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# Harrogate CAB Report



## Adding Up the Costs of Education

**March 2011**

Harrogate CAB Social Policy

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## Abbreviation List

- HDLEA Harrogate District Local Education Authority
- LA Local Authority
- LEA Local Education Authority
- P/G Survey Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Survey
- PSQs Infant and/or Primary School Questionnaires
- SSQ Secondary School Questionnaire

## **Executive Summary**

A user friendly format is adopted throughout this report. Most of the findings have a related table or graph at the beginning that quantify the findings. Appropriate symbols are used to easily identify good or poor practices and the end of each line of enquiry and response rates variables are flagged up. Some client quotes to utilise qualitative research methodology and help to broaden understanding behind the issues and to gauge the personal impact from our client's perspective. The report also includes other helpful information, for instance, accompanying comprehensive list of contents, executive summary, bibliography, appendices and table list.

### **PART 1: BACKGROUND**

Part 1 of this report introduces the Adding-Up Campaign at both a national and local level. The CAB's background and our bureau's views on the campaign are explained in terms of 'hidden costs of education' that come under the umbrella of either the cost of school uniforms or the cost of school trips. In addition, we introduce Harrogate bureau's research aims and objectives that are underpinned by identifying with our client's concerns. The research design and development are largely underpinned by the CAB's 'recession busting top ten tips'. However, a fluid and flexible approach resulted in a unique tailor made research process.

### **PART 2: RESEARCH**

Part 2 has two main sections; an overview of the research (section 2) and methods (section 3). A robust research design is set out in Part 2, Section 2 that includes thoughtful consideration to ethical procedure and identifies three key areas to collect fieldwork and bureau data: a) schools under HDLEA (Harrogate District Local Education Authority) jurisdiction, b) Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of school aged children, and c) representation from HDLEA. In addition, key literature and web-sites from CAB and government sources provide policy guidelines and regulations are identified in this section and are therefore used throughout this report, most notably in the research background, data analysis and findings.

Section 3 reveals an in-depth explanation of the methods used throughout the campaign. Our bureau adopted vigorous research methods that have already been proven to produce the most reliable and valid findings. Methods include; a) communicating and informing the bureau and instilling interest by adopting motivating techniques, b) rigorous monitoring the campaign's progress, c) utilising methods that produce high response rate from selected participating cohorts, and d) gauging a 'general consensus' via purposive targeting and utilising demographic knowledge and statistics.

Section 4 deals with the physical act of collecting the data and therefore the section moves on to explain the content of the questionnaires, surveys and interview. The two main line of enquiry paths are on school uniforms or school trips. These in turn are broken down into

five key areas for school uniform questionnaires and surveys that cover: a) supporting low income families, b) school practices in regards to changing the uniform, c) school policies on the cost of uniforms, d) decision making on uniforms, and e) non-conformity issues and five key areas covered by school trips questionnaires and surveys that include: a) how many trips are available to the students in the course of a year, b) why schools have trips, c) what are the school policies of cost of trips, d) notice and budgeting for trips, and e) whether trips are over or undersubscribed.

### **PART 3: FINDINGS**

Main body of the report is Part 3 which gives both comprehensive and detailed feedback of all the research findings under three main titles: General practice findings from uniform and trips research, school uniform findings and school trips findings. Findings were based upon coding and analysing data from school questionnaires, parent(s)/guardian(s) surveys and HDLEA representative interview (where appropriate). We looked for good or poor practices in a number of areas that included: consistency, affordability, awareness, inclusion and/or specific impact on single parents, low income and/or large families.

The good practices that were identified followed three routes, that of:

1. School policies that are promoted well within our area. Report findings are to be disseminated. Schools will be commended and encouraged to continue to promote good policy practices
2. Are promoted in some schools but needs greater dissemination to either all schools in the area or to all secondary schools
3. Research found limited evidence; however, a) initial concerns/ideas will be voiced and either disseminated to all schools in the area or to all secondary schools or b) there is no need for any further action

The poor practices that were identified also followed three routes, that of:

1. Widely used and therefore a need for policy change. Report findings to be disseminated where schools will be commended and encouraged to continue to promote good policy practices
2. Poor practice promoted in a notable number of schools and therefore optional good practice or alternative could be disseminated to either all schools in the area or to all secondary schools
3. Research found limited evidence; however, a) initial concerns/ideas will be voiced and either disseminated to all schools in the area or to all secondary schools or b) there is no need for any further action

Part 3, Section 5 then goes onto introduce and explain general policies and practices used by schools and HDLEA in regards to school uniforms and school trips.

### **School Policies and Practices (General): Research Findings Include**

Recognition that schools used different definitions to assess student 'need' and some schools used multiple indicators to identify family need. However, a few schools relied on parents or guardians to ask for extra help. Our report recommends that:

- Promoting Free School Meals (FSMs) as a universal indicator of student/family need
- Schools adopt several methods to identify student/family need
- Parents/guardians may be reluctant to come forward and therefore more subtle ways of reaching out to families may be more beneficial

HDLEA offers a one-off uniform grant when a child transfers to secondary school. However, the level of support offered varies regionally with some LEAs offering regular grants and support and others offering nothing at all. HDLEA pays the grant via a voucher system which is not accepted by all uniform retailers, most notably one of the cheapest uniform suppliers in the town. All families of students under HDLEA jurisdiction transferring to secondary school are given a transfer form where students in receipt of FSMs are identified and information is passed onto their new school. In addition, HDLEA will give one off payments in exceptional cases and are working with multiple agencies to promote greater awareness of eligibility and rights. However, research findings indicate that FSMs edibility and a one off payment may be too limited. Inconsistent national policies from LEAs add to the notion of a 'post-code lottery' where some children in receipt of FSMs will get regular uniform grants and others get no help at all. There was also low awareness among parent(s)/guardian(s) in the survey regarding their entitlements and rights. This report's recommendations include:

