



Circular No: 22/2023

All Additional Secretaries  
All Secretaries to Provincial Ministries of Education  
All Provincial Directors of Education  
All Zonal Directors of Education  
All Divisional Directors of Education  
All Principals of Government Schools

**Criteria/Methodologies to be followed in purchasing Books and Printed and Non-printed Learning Aids or receiving those as donations for School Libraries**

01. This circular comes into effect from 01.06.2023 beyond the circulars and directives issued so far by the Ministry of Education in respect of purchasing library books and materials or receiving those as donations for Government Schools and Government Approved Aided Schools.

02. Details of all the books received to be used in libraries should be included into 02 Accession Registers as shown below.

- 2.1 Accession Registers A – Books with 49 pages or more (Form - Education B 132)
- 2.2 Accession Registers B – Books up to 48 pages (Form - Education B 132)

03. In respect of the books purchased by the Line Ministry, Provincial Council or School Development Society or by any other fund and received as donations for the library, the following criteria are applied.

3.1 Being the book appropriate to the age and the level of knowledge, easy to read and written in a simple language increasing the desire of reading.

3.2 Should be compatible with the accepted language rule and the use of language should be symmetrical throughout the entire context. Free from spelling errors, printing and production mistakes. In addition, word separation, use of punctuation marks should be correct and errors should be minimum.

3.3 Books should be well-suited with accepted ethics and education and national objectives. The contents should bear the facts, illustrations and pictures favourable for the mental growth of the children according to their age limits.

3.4 Books should not contain any view, notion, fact or picture that disregard, insult, demean and scorn any religion, nation, community or social institute or that leads to breakups or conflicts among them.

3.5 In selecting the curriculum related books, following criteria should be fulfilled additionally.

- Being in line with the respective subject.
- The facts included should be correct and updated.
- Preparation in compatible with accepted psychosocial and educational phenomena.
- Accuracy of terminology.
- Inclusion of pictures, diagrams and illustrations relevant to the contents of the books.

3.6 It is suitable that the relevant books bear ISBN code at every time possible.

3.7 Newest printed copy should be purchased at every time possible.

3.8 Book edge should have been prepared so that the pages are not detached when using.

3.9 Price of the book should be compatible with the existing market value and there should be a content value commensurate with the price of the book.

3.10 Book should have been printed on a suitable paper and the inner pages should have been clearly printed so as not to be transparent (Neatly without being blurred).

3.11 First pages and inner pages should have been numbered in an accepted system and compiled appropriately.

3.12 Size of the pictures and letters of primary grade books should have been printed as appropriate for each age limits.

#### **04. Method of purchasing books**

4.1 The list of books that needs to be purchased annually for the libraries should be prepared based on the requirements of the readers.

4.2 At least 03 quotations should be called at every purchase of books with a value exceeding Rs.80,000.

4.3 Purchasing should be done to develop the collection of library books considering the minimum book ratio as 1:5 (As 05 books per student).

4.4 The instructions and guidelines of the existing Circulars issued by the Secretary to the Ministry of Education; in terms of the school based qualitative, quantitative and structural development and planning and procurements, should be followed in purchasing books.

4.5 A higher percentage from the total price of the books purchased for the library should be in terms of the books directly related to the school curriculum and the books suitable to read for additional knowledge. Also, the requirement and the importance of each book list purchased should have been verified by the school library committee.

4.6 The books should be purchased so that the subjects of each level of the school; as Primary, Grade 6,7,8,9,10, G.C.E (O/L) and G.C.E (A/L), is represented.

4.7 For the convenience of the institutes that purchase the said books, a catalogue of books for the schools approved by the Educational Publications Advisory Board has been prepared from the year 2017 and published as a catalogue of school library books. This catalogue has been included to the website of the Ministry of Education ([www.moe.gov.lk](http://www.moe.gov.lk)) and it should be used when the book list is prepared.

4.8 A suitable book in the book list prepared; for the requirement of the readers, at the discretion of the Library Committee that has the power to recommend selecting and purchasing the library books in addition to the books selected from the books included in the catalogue of the school library books.

4.9 In case of a book/ books not included in the catalogue, but useful and essential for school students, such book / books can be selected and purchased on the approval of the school library committee.

4.10 The books can be purchased by ordering from the book sellers of the area, publications institutes, national/international and regional book fairs or directly from the author publisher or local agencies.

4.11 The minimum discounts required in purchasing books are as follows.

Local Publications	20%
Imported Books	15%

**Note:** Higher discounts should not be taken as a criterion for purchasing books rather than the physical and contextual quality and the requirement.

4.12 The above discounts are not compulsory for the publications of the government institutes such as Educational Publications Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Survey Department and the Non-Governmental Organizations such as UNESCO. The books of said institutes are not included in the school library book catalogues and it is appropriate to peruse the websites of those institutes for details.

Eg – [www.edupub.gov.lk](http://www.edupub.gov.lk)  
Educational Publications Department

4.13 Children story books of the schools with primary sections should be purchased in Sinhala/ Tamil and English languages at required quantities. The books of those sorts should be purchased as an adequate language exercises such as reading, reading with sound, guided reading and balanced number of genres are added to the collection of children's books.

4.14 As the improvement of English language skills of the students is a prime target of the government, it is essential to purchase an adequate number of suitable English books also for that purpose.

In addition to the books, non-printed reference materials suitable for the library for the use of the readers can be purchased.

## **05. Places from where the books can be purchased and limitations**

5.1 Each school should develop their collection of books through the Library Committee. Selection of books should not be assigned to a publications institute or book marketing institute for any reason.

As the principals hold the responsibility of applying those criteria so as to improve the use of library and reading among the school students every time of proceeding with relevant activities considering the aforesaid criteria, it is hereby emphasized that each respective party is obliged to extend the required support in that connection.

**M.N. Ranasinghe**  
Secretary  
Ministry of Education

Copies

1. Auditor General, National Audit Office
2. Chairman, National Libraries and Documentation Services Board
3. Director General, National Institute of Education
4. Director General, Department of National Archives