



To: Management Authorities of Second-Level Schools

M41/98

WEIGHT OF SCHOOLBAGS

The Minister for Education and Science, Mr Micheál Martin., T.D, is pleased to enclose the [Report of the Working Group on the Weight of Schoolbags](#).

One of the main recommendations of the Report is that a campaign of heightened awareness of the problem of overweight schoolbags should be initiated. To this end leaflets containing guidelines for teachers are also enclosed together with the poster to promote pupil awareness.

It is important that schools should be aware of the potential health hazards posed by overweight schoolbags and every effort should be made to minimise the weight children are obliged to carry to and from school. The Report acknowledges that many factors contribute to the problem and it therefore follows that any solution requires action not just from the Department of Education and Science or school authorities, but also from parents, publishers of educational books and indeed from children themselves.

The attention of school authorities is drawn in particular to the actions it is recommended they should take in tackling the problem of overweight schoolbags as outlined on pages 4 and 5 of the Report.

It is incumbent on school authorities from a health and safety viewpoint to identify this problem where it exists and take whatever steps are appropriate to deal with it.

Please provide a copy of this circular to the appropriate representatives of parents and teachers for transmission to individual parents and teachers.

John Dennehy
Secretary General

October, 1998