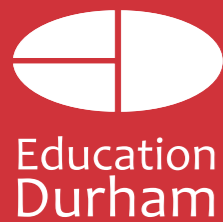




Cut the cost of the school day: Raising awareness of child poverty



A service provided by



In partnership with



County Durham Children and Families Partnership

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Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

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Introduction

Poverty can have a massive impact on people's lives! It can affect a child's social, educational, health and personal development. Living in a poor household can reduce children's expectations of their lives and lead to a cycle where poverty is repeated from generation to generation. The Children and Families Partnership welcomes work to address the cause and impact of poverty on families across the county.

We understand the importance of addressing poverty and offering help as early as possible, and acknowledge the valuable work undertaken by the Child Poverty Working Group in identifying ways to cut the cost of the school day, helping to give young people the best start in life and enabling them to reach their full potential.

"To tolerate children and their families living in poverty is morally wrong. No civilised society should permit it. To invest in children is to invest in the future. I'm sure we would all commit to that. Let's do it"

Cllr Olwyn Gunn

Cabinet member for Children and Young People's Services

Cut the cost of the school day: Raising awareness of child poverty

Top tips to minimise costs

These top tips have been developed by staff and pupils who took part in the 'Cut the cost of the school day: Raising awareness of child poverty' workshops. The areas for consideration were most commonly identified as placing financial pressure upon families. The top tips aim to provide schools with a list of suggestions to attempt to minimise the cost of the school day on all families. Some ideas may already be in place but these recommendations allow schools to further develop good practice.

School uniform and PE kits

- Allow uniform to be purchased from a range of suppliers as opposed to one single supplier with a set cost.
- Explore 'bulk buy/sibling deals' with suppliers to minimise costs.
- Explore the option of having sew on school logo badges to allow parents to buy generic uniform.
- Regularly hold upcycle school uniform/swap shop events and encourage pupils to take part in organising these events (avoid negative language such as second hand uniform sale).
- Have upcycled uniform readily available in reception everyday as well as during parents evenings, opening evenings etc.
- Link in with local charity shops to encourage them to have a school uniform section.
- Open these events to everyone: avoid targeting only Free School Meal/Pupil Premium (FSM/PP) pupils and families as personal circumstances may not have been disclosed.
- Allow for generic PE kit to be worn.
- Revise behaviour policies linked to incorrect uniform.
- Sign-post families to school clothing grants and vouchers (School Benevolent Fund) www.durham.gov.uk/schoolbenevolentfund



Training requests

If you would like your school to take part in a 'Cut the cost of the school day: Raising awareness of child poverty' training session please contact cpd@durham.gov.uk

Food in school

Is the cost of your breakfast club a barrier for some pupils attending?

- Consider having volunteers run the club to reduce staffing costs.
- Contact local supermarkets/businesses for donations.
- Offer daily/weekly sibling deals for families to attend breakfast club.
- Consider providing all pupils with a basic packed lunch for trips not just those on FSM.
- In addition to the KS1 free fruit for schools scheme, explore the option of having fruit in the classroom each morning, available to everyone.
- Save uneaten fruit, yoghurts, cereal bars from packed lunches and have these available for pupils to take home if they would like them.



After school clubs and trips

- Ensure that dates and costs of trips are given out at the start of the academic year (or earlier) to give plenty of advance warning. Consider spacing trips out across the year more evenly.
- Set up payment schemes for parents/carers to pay towards school trips in instalments (link in with Durham Savers www.durham.gov.uk/durhamsavers) - ask parents to return financial contributions not pupils.
- Pupils to take part in fundraising events for school trips to minimise the amount of financial contribution needed.
- Consider each year group trips against one another to account for families with more than one pupil in school to avoid extra financial pressure.
- Revise any first-come first-served policies (with payments) as this may be excluding pupils from low income families from taking part.
- Review the range of clubs on offer to minimise the amount of charged activities.
- Have a weekly token scheme to enable free access once per week to any charged school clubs.
- Consider the equipment required for after school clubs (football boots, rugby kit, dance uniform) and whether these could be borrowed/rented from school to ensure all can take part.
- Avoid sending letters home with pupils that request financial contributions. Send these direct to parents/carers.

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