in the development of initiatives to improve access to educational materials for disadvantaged children both in Ireland and overseas.
- Apart from the commitment to maintain editions in print for a minimum of six years, the publishers will co-operate with individual schools in their development of textbook rental schemes
- Member publishers will continue to engage actively with school communities, parents, teachers and government agencies to improve the education experience for students in Irish schools

Adopted in October 2011 and revised in June 2015, this Code of Practice is supported by the following publishers: CJ Fallon, Educate.ie, Folens, Gill Education, An Gúm, Mentor Books, Prim-ed, The Educational Company and Veritas.

## Useful links

[www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes](http://www.gov.ie/schoolbookschemes)

[Gov.ie - Public procurement guidelines for goods and services \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

[Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices - SPU](#)

[Green Public Procurement \(epa.ie\)](http://epa.ie)

[COGG | An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta](#)

[www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-post-primary](http://www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-post-primary)

[www.oide.ie](http://www.oide.ie)

[www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

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

[www.spu.ie](http://www.spu.ie)

[DPER Circular 05/2023 - Initiatives to assist SMEs in Public Procurement](#)

[DPER Circular 13/2014 - Management of Grants from Exchequer Funds](#)

[DE Circular 0002/2018 Operation of the Financial Support Services Unit \(FSSU\)](#)

<https://www.fssu.ie/post-primary/>

<https://www.icla.ie/licences/primary-and-post-primary-schools-licences>

[Irish Educational Publishers Association/code-of-practice](#)