- Supporting HDLEA to continue paying grants and one off payments to student's in need with view to expand grants where possible
- We express concerns about inconsistent practices nationally with view to promoting fair and consistent policies
- HDLEA could re-think using vouchers and give a cash payment instead or persuade uniform retailers to accept the vouchers
- Close bureau-HDLEA liaison and high awareness profiling within the bureau community

## School Uniform Research Findings Include

School uniforms findings are in section 6 of the report. The school uniforms findings specifically looks at uniform policies used in schools and the impact on pupils and their families in four key overlapping areas: decision making, changes and conformity, cost of uniforms and supporting low income families. Why uniforms are promoted and government guidelines on uniforms are discussed. Research findings revealed that school governing bodies had a high input on uniforms but there was low parental consultation on the choice of uniform. Although the majority of schools clearly published details of their uniform/dress code expectations, most notably on school web-sites and/or prospective, some did not. A few infant/primary schools do not have web-sites that parent(s)/guardian(s) can access. Moreover, there are inconsistent explanations among the secondary school community as to why school uniforms are important. Some school web-site acknowledged that some uniform items were difficult to get hold of and therefore plenty of notice had to be given. This report's recommendations include:

- Greater consultation and decision making for parents on uniforms to be disseminated as a good policy practice
- All school should have web-sites that are easy to access and navigate by parent(s)/guardian(s) and in addition have a hard copy of the prospectus with uniform details
- Inconsistent policies on why uniforms are important, particularly from secondary schools
- Governing bodies should consider uniforms that are readily available

Report findings indicate that school attempt to give a reasonable amount of notice before making changes to the uniforms, however, some parent(s)/guardians surveys revealed that their child(ren)'s school had only given a short amount of notice before making changes. This finding is more pronounced in secondary schools. Our report recommendation includes:

- Schools, most notably secondary schools should be aware that families need a reasonable amount of notice before changing the uniform

The cost of school uniforms is most notably the greatest area of concern. The report findings revealed that often Infant/primary schools limited specialist/logo items and some offered sensible cheap extras. However, the number of items that are needed to make up a school uniform varied from one school to the next. Some parent(s)/guardians expressed concerns about the cost of primary school uniforms but the majority of surveys specifically noted that secondary schools were expensive. The most expensive school uniform items were those that could only be purchased at a sole specialist supplier. We carried out a price comparison on behalf of surveyed clients which revealed some alarming findings, for instance, £29.25 saving on a school kilt if the school changed their supplier from a specialist one to a main

street supplier that sells a similar style kilt and a £19.25 on a pair of black school trouser that do not have a school logo on them. These sorts of savings would help all student families but most notably would help single income, low income and larger families. This report's recommendations include:

- Good practice used in many infant/primary schools on sourcing and pricing are to be disseminated to all schools in view of developing these practices
- Initial findings suggest poor practice in operation in the majority of secondary schools, most notably the over use of specialist suppliers and items with a logo on and therefore concerns will be disseminated to all secondary schools

Many secondary school uniforms also ask families of students to supply a comprehensive and expensive list of extras, including PE kits with school logos on them. This report recommends that:

- Report finding on PE Kit criteria and price to be disseminated to all secondary schools

Schools can also help to keep uniform costs down, most notably for low income families, by raising funds specifically aimed at supporting families in the greatest of need and operating second-hand uniform schemes. Research findings identified that most infant/primary schools put aside extra funds to specifically help families in need of extra support or a universal policy to help all families, however, there is some evidence that a minority of infant/primary school have neither. Schools that do have specific funds available often bolster their school with imaginative and multiple methods of raising extra cash. In addition, research findings indicate that some infant/primary schools operate second-hand schemes (pre-loved uniform or recycling schemes), although parent(s)/guardian(s) survey suggested that very few families were aware that their child(ren)'s schools had second-hand uniforms available. Unfortunately we have no data available on extra funds policies or second-hand schemes from secondary schools in the area

- No data available from secondary schools due to low response
- Good practices and imaginative fund-raising methods is commendable and ideas will be disseminated to all schools in the area
- Schools should consider policies on better internal advertising
- Policies on positive terminology and promoting second-hand schemes for their environmental quality are to be disseminated
- Encourage second-hand schemes in all school, most notably secondary schools

## School Trips Research Findings

School trips research findings are in section 7 of the report. The school trip findings specifically looks at regulations and LEA support regarding school trips, policies and practices used in schools and the impact on pupils and their families in five key overlapping areas: school trip regulations, remission policies and LA endorsed trips, reasons for trips and frequency, cost of trips, supporting low income families, and paying for trips. The section begins with a background discussion on rules for charging and remissions policies. However, it is difficult to clarify common and/or fair practices in specific policies on school trips because the rules are inconsistent and variable and would also need schools to provide a comprehensive amount of data. Our research discovered that parental awareness about rights appears to be limited. In addition, the way school promoted schools trips, most notably in secondary schools, leaves families confused and in some cases places unnecessary pressure to pay for trips that are not vital to their child(ren)'s education. The research findings recommendations include:

- Rules and government guidelines on paying for school trips are complicated and variable and as a result schools can interpret these rules differently
- Parental awareness about what they have to pay for and what they don't
- Is the trip part of the school curriculum or a enhancement to the educational process should be broadened
- School should be aware that parent(s)/guardian(s) may feel that their child is missing out if they don't go on school trips, even when those trip are not vital to the child's education

