

School book Rental scheme

To help schools and Parent Teachers Associations set up a school book rental scheme we have assembled some outline literature. Please note that this is by no means a comprehensive or accurate account and acts simply as a guide to best practice. If you have additional suggestions, please visit our blog site at www.dbcgroup.ie and we will add or amend any information as is appropriate.

This document contains:

What is a School book rental scheme?
What Grants are available?
Management issues to consider
Guidelines for operation
Questions schools may need to address
Quick tips on setting up a rental scheme
Example of terms and conditions



What is a School book rental scheme?

School book rental schemes can alleviate the costs of purchasing text books for parents and Pupils in both primary and post primary schools. Effectively, it's a rental scheme that "pools" the upfront costs of purchasing books for selected classes or set of curriculum books by amortising both the cost of purchase and depreciation of the books over a set period of time, normally 3 years. In general, the scheme is administered in each school by the school principal in association with the Parent Teachers Association (PTA)

What Grants are available?

A grant scheme is available for students to help with the cost of school books. The scheme is mainly aimed at pupils from low-income families and families experiencing financial hardship. Funding for the scheme comes from the Department of Education and Skills.

Broadly speaking, students who may be eligible for assistance under the School Books Grant Scheme include:

- Families that are mainly dependent on social welfare payments
- Families on low incomes, (for example, those receiving Family Income Supplement, and the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance)
- Families experiencing financial hardship because of particular circumstances (for example, where there is prolonged illness of a parent/guardian, addiction problems, etc.)
- Students who are in the care of foster families under arrangements made by a Local Health Office and students participating in Youthreach, VTOS and Post-Leaving Certificate Courses are ineligible for assistance under the School Books Grant Scheme.



However, in the current economic climate the rental scheme is rising in popularity amongst the general school community.

The rates for schools in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme are higher than those for non-DEIS schools. Payment of funding to be allocated to schools to provide assistance for books can be analysed as follows: (2011 Data)

Primary Schools: (As of April 2011)

The allocation to schools for books allows an additional per capita funding of:

Allocation to DEIS schools for books €21
Allocation to non-DEIS schools for books €11

Post Primary Schools As of (June 2011)

The additional per capita funding to be provided is:

Allocation to DEIS schools for books €39
Allocation to non-DEIS schools for books €24
Junior Certificate Schools Programme €60
Transition Year Programme €95
Leaving Certificate Applied Programme €151
Physics and Chemistry €13

Management issues to consider:

A textbook fund administrator would need to be appointed and this could be delegated to a deputy head, a senior teacher or a member of the Parent Teachers Association. The appointee would be responsible for the scheme's day to day running at the school.

The duties include the following:

1. Identifying new books and class participation.
2. Organizing the tagging and covering of books
3. Distributing books to students
4. Collecting rental fees from students
5. Requesting additional books when needed
6. Maintaining textbook ledgers
7. Developing a school book policy
8. Instructing students on proper textbook care
9. Collecting books at the end of the year and returning the textbook inventory and re-ordering form
10. Negotiating purchase/volume discounts with booksellers for following year



The senior management team (Principal or PTA) is often responsible for the proper administration and management of the fund.

Guidelines for operating a rental scheme for school books:

1. Parents should be consulted in the first instance in order to get their agreement to the operation of the scheme. The cooperation of parents and school staff is essential to the success of a scheme. The main benefits for parents would be

- significant savings in the cost to them of text books
- availability of books from the beginning of the school year
- access to a greater range of text books than would otherwise be feasible
- avoidance of traveling and queuing for books at shops

2. The initial capital required to buy a stock of books could be raised through a bank loan and/or through subscriptions from parents who will get future financial benefit from the scheme. A bank loan could be repaid over a short number of years out of the rental income. A membership fee for pupils joining the scheme for the first time could also be considered.



3. The yearly rental charge should be pitched at a level sufficient to buy additional or replacement books as required and to repay any loan taken out to buy the initial stock of books. This charge should be reviewed on a year to year basis.

4. The scheme should be confined to books suitable for re-use. Good quality second-hand books or new books would be bought. In buying books, durability such as the quality of the binding, would be an important factor. Books might be bought from pupils and past pupils as well as from local booksellers. Discounts and/or credit terms could be negotiated with booksellers for bulk purchases.

