

St. Mary's College Dundalk.



Book Grant Policy.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers. The primary aim of the College through its spiritual and humanistic endeavours, is to promote and develop a sense of community where those entrusted to its care can be brought to the fullness of their human potential in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel.

The College, through its academic, pastoral and spiritual undertakings strives to provide for the holistic development and welfare of each of the students in its care.

INTRODUCTION

The Schools Books Grant Scheme is available to post primary schools to help with the cost of schoolbooks. Funding for this scheme comes from the Department of Education and Skills (DES), and the scheme is administered by the school authorities.

RATIONALE

This policy was developed in order to ensure consistency and fairness in terms of the allocation and distribution of DES funding for schoolbooks. It also sets out clear guidelines in order to ensure that applications for financial assistance towards the cost of books are dealt in an equitable manner.

The scheme is mainly aimed at students whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

THE DES GUIDELINES STATE THAT THE STUDENTS WHO MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER THE SCHOOL BOOKS GRANT SCHEME INCLUDE:

1. Families that are mainly dependent on social welfare payments
2. Families on low incomes (for example, those receiving Family Income Supplement, and the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance)
3. Families experiencing financial hardship because of particular circumstances (e.g. where there is prolonged illness of a parent/guardian, addiction problems etc.)
4. Entitlement to a medical card is not necessarily an indicator of eligibility. In this regard, other factors may be taken into account when assessing students' eligibility.
5. Students who are in the care of foster families under arrangements made by the Local Health Office may not qualify for assistance under the School Books Grant Scheme.
6. The school has total discretion in deciding which students are most in need.

AIMS

This policy aims:

1. To ensure consistency and equity in terms of grant allocation
2. To ensure that all parties are aware of the agreed policy on the distribution of any book grants received by the DES
3. To ensure discretion in securing the required textbooks for students in St Mary's College whose families are experiencing significant financial hardship.

PROCEDURE

1. Application forms can be acquired from the Main Office and the College website, www.maristdunkalk.ie, and must be submitted by a specific date each year. This date is decided upon in early June.
2. Due consideration will be given to each applicant. Please note, priority is given to First and Fifth Year students, as they are beginning a new cycle of learning
3. The amount of assistance to individual students is decided at the discretion of the Principal.. Every effort is made to maintain confidentiality.
4. Vouchers are made available to parents and guardians of eligible students in the June.
5. Parents and Guardians must sign for the vouchers in the Main Office.
6. **Students are expected to return the books to the College on completion of their State Examinations. These books are then redistributed.**

St Mary's College acknowledges the sensitive nature of the School Books Grant.

All data gathered is retained in accordance with St Mary's College Data Protection Policy.

The DPP is available on the college website, www.maristdunkalk.ie

REVIEW

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management on a regular basis. A copy of this policy will be made available to the DES and the trustees if requested.

Signed: Kevin Jennings
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Alan Craven
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 07.09.2021

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