The sort of trip and frequency of trips also impacts on family budgets. Secondary schools tend to offer a diverse range of trips that include opportunities for their students to go abroad. Some of these trips are linked to subjects or courses and others are for team-building or holiday purposes. Infant/primary schools, for obvious reasons, tend to offer day trips with a year 6 residential. Like school uniforms purchase, greater expense occurs with larger families or families with multiple births. However, our research found that there were low parental concerns regarding how often school trips were offered to students. However, parental concerns were expressed in regards to cost, for example; voluntary contributions, actual cost of trips and extra costs related to trips. Voluntary contributions can be problematic because schools do need to find funds to pay for school time activities and day trips. Our research discovered that the majority of schools also made families aware that trips would be cancelled if contributions were low. The CAB Adding Up campaign suggests that this is unfair pressure to put upon recession stressed families. In addition, some families perceived voluntary contribution as not voluntary at all. Our research also exposed that at least one primary school in our area simply sends out bills to families to cover the cost of day trips. Children of families that cannot or do not want to pay are excluded from the trip in this case which is in violation of government regulations. This report's recommendations include:

- School need to be aware of parent's views that some of them feel pressurised into contributing and this in some cases results in them contributing beyond what their family budget allows
- Any school using practices outside regulations will be notified of voluntary contribution criteria
- Schools will be asked to be more sensitive when asking for voluntary contributions i.e. how often they ask for a contribution and how much they ask for
- Schools could adopt universal inclusion policies and look for different and more imaginative ways to raise money for school trips

The cost of school trips varied considerably with some infant/primary schools offering day trips for a few pound and/or offering some free trips. Residential trips were considered more expensive and also varied. However, the costs of secondary schools abroad were overwhelming expressed as the greatest concern for families. Some of these trips are well over a £1000. This report's recommendations include:

- Good practices from schools on low cost day trips is commendable, however, some residential trips are far more expensive than others and schools could consider the cheaper options
- Trips abroad for secondary school students are often considered too expensive by parents, put a strain on the family budget and cause unnecessary anxiety. Ideas that could be disseminated by the bureau include:
  - Secondary schools could offer more day trips or low cost trips and have fewer trips abroad
  - Be more vigil in the types of trips they offer and think about value for money
  - Recognise that some students (often the same students) are being economically excluded from an enhanced education which may cause them and their family anxiety and embarrassment. In addition, older students can become disaffected by the negative experience of being left out. Every child matters policies should not only apply to younger children but to all children, including those at secondary school

In addition to the cost of the actual trip and the students spending money, many residential trips and longer trips abroad incur extra costs like specialist clothing and equipment. Our research recommendations include:

- All inclusive residential could be picked above those that do not supply extra clothing and equipment
- Schools and HDLEA could keep a stock of second-hand clothing, especially activity clothing and specific equipment needed for trips. Families could be asked to return cleaned items after the trip

Schools can also adopt practices that help families, for example, having funds specifically for trips, universal inclusion policy, budgeting schemes and reasonable notice before a trip so families can save accordingly. Our research revealed that infant/primary schools use several methods to boost school trips funds, although a minority did not. Parent(s)/guardian(s) survey indicated that a high percentage of families are unaware that their school has specific help available. In addition, many schools gave reasonable notice before a trip and offered some kind of budgeting scheme. However, some parents were not aware that there was budgeting schemes available in their child(ren)'s school. This report's recommendations include:

- Some good policies in practice. Ideas about different way the PTAs can help to keep the cost of school trips down to be disseminated
- All schools should have either specific funds available to help families in need pay for school trips or a total inclusion policy in operation
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) survey findings indicate that there may be a lack of awareness in regards to help availability. Ideas on how to promote help more widely to be disseminated to all schools, including using school newsletters, public notice boards and school web-sites. Ideas could be disseminated
- Inclusion policies or full inclusion for some events throughout the year to be disseminated to all schools. However, sensitivity and flexibility needs to be considered in regards to how workable these options are for the sorts of trips that are currently offered to older students
- Low awareness and/or availability of budgeting schemes. Ideas on how to offer easy payment schemes to families for residential trips and trips abroad to be disseminated to all schools in the area

#### **PART 4: REPORT CONCLUSION**

A concluding thought and a brief bullet point explanation of the bureau's next step can be found in Part 4.

Bureau's next steps include disseminating the report to:

- CAB National Campaign
- Local MP
- HDLEA
- Our Bureau, Management and Social Policy Team
- North CAB cluster group
- Copy available to anyone who requests it

Summaries of the report are to be disseminated to:

- All LEA schools in the area

- Schools will be notified that the full copy is available in the bureau

Finally there is a summarisation of the report recommendations that will be disseminated to their appropriate interested parties.

The findings set out are:

- Summary of National Findings Report Recommendations
  - Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: General
  - Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: School Uniforms
  - Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: School Trips
  - Summary of Infant and/or Primary schools & Secondary Schools Report Recommendations: General
  - Summary of Infant and/or Primary Report Recommendations: School Uniforms
  - Summary of Infant and/or Primary Schools Report Recommendations: School Trips
  - Summary of Secondary Schools Findings Report Recommendations: School Uniforms
  - Summary of Secondary Schools Findings Report Recommendations: School Trips
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## **PART 1: BACKGROUND**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1. What is the Adding Up Campaign**

Adding Up: the hidden costs of education is a national CAB campaign that aims to focus attention on issues on the cost of school uniforms, school clothing grant availability and the cost of school trips. The campaign “urg[es] schools to help out recession-stressed parents by adopting sensible, low cost policies on uniform, kit and other expenses.”<sup>1</sup>

Adding Up Campaign recession busting top ten tips are:

1. Make sure uniforms are available from a range of outlets rather than one sole supplier
2. Offer sew-on badges that can be put on plain clothing
3. Choose colours that can be carried onto the next school
4. Encourage recycling or swap schemes
5. Set up funds for families in need (for example, sourcing extra funds from local businesses and trusts)
6. Give parents schedules for trips in September so they can budget accordingly
7. Indicate which trips are essential for school work
8. Make sure letters don't imply that 'voluntary' contributions are obligatory if trips are to go ahead
9. Promote saving and financial planning either by establishing links with a credit union or setting up saving schemes into which parents can make regular payments
10. Appoint a governor to maintain a check on the affordability of parental expenditure<sup>2</sup>

#### **1.2. Why Harrogate Bureau Chose the Adding Up Campaign**

We chose this campaign because:

- Our clients had expressed concerns regarding the cost of school uniforms and/or school trips
- It is something that is relevant to and has an impact on a lot of people in our area (particularly single-parent families, families on low income, large families and children in general)
- We had noted that there had been an 17% increase of our clients claiming Free School Meals (FSM)
- It was a good time to launch the campaign as it was a few months before schools would break for the summer holiday and therefore families would be purchasing new uniforms

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<sup>1</sup> [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/resources\\_guidance\\_schools\\_england](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/resources_guidance_schools_england)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cablink.org.uk/bureaux/socialpolicy/campaigns/sp-addingup.htm>

- It is something that parents and guardians might be silently worrying about but not actually come into the bureau to express their concerns
- These costs are linked to other issues that our clients are experiencing, for example debt and therefore it is a very practical way to support families in our area
- 'Providing' for ones' children can be an emotive subject and it was suspected that some parents and guardians may be reluctant to ask for support
- Often people assume that every day policies like school uniforms and school trips have not changed or cannot be changed

### **1.3. Harrogate Bureau Campaign Aims and Objectives**

Aims and objectives for the Bureau can be defined in two overlapping areas: a) the aims and objectives for the campaign and b) the aims and objectives for the research. The campaign itself underpins the research process. The campaign aims and objectives are:

1. To identify concerns set out by the CAB national 'Adding Up Campaign'
2. To identify issues from the campaign that apply to clients in our area and any other issues
3. To identify how the cost of school uniforms and school trips impact on families in our area and to voice any concerns
4. To heighten awareness by disseminating findings, information and policies to the Education Office, to schools, families and other agencies (for example, information agencies, the local press and local politicians)

The Research aims and objectives are:

1. To broaden or narrow the scope of the research enquiry in line with the data findings
2. To establish whether it would be appropriate to expand the research to a second stage wide scale parent(s) or guardian(s) survey
3. To measure school policies practices regarding uniforms and school trips for consistency and fairness
4. To use comparative data to identify good, poor or misguided practices and share the findings to promote universal good practices in our area
5. To use comparative data to identify how some families are more profoundly affected by school costs, for instance, single parent families, families on low income and/or larger families and to promote the up-take of support available, particularly in secondary schools

## **PART 2: RESEARCH**

### **2. Harrogate CAB Adding Up Campaign: Overview of Research**

#### **2.1. Research Design**

In addition to using the “Top Ten Tip’s” and our bureau’s aims and objectives,<sup>3</sup> the research was also guided by literature and information on CABLink and AdviserNet. It was further underpinned by relevant government web-sites, documentation and policies, for example, TeacherNet, Fair Access Division: Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) and DirectGov, Local Government policies and guidelines for schools.

It is said that social science research methods that adopt multifaceted approaches have greater validity and reliability. This research design blended qualitative fieldwork research methods and analysis with quantitative methods and analysis, for example, by applying statistical analysis that quantified data findings. Furthermore, the research design had a comparative quality as it focussed attention from three angles.

The fieldwork data collection was aimed at three different participating groups:

- a) Schools in the Harrogate and surrounding area under Local Authority (LA) jurisdiction
- b) Parent(s) or Guardian(s) with children of school age (sample survey)
- c) The LA Education Office (face-to-face interview with a representative)

It was therefore essential to adopt a different approach for each category.

#### **2.2. Ethics, Confidentiality and Participant Empowerment**

It is said that “all research raises ethical issues”<sup>4</sup> and therefore we advocate that our research was “based on trust, openness and non-exploitative relationships.”<sup>5</sup> In addition, we had to consider the “kinds of people [who were] serving as research participants”,<sup>6</sup> for example, could they be considered vulnerable, are they able to give informed consent, are procedures in place that protect anonymity and confidentiality and are they free to not participate if they so desire? Therefore the ethical social science research procedure adopted for the fieldwork research in this report was in accordance with the ESRC ethical framework.<sup>7</sup> However, it should be noted that non-participation and selective answering of questions by participants can be problematic to the reliability of some of the data. In such cases we attempted (where possible) to find data that could effectively fill the gaps, for

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<sup>3</sup> See Report Introduction, p.15 & p.16

<sup>4</sup> Henn *et al*, 2006, p.68

<sup>5</sup> Henn *et al*, 2006, p.67

<sup>6</sup> Henn *et al*, 2006, p.68

<sup>7</sup> Economic and Social Research Council: Research Ethics Framework: see Bryman, 2008, pp.127-8

instance, school web-sites. The variables of low response rates and patchy data have therefore been flagged up in the findings section of the report.

### **3. Harrogate CAB Adding Up Campaign: Methods**

#### **3.1. Informing and Motivating the Bureau**

Some key issues had to be considered before embarking on the campaign and throughout its implementation. These included:

- The impact on the bureau and on individual supervisors and advisors
- How to communicate with staff and notify them of the launch of the campaign and the campaigns progress
- How to motivate staff interest and keep the campaign alive

Like many bureaux, Harrogate bureau is usually busy and the care of our clients takes priority. Often paid and voluntary staffs do not have any spare time. In addition, the bureau was in a time of transition to gateway. A sensitive approach was therefore applied to ensure that the campaign had the least amount of impact on the daily running of the bureau. The surveys carried out in the bureau were a self-completion style and advisors could ask appropriate clients to fill them in when they were out of the room researching the client's enquiry. Naturally, advisors were also sensitive to the clients' needs and abilities and offered help to those who needed it. Client's who were clearly upset were not asked to complete the surveys. The staff was notified about the on-set of the campaign via a regular workers meeting and posters informing them were put up in the workers room and on the doors of the interview rooms. Small postcard size reminders were placed on the communal desks in the open office. The Social Policy (SP) notice board was used throughout the campaign to inform all staff of the on-going progress and relevant contact details were displayed to deal with any staff enquiries. Supervisors were also asked to flag up the surveys at the beginning of every session.

#### **3.2. Monitoring the Campaign Progress**

The decision on how to do the campaign was made at one of our regular SP team meetings. The delegation of workload was decided on the basis of role within the bureau, the ability to implement the required task, appropriate skills and other work commitments (i.e. work load either within the bureau or outside). A campaign time-table was drawn up that had set targets and completion dates.<sup>8</sup> In addition, an on-going monitoring and reference system of all the questionnaires and surveys was put into place. This worked alongside other social

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 1: Campaign Time Table

policy bureau evidence monitoring and the automatic monitoring of all external communication that comes into the bureau. All work was approved by the SP manager and Bureau manager before implementation. Moreover, feedback on individual allocated work, concerns, adaptive ideas and progress was given to the SP team members on a weekly basis.

### 3.3. Representation and Response Rates

#### 3.3.1. Harrogate and Surrounding Area Local Authority Schools Demographic Overview

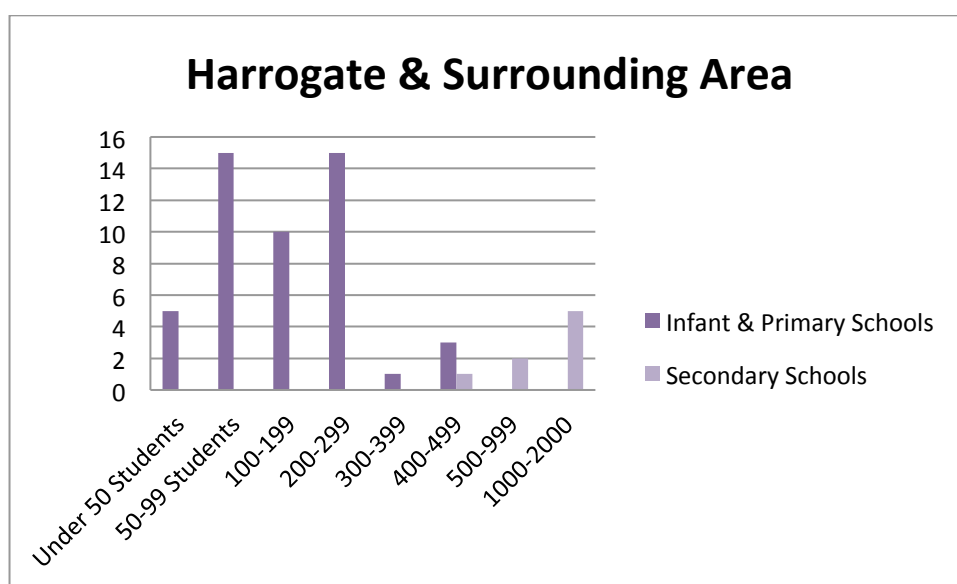


Table 1 - Size of Schools in Harrogate and Surrounding Area

Harrogate LA jurisdiction covers the towns of Harrogate, Knaresborough, Boroughbridge and surrounding villages. There are 49 infant and/or primary schools and 8 secondary schools. 9 schools have students as young as 3 years of age with 2 being infant schools. 20 schools have students from the age of 4 years. 17 schools have students from the age of 5 years with 1 being an infant's only. The final 3 are primary schools with student age starting from 7 years. 7 out of 8 secondary schools have a sixth form with students up to the age of 18 years and 1 secondary school caters for students up to 16 years of age. The infant/primary schools population range from as little as 25 students to as large as 424 students and secondary schools population range from 454 students to 1873 students (see Table 1).

