



Circular 0049/2008

PRIMARY BRANCH
TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND PRINCIPALS OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS

School Books Grant Scheme – 2008/2009

General

1. The Minister for Education and Science wishes to refer to the School Books Grant Scheme in Primary Schools. The scheme will operate again in 2008/2009 on the basis of the same criteria as in the current school year.
2. The Minister wishes to acknowledge the sensitive, responsive and resourceful manner in which the management and staff of schools, particularly the Principals, have operated the scheme to date. The Minister looks forward to continued co-operation in serving the interests of eligible pupils.
3. It is hoped to issue the school books grants in respect of the 2008/2009 school year in July, 2008. School authorities are therefore requested to have application forms returned as soon as possible but before 16th May, 2008 in order to facilitate payment of the grant in July.

Eligibility of Pupils

4. Pupils eligible for assistance under this scheme would include pupils from a family where there is genuine hardship because of unemployment, prolonged illness of a parent, large family size with inadequate means, single parenthood or other family circumstances (such as substance abuse), which might indicate a similar degree of financial hardship.

Such families may be divided into the following three categories:

- Families that are dependent mainly on social welfare payments
- Families on low incomes from employment (Such families are likely to be in receipt of Family Income Supplement, which is a weekly cash payment by the Department of Social and Family Affairs or to be beneficiaries under the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Scheme.)
- Families that are experiencing financial hardship because of particular circumstances in the home. (It is envisaged that only a small proportion of those considered eligible will come within this category.)

5. Pupils who are in the care of foster families, under arrangements made by the relevant Health Service Executive Area, are not eligible to receive assistance under the scheme where such assistance is available from the Health Service Executive.
6. A pupil who transfers from one primary school to another after commencement of the school year is not eligible for assistance under the scheme in the second school unless the Principal is satisfied that assistance has not already been given under the scheme or that any books already supplied in the current school year have been returned.

Loan/rental schemes

7. **The Minister will continue to assist schools that opt to use the grant scheme to establish or maintain a loan/rental scheme. In addition, schools participating in the School Support Programme (SSP) under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools), the new action plan for educational inclusion, and which will be operating a book loan/rental scheme for 2008/2009, will be eligible for increased grant aid from a supplementary fund which has been made available for this purpose. If eligible, this will be included in the payment in July.**

Allocation of Funding

8. The Minister urges management authorities and Principals to adopt, to the greatest extent possible, the suggestions for loan/rental schemes outlined in Circular 35/91 & M54/91 issued in September, 1991, and also the Codes of Good Practice outlined in the Cooney/Carey "School Books in Ireland" report. This report was circulated to all schools.

Enquiries

9. Enquiries as to the payment of the grant should be addressed to Department of Education & Science, **Central Funds Unit**, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Tel. 090 6483852 or 090 6483853.

Enquiries in relation to the operation of the loan/rental scheme should be addressed to Department of Education and Science, **Primary Administration Section 1**, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Tel 090 6483731.

Applications

10. Applications should be submitted on the application form enclosed with this circular. Faxed or photocopied application forms will not be accepted. Any incomplete application forms will be returned for full completion.
11. Please provide a copy of this circular to the appropriate representatives of parents and teachers for transmission to individual parents and teachers.

**Hubert Loftus,
Principal Officer.
April, 2008.**

**APPLICATION FORM FOR SCHOOL BOOKS GRANT SCHEME
(PRIMARY SCHOOLS) 2008/2009
(TO BE RETURNED BY 16th May, 2008)**

1. Name of School: _____

2. Address of School: _____

3. Roll Number: _____

4 Please complete the table below in respect of the number of eligible pupils in the school.

Number of Eligible Pupils in Infant Classes	
Number of Eligible Pupils in 1st to 6th Classes	
Total Number of Eligible Pupils	

5. Please indicate whether you intend to operate a loan/rental scheme with the grant received from the Department.

Yes No

I certify that, in so far as I am aware, the information supplied on this form is correct and that the 2007/2008 allocation under the scheme has been expended in full for the purpose intended (if the full allocation was not expended please provide details of the amount left and an explanation why it was not expended).

Signed (Principal): _____

Date: _____

Signed (Chairperson): _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to the Central Funds Unit, Department of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DATE STAMP

Date Examined	
Date Input	
Date Verified	

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