5. The scheme could be administered by a post holder. Parents and senior pupils could assist in the cataloguing of the books, applying the school's identification marks e.g. the school stamp, and sorting the books into the individual lots for each pupil. The required books would be given to pupils on the first day of the school year. Each pupil would sign a receipt which would be retained in the school. The rental charge and membership fee if applicable would have been paid by parents in advance.

6. The books would be returned by pupils at the end of the rental period. Lost or damaged books would be paid for by pupils/parents.

7. The book grant for necessitous pupils would be used to pay the rental charges and membership fee (if applicable) for such pupils.

Questions schools may need to address:

Identifying School Needs

- Is the school reviewing its present scheme or considering the introduction of a book rental scheme?
- What are the benefits/drawbacks related to the scheme?
- Have parents, pupils been consulted?
- Has the Board of Management been consulted?
- Can a pilot project be introduced prior to the full implementation of the scheme?

Budget

- How is the initial capital acquired to buy a stock of books?
- What yearly rental charge is levied?
- Is it the same for all classes/for all pupils?
- How often is this charge reviewed?
- What procedures are followed if the fee is not paid?
- What arrangements are made for children eligible under the Aid for School Books Grant Scheme? (Refer to relevant circular)



Implementation of scheme

- Who has overall responsibility for the administration of the scheme?
- What books are included in the scheme?
- Who purchases the books?
- How books are identified – school stamps, label ...?
- Who is responsible for the cataloging and distribution of books?
- Who is responsible for the covering, repair and replacement of books?
- What system is used to collect the books at the end of the year?
- What procedures are followed if books are damaged or lost?
- What special storage arrangements are in place?
- What happens to the books that are no longer required by the school?

Evaluation

- How often will the scheme be evaluated?
- What criteria will indicate that the scheme has been successful?
- Who will be involved in the review?

Some quick tips on setting up a school book rental scheme



- Phase in the introduction gradually to help alleviate the initial financial outlay. For example English the first year, Maths the second year etc or select class years that would easily facilitate a pilot test.
- Engage participation of Parents. Instigate a questionnaire to compile views and opinions and any objections or hurdles that may be unforeseen.
- Run a costing and financial model to fund purchase.
- Consider purchasing from previous year pupils by offering to buy books second hand off parents who had them prior to the start of the scheme.
- Review the department grant for school books rental and examine your schools suitability for funding from this resource.
- Implement a book covering system to ensure the longevity of new and existing books. Old or worn books could be easily revived with a fresh new cover each year. Saving on replacement costs in future years

Example of "terms and conditions" for school book rental scheme



Should you consider operating a school book rental scheme, below is a brief outline of conditions which could be applied.

- 1.** The scheme is voluntary. Book lists will be supplied to parents in the normal way.
- 2.** A security deposit of €_____ is payable on behalf of each student who joins the scheme. This deposit carries forward to the following year if all books are returned in good condition at the end of current year.
- 3.** The security deposit will be held against the safe return of all books rented to pupils under the scheme. If books are lost or damaged, a percentage or all of this deposit will be retained to cover such loss or damage.
- 4.** Full compensation for lost books will be required before re-admission to the scheme. However, this deposit will be returned should a pupil leave the scheme having safely returned all the rented books within an acceptable condition of use.
- 5.** Annual rental: A rental charge of €_____ per year will apply in addition to the security deposit of €_____. The payment of both charges will secure the rental of all relevant text books listed in the book list as and when required throughout the school year.
- 6.** Purchase of workbooks, disposable materials and stationery will remain outside the scope of this scheme and remain the responsibility of the parents.
- 7.** To qualify for admission to the scheme the deposit and rental charge must be paid on or before 1st X month (June) each year. This deadline is absolute - no late applications will be considered.
- 8.** The Department of Education Book Grant scheme will be operated separately from this scheme. Application forms for the book grant scheme can be obtained from the school office and must be submitted to the school office before X month. If a pupil is deemed eligible, a grant of €_____ will be set against the rental charge of €_____ leaving a balance of €_____ to be paid. The Security deposit of €_____ will still be payable if you are a new entrant to the scheme.
- 9.** Each pupil/parent will be required to sign a receipt for the books supplied which will be retained in the school. The books supplied under the scheme will remain the property of the school and may be subject to inspection at any time by a member of the teaching staff.
- 10.** Membership of the scheme is at the discretion of the school Principal. Any pupil found to be abusing, defacing or disposing of rented books will be dismissed from the scheme and will be required to supply their own text books for the remainder of their time in the school.
- 11.** Books supplied under the scheme may be new or second hand at the discretion of the Principal.

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