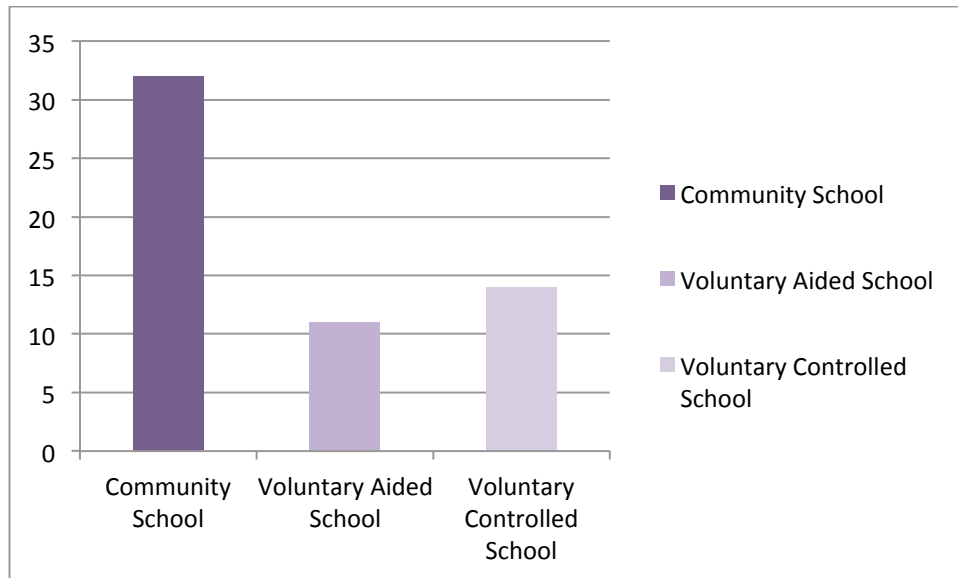


Table 2 - Type of Schools in Harrogate and Surrounding Area

There are three types of school under Local Authority jurisdiction; community schools, voluntary aided schools and voluntary controlled schools. 32 schools are community schools, 11 schools are voluntary aided schools and 14 are voluntary controlled schools (see Table 2). A representative from Harrogate Education Office claimed that “all schools in the area enjoy autonomy regarding uniform choice and school trips.”<sup>9</sup> However, the LA does expect schools to take notice of government guidelines that can be easily accessed on TeacherNet or DirectGov.

<sup>9</sup> Education Officer, (Interview 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010)

### 3.3.2. Response Rates of School Questionnaires

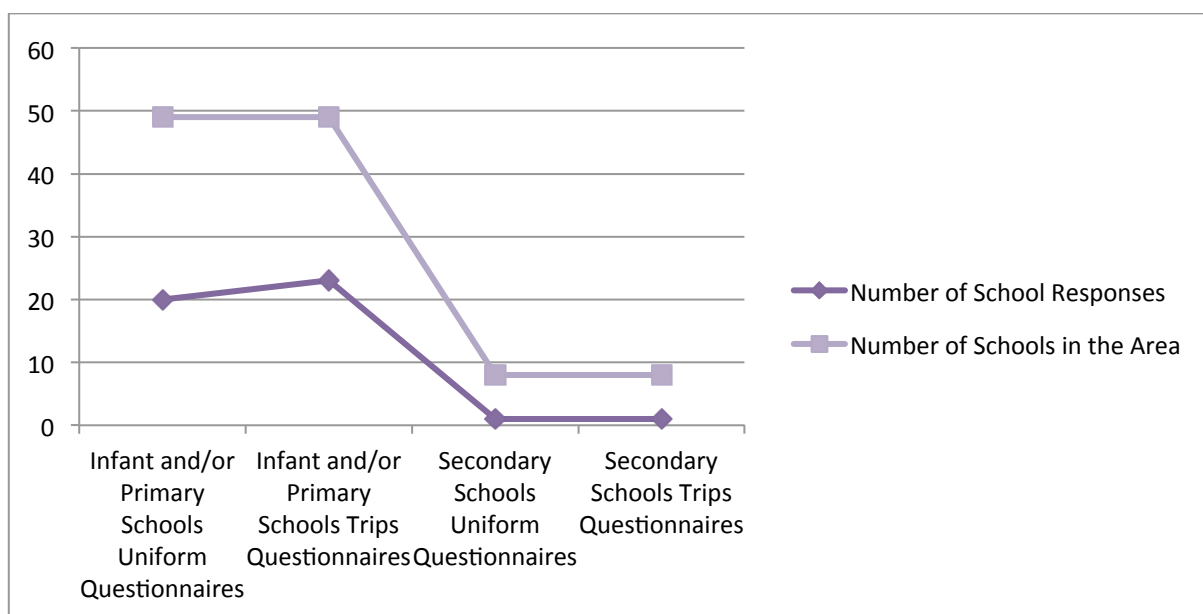


Table 3 - Response Rate of School Questionnaires

The 'Care Quality Commission National NHS Staff Survey Guidance Notes' suggests that a 50% response or over (ideally 60%) would achieve an excellent reflection of a specifically targeted cohort views.<sup>10</sup> However, in broader survey terms, 26% or over would be considered sufficiently reflective and therefore a good indicator of common practices.<sup>11</sup> 20 out of 49 (41%) of infant and/or primary schools returned the school uniform questionnaires and 23 out of 49 (47%) returned the school trips questionnaires (see Table 3). In social science research terms this can be considered a high response and therefore a good indicator of infant and/or primary school policies and practices. All the schools completed the trips questionnaire and 16 fully completed the uniform questionnaire. 3 out of 4 school uniform questionnaires had missed out an entire section and one questionnaire had three sections missing. One school returned a letter instead of the questionnaire that provided some information most notably on school trips. Where appropriate the information from the letter and information given on the incomplete questionnaires was included in the data when data was missing the variable accounted for in the quantitative analysis and report findings.

Only one secondary school returned both questionnaires (see Table 3). This was disappointing but in a large busy office environment it is easy to overlook generic communications and understandably focus on the everyday running of the school. However, it was clear from the answers that the school in the research did not have a typical demographic of the area. A greater response from secondary schools would be needed to identify common practices from secondary schools perspective. It was possible to

<sup>10</sup> Care Quality Commission National NHS Staff Survey, 2010, p. 27

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.supersurvey.com/papers/supersurvey\\_white\\_paper\\_response\\_rates.pdf](http://www.supersurvey.com/papers/supersurvey_white_paper_response_rates.pdf) p. 6

compensate for some of the absent data. As noted earlier, all the secondary schools had reasonably comprehensive web-sites that provide some information on uniforms. In addition, the parent(s) or guardian(s) surveys illuminated areas of concerns regarding school uniforms and school trips policies and practices that can be disseminated back to the secondary schools with a second request to respond to the questionnaires.

