



Solas Chríost National School

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June 2023

Re: Free Book Scheme FAQ for Sept 2023

An announcement was made as part of Budget 2023 that all primary school children will be able to avail of free school books from September 2023. Here at Solas Chríost National School, we have been working hard to put a Free School Books Scheme into place to succeed our current Book Rental Scheme, which has been running very successfully since September 2015. You may have questions about how the Scheme will work and what exactly it will provide for your child. We have compiled some questions and answers below, which we hope will make the new Book Scheme easy to understand.

What is covered by the new Free School Books Scheme?

All primary school children will benefit from the use of all the textbooks, workbooks and copies that they will need for the coming school year. Stationery will not be included.

What do I have to do in order for my child to be in the new Free School Books Scheme?

Nothing. Your child's class teacher will provide your child with the correct textbooks, workbooks and copies they will need for their class level in September.

Who will own the books?

All textbooks will remain the property of Solas Chríost National School. Your child will have the use of them for the year and will be expected to look after them, and then return them to the school in good condition the following June. Your child will also be given workbooks and copies, which they will write into. At the end of the school year, these workbooks and copies may be kept by you and disposed of as you wish.

Can I keep any of the books at the end of the school year?

As stated in the above point, all textbooks remain the property of the school. You may, however, keep the workbooks and copies into which your child has written at the end of the school year.

Will my child be given all new books?

No. The Free School Books Scheme is to be built on our Book Rental Scheme, as advised by the Department of Education. This means that we will continue to use our stock of textbooks, which we have been using in our Book Rental Scheme, and we will replace only those textbooks that are of poor quality through wear and tear. So your child will not receive new textbooks for the most part. All workbooks and copies, however, will be new as your child will be writing into them.

Will I have to pay a deposit as I did with the Book Rental Scheme?

No. The Free School Books Scheme is exactly that, free. No deposits will be requested.

Will you provide all the stationery (pencils, erasers, etc.) that my child will need?

A list of stationery will be provided to all parents which can be purchased in any stationery shop.

So do I have to pay any money to the school this year?

The simple answer to this question is yes, you will. The following is a breakdown of what the Free School Books Scheme Grant pays for:

- Textbooks
- Workbooks
- Copies

The Free School Books Grant does not go far enough to cover Art and Craft material, school journal, photocopying, text a parent facility, administration software etc. is not included and must be paid for every to meet this expense in the school. This will cost €40 per child.

The School Books Scheme also does not cover co-curricular activities such as swimming, school trips/tours, Bus journey's etc. So again, as in previous years, the costs associated must be paid for by parents.

You will receive a full breakdown of what your child will be receiving for the next school year in July.

I don't want my child to take part in the Free School Books Scheme. Do they have to?

No. It is your decision whether your child takes part or not. However if you decide that your child will not take part in the Scheme, you will have to buy all the textbooks, workbooks and copies he/she will need. You will be sent a list of what your child will require, and it will be your responsibility to make sure that your child has all of these items when he/she returns for the new school year. The school will not be obliged to refund the cost of such purchases to you.

What happens if my child leaves Solas Chríost National School mid-year?

If your child leaves Solas Chríost National School during the school year, all books and any related classroom resources he/she has been using must be returned to the class teacher before he/she departs. It will be the responsibility of your child's new school to provide him/her with a complete set of books, including textbooks, workbooks and copies.

We sincerely hope that this document goes some way to explaining the new Book Scheme. If you have any further queries or questions about the new Scheme, please do not hesitate to contact the school at info@solaschriost.ie We will do our best to answer any further questions or to clarify any information to the best of our ability. We would ask you to remember though, that because this is a new Scheme, we are still learning about how it will work best, and we will amend the running of the new Scheme as necessary for the benefit of all. We recommend that you read through the new Free School Books Scheme Policy which is available on the school's website <http://www.solaschriost.ie/school-books.html>