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The Assistant Commissioner  
Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan  
All Regional Offices

Sub:- Reduction in weight of school bag - Need for strict compliance.

Madam/Sir,

The issue of weight of school bag has been a matter of national debate. In spite of our unambiguous stand on the subject, complaints and suggestions are being received in the KVS from the parents and other organizations. As per physiological prescription, a child should not carry more than  $1/5^{\text{th}}$  (in some countries it is  $1/7^{\text{th}}$ ) of his body weight on his back to keep the spine and skeletal structure strong and upright.

2. The primary responsibility to draw up syllabi and corresponding text books plus supplementary reading materials lies with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and National Council for Education & Training (NCERT). Through their policy and planning, they have been trying to reduce the size and weight of text books, in which they have been successful to some extent but the mindset at school level has not changed in conformity with the demands of the time.

3. The teachers advise brining of more and more note books on the same subject like rough note book, class work note book, home work note book, note book on supplementary reading material etc., thereby increasing the load of the school bag. And, all the note books have to be brought to school almost every day as a number of teachers do not decide in advance as to which particular book on the same subject would be taken up on a particular day. Thus, a child has to carry avoidable load on almost all the days.

4. There are teachers who insist that every student should bring all the prescribed books in their subjects including reference books on all the scheduled days. In the subject like 'Social Studies' having multiple components like history, geography, civics/political science the insistence of the teachers to have separate notebook multiplies the problem pertaining to the burden of the school bag. It can be easily imagined what will be load on a student if he is asked to bring all the prescribed books with corresponding exercise books on all the scheduled dates.
5. In many multi-storeyed school buildings class rooms are so oriented that junior students have to climb up to upper floors along with their heavy school bags, thereby causing physical stress and strain on the spine.
6. It is a pure and simple violation of a child's right to place the burden of the school bag on his back disproportionate to his age and health and the school system can be charged with cruelty to the child.
7. In this connection you are directed to comply with following instructions :
  - A. In class I & II the weight of books and notebooks will not be more than 2 kg including school bag.
  - B. In class III & IV the admissible weight will be 3 kg.
  - C. In class V-VII the weight will not exceed 4 kg.
  - D. From class VIII to XII the weight will not exceed 6 kg.
8. A few suggestions for reduction in weight of school bag are enclosed at Annexure - A.

It will be the responsibility of the Principal to ensure compliance of the instructions and he/she will be held responsible in case of non-compliance.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. U N Singh)

Joint Commissioner(Acad)

Encl : As stated above.

## How to reduce the weight of school bag : A few suggestions

1. Single note book will serve the purpose of class work/Home work.
2. Note book should not be More than 100 pages & soft bound instead of hard bound.
3. Teachers should gradually avoid reading from text book and students should not be compelled to bring text books daily.
4. Home work should not be given in more than 2-3 subjects on a particular day. Home work time table should be made & displayed in the class.
5. Instead of note books, children may bring ruled paper sheets (A-4) (15-20) in a file, write on the sheets during the class & then tag in separate files at home.
6. Time table be so designed that soft skills are interspersed with academic subjects.
7. Dependence on the teaching through books (Except for Language & Literature) should gradually be reduced.
8. Textbooks of the session can be divided into three [one for each term] so that each term will have just a few chapters. [It can be light bounded as per term by the students after the purchase also]
9. Provision to keep books in every class by providing locker system.
10. Used textbooks can be collected by the librarian from students after the session for the use of the next batch and can be issued to the class teachers
11. Students can be given the charge of bringing textbooks in rotation such that each desk has one text book at least.
12. Giving information to students in advance if the teacher is going on leave so that those books can be kept at home.
13. Keeping non-scholastic books like art, music, and craft at the school.
14. No textbooks should be there till class IV only teacher's handbook and resource material should be there. Activity sheets can be provided for students.
15. Changes in the timetable with reduction in the subjects taught in a day with more duration allotted to one subject per day. 35 - 45 minutes duration presently given is insufficient to have creative and constructive group discussions or activities.
16. It was also found that a major portion of the weight is due to the water bottle, which is kept inside the school bag. If potable water is provided in the school then there is no need to carry water from home.

17. Insistence could be on collaborative learning which will lead to less number of books and more of activities and development through practical approach. This can be valuable for CCE.
18. Creating awareness among parents in checking the bags daily and keeping books as per timetable.
19. Encourage the use of trolley bags to carry books. The right type of bag pack and method of packing can reduce the health problems to a great extent.
20. Review & design time tables in such a way that students need not bring large no of text books, heavy materials such as Atlas, Dictionary, Drawing paper, sports wear etc. on a particular day.
21. Teachers should indicate before the lessons to the students, the books required by them and should avoid penalising the students for failing to bring text books and exercise books as they tend to bring all books to minimize the chance of punishment.
22. Judicious use of hand outs are recommended when the main text book has a reference role.
23. When more than one text book is prescribed ( like in the case of S.St.) student should know what text is to be used on a particular day. This information should form part of the official school time-table and is to be followed by students and teachers.
24. Easy access to reference material in the school through school libraries. This can reduce students carrying reference materials to class from home. Reference oriented task can be set wherever possible as home work, so that the reference materials need not be carried to school at all.
25. Raising awareness among students and parents regarding this issue:  
~~by presenting a seminar, rallies, role-play etc.~~
26. Spot checking of school bags at school to be done frequently.
27. Individual counselling for students by school for those who are labouring uncomfortably under the load.
28. A school bag awareness day can be celebrated in school.
29. Projects on the topic can be taken up using weights, measures, graphs, extending to interactive discussion based on practical demonstration in the school which can be followed up by extensive media coverage.