



7th July 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for the feedback and queries on the new locker scheme at Oakgrove Secondary. Please find a summary of answers to the questions asked.

There is no statutory duty or guidance from the DFE that states schools must provide lockers. The decision to provide lockers is at the discretion of the individual school. Some schools in Milton Keynes do not offer any locker facilities. Oakgrove consulted with parents on removing lockers entirely and after taking on board feedback during the consultation process, decided to keep the option of lockers being available. The only viable way to continue to provide lockers is to outsource to an external company and ILS was selected – a company recommended by a number of local and national schools on the basis of their product and excellent customer service.

The school does not financially benefit from the locker leasing agreement with ILS, and there is certainly no commission gained. The gain is in providing cleaner, more hygienic, better quality and more durable lockers that are specifically designed to be stored and used outside. In effect, many of the existing lockers are no longer fit for purpose, have extensive wear and tear, and it takes a great deal of time and money to repair and maintain them. Now that Oakgrove have moved to third-party locker provider, the significant time saved by our team of site wardens can be used to enhance the school and learning environment for all stakeholders, not just those who use the locker system.

As part of the original decision process to have lockers, consideration was given to students having to carry the appropriate school resources throughout the school day. Unlike some other schools in Milton Keynes, we chose to give parents the option of having a locker to save the child having to carry all their school equipment. The use of lockers has always been optional. Currently, of the 900 lockers provided on site, approximately 50% are in use. Many parents and students decide not to make use of a locker, especially at Key Stage 4. Items such as PE kits do not have to be carried into school each day, only on those days that students have PE lessons.

The school does not regard students carrying bags around school as a safety issue, many students choose to carry their bags already. We also have areas designated to store bags outside of practical based subjects such as Art/Design Technology when students may be using machinery or practical resources. The school understands and shares parents' concerns with regards to the health of their children, which is why we have made the option of leasing a locker available.

In relation to the schools Charging Policy, the list of what the school may charge for is not exhaustive but in any case, the leasing of a locker is not a charge being made by the school and therefore the Charging Policy does not apply. The locker agreement/contract it is through a third party and it is entirely optional. Separate arrangements are already in place for those students identified as having financial hardship.

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A few enquiries focussed on the fact that these lockers are £38 per year and are cheaper with ILS in other schools. This is true, but is because we are having outdoor lockers which by their very nature are of higher quality and therefore more expensive. The school design is such that indoor locker space does not exist. This was a deliberate decision by the school from the outset to maximise internal circulation space.

As has already been communicated, because we are changing the system, we will make good any refunds which are due. There have been 2 previous schemes in operation and refunds will be made fully or partially depending on the scheme in place when your child started at Oakgrove. We have tried to make the application for a refund as painless as possible.

In summary, we are under no obligation to provide lockers, but continue to do so for those parents who wish to take advantage of the scheme. The decision to continue to provide lockers is wholly as a reaction to the feedback from the survey carried out earlier in the year. We have received lots of positive feedback on the simplicity of signing up to the new scheme and that you are able to choose the position of your child's locker. Feedback from other schools is that these lockers are kept in as new condition and are very secure. Whilst it is an increase in cost on what was an unsustainable scheme, it is still less than £1 per school week in support of your child's health and property.

Yours sincerely,



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