### **3.3.3. Target Response Rates of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) in the Bureau Sample Survey**

As noted earlier, some of our clients had indicated they were experiencing difficulties in meeting school uniform and/or school trip costs. However, these could have been a few isolated cases and therefore it was important to assess the concerns and needs of our clients with children of school age in more detail before embarking on a full scale survey. Furthermore, we wanted to gauge the views and experiences of parents and guardians in more general terms and encourage a balanced, broad and comparative consensus. In addition, we wanted to identify good practices, as well poor or misguided practices. The data collection therefore had to incorporate the views of all parent(s) or guardian(s) and not just those who were experiencing problems. To allow for a 50% response rate a participating sample must have more than 10 respondents in each survey.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, allowances had to be made for data that cannot be used. The target was set at collecting 15 school trip surveys and 15 school uniform surveys. 3 school uniform and 4 school trips surveys could not be used because the school was not in this area or the school was privately run and not under Harrogate LA jurisdiction. Therefore, there were 12 uniform surveys and 11 trips surveys completed and used in this report.

### **3.3.4. Bureau Representation: Demographics**

According to Harrogate Borough Council (2009) “the estimated resident population of the Harrogate district was 157,900.” The last census in 2001 noted that “lone parent households with dependent children comprise 5% of all households and 98.4% of the district’s population was white/British.” 79% of males of workable age were said to be economically active and 64% of females,<sup>13</sup> however by October 2010, 1.7% of the people in the area were claiming unemployment-related benefits.<sup>14</sup> 16% of all residents (at the time of the 2001 census)...[had] some limiting long-term illness.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Care Quality Commission National NHS Staff Survey, 2010, p. 16

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/pdf/HBCDatafile04\\_pt6\\_10.pdf](http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/pdf/HBCDatafile04_pt6_10.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.harroagte.gov.uk/immediacy-4072>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.harroagte.gov.uk/immediacy-4072>

Half the parents who completed one or both of the surveys were lone parents but only one indicated that their child was in receipt of Free School Meals (FSMs). One parent of a single income household was registered disabled and one child had a specific learning need (dyslexia).<sup>16</sup> 25% of families had a double income and a further 8% had one parent in full-time employment and other parent in part-time employment (for full details see: Bureau Survey Demographic Table, Appendix 2).<sup>17</sup>

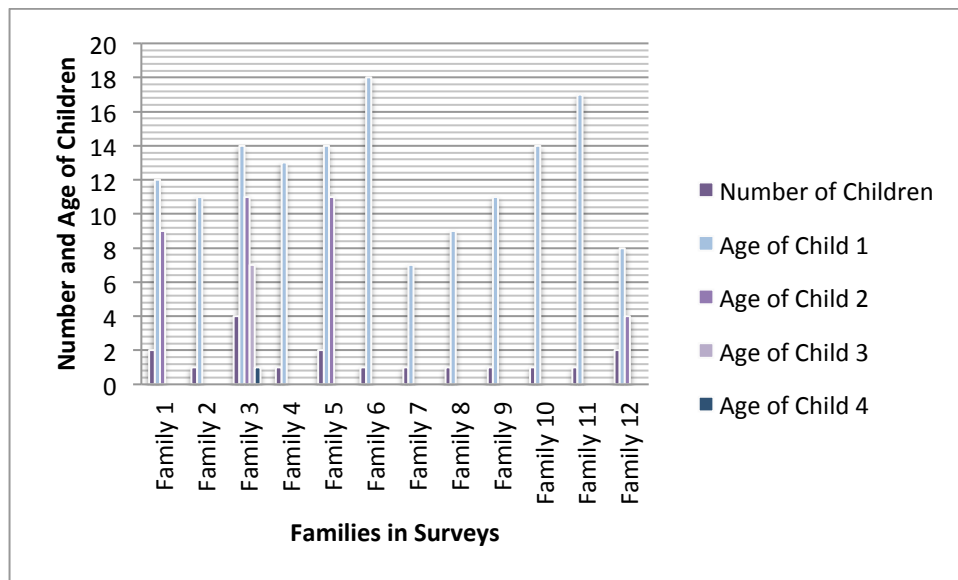


Table 4 - Families in Bureau surveys: Number and Age of Children

The total number of children represented in the bureau surveys was 9 at secondary school, 7 at primary school and 1 at infant school. In addition, one family said they had a child under school age. 8 families had one child, 3 families had 2 children and one family had 4 children (see Table 4).

### 3.4. Semi-Structured Interview with a Local Authority Educational Representative

A representative from the Local Education office kindly agreed to an interview. The purpose of the interview was to engage in policies issues regarding school uniforms (most notably grants) and school trips from the LAs perspective (the interview content is discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3). A qualitative informal semi-structured interview offered the most appropriate method because it required personal contact, had a flexible and adaptive quality and encouraged participant empowering.<sup>18</sup> This technique largely required open ended questions and the participant only answered or offered up ideas that they wished to.

<sup>16</sup> Note that children who are in receipt of DLA are not represented in this report because extra clothing allowance (including school uniform) in relation to the child specific disability(ies) is incorporated in the benefit

<sup>17</sup> Appendix 2: Demographic Table

<sup>18</sup> Bryman, 2008, pp.438-440 & Henn *et al*, 2006, pp. 67-68

The participant was guaranteed confidentiality and it was agreed that any reference to them in this report would be under the generic title of 'Education Officer.' In addition, the participant was informed that they could withdraw any of their answers at any time before the draft completion date.

#### **4. Harrogate CAB Adding Up Campaign Data Collection**

##### **4.1. Schools Postal Questionnaires on School Uniforms and School Trips**

All schools in Harrogate, Knaresborough, Boroughbridge and surrounding area were asked to fill in two postal questionnaires; one on school uniforms and the other on school trips. The questionnaires were sent out six weeks before the schools summer holiday break (2010) and were personally address to the head of each school. It was important to address letters to specific individuals as it enhanced the possibility of a positive response because:

- It demonstrates care and attention to details
- Participants are more likely to respond favourably to a letter with their name on
- The pack was less likely to get lost as one person took responsibility for it
- It demonstrates professional integrity that is promoted in our bureau and in CAB
- It is simply the polite thing to do

Each pack contained two questionnaires, a letter of request and a bureau stamped addressed envelope (see Appendix 3, 4 7 5).<sup>19</sup> Individual schools could not be identified as the questionnaire did not ask for the school to provide a name and therefore anonymity was protected. However, some of the questions were appropriate to infant/primary schools only and others to secondary, therefore we were able to identify how many schools had responded the infant/primary category and how many had responded in the secondary category. The letter asking for assistance was sensitive to the fact that Head Teachers themselves may be very busy and therefore asked for "you [the Head] or an appropriate member of staff"<sup>20</sup> to fill in and return the questionnaires. Furthermore, the questionnaires were designed in such a way that they could be filled in relatively quickly but the participating school could elaborate if they so desired.

The uniform questionnaire covered five key areas:

##### **1. Supporting low income families**

Questions about what kind of help is available for students from low income families, funding and grants and second-hand schemes (seven questions included in the section and a data table)

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<sup>19</sup> Appendix 3: Cover Letter; Appendix 4: School Uniforms Questionnaire; Appendix 5: School Trips Questionnaire

<sup>20</sup> Appendix 3: Cover Letter

2. School practices in regards to changing the uniform  
Questions on how much notice and the basis for change (two questions included in the section)
3. School policies on the cost of uniforms  
Questions on suppliers of uniforms, logos, uniform descriptors and help with specialist items (five questions included in the section)
4. Decision making on uniforms  
Questions on who decides and checks uniform conformity and are dress codes universally accepted within the staff (two questions included in the section)
5. Non-conformity issues  
Questions on amount of student non-conformity in regards to uniforms and the percentage put down to cost (two questions included in the section)  
(See Appendix 4 for full details)

The school trips questionnaire also covered five key areas:

1. How many trips are available to the students in the course of a year? (one numerical question)
2. Why schools have trips (six options given)
3. What are the school policies of cost of trips?  
Questions on expenses and extra costs, frequency, parental concerns and second-hand schemes (seven questions included in the section)
4. Notice and budgeting for trips  
Questions on how much notice does the school give families before a school trip, does the school ask for voluntary contributions and does the school have specific fund raising for trips? (six questions included in the section)<sup>21</sup>
5. Whether trips are over or undersubscribed  
Questions on the balance of attendance and any recent changes in attendance (two questions included in the section)  
(See Appendix 5 for full details)

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<sup>21</sup> Questions on voluntary contributions and specialist fund raising were placed in a sub categories for analysis purpose

#### **4.2. Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Bureau Sample Survey on School Uniforms and School Trips**

The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Bureau sample survey on school uniforms and school trips was carried out because we wanted to:

- Identify issues and level of concerns in our area and to assess if there was a need for policy change
- To indicate areas of further investigation
- To use primarily data finding as a template for a revised full scale survey if appropriate
- To use data for comparative purposes and to fill data gaps from schools questionnaires

The launch of the Bureau Sample Survey was strategically timed to coincide with the schools summer holiday. Posters notifying bureau clients of the surveys and the surveys were placed in key public areas throughout the bureau and in interview rooms. Moreover, advisors and receptionists were asked to flag up the surveys to appropriate clients. The surveys were designed to be of a self-completion style, however, help was offered if the client needed it. Both the school uniform survey and the school trips survey were designed to closely correlate with questions asked in the schools questionnaires and covered similar key areas. In addition, the surveys had confidential personal details section for demographic purposes and a space to voice any concerns if they had any. The parent(s) or Guardian(s) survey (P/G surveys) on uniforms covered three key areas:

1. Cost of uniforms  
Questions about specialist suppliers and branding v supermarket outlets, uniform reuse, cost of uniform and expensive items, awareness of uniform or dress code, problems meeting uniform requirements and cost of specialist clothing and equipment (eight questions included in the section)
2. Changes in uniform or dress code  
Questions on changes to uniform, notice given and basis (three questions included in the section)
3. Help provided for low income families  
Questions on help available, from whom and schemes that help keep costs low, for example, swap-shops and second-hand uniform schemes (two questions included in the section)

(See Appendix 6 for full details)

The parent(s)/Guardian(s) (P/G survey) school trips survey covered five key areas:

1. How many trips are offered during the course of a year (one question included in the section)
2. What is the purpose of the school trips (six options given)
3. Cost of school trips  
Questions on the cost of trip per child, extra costs of trips and does the school offer schemes that help with school trip costs (three questions included in the section)
4. Help for families on low income  
Questions on FSMs, funding available to families in need, advertising funding availability and would they take up offers of help if offered (five questions included in the section)
5. Notice and budgeting  
Questions on notice for trips, saving schemes, voluntary contributions and specific fundraising for trips (five questions included in the section)  
(See Appendix 7 for full details)

#### **4.3. Semi-Structured Face-to-Face Interview with LA Education Office Representative**

The interview was designed to take under an hour and was adapted after telephone conversation that indicated the level of appropriate information that could be provided and after some data analysis and relevant research had been done. An additional purpose of the interview was to clarify help available as the Local Authority web-site indicated that assessment of need was often done on an individual basis, to illuminate another perspective or line of enquiry and to gauge interest and how far the LA would be able to help with the campaign in future. It should be noted that the interviewee was not able to answer some of the questions because the questions were beyond the role of the LA, for instance, individual schools autonomy regarding policies on uniforms and school trips is respected by the LA. However, procedures and information on school grants, LA recommended residential school trips, awareness of rights and entitlements and up-take of Free School Meals was clearly within the scope of this interview. The questions covered several areas:

- The LA's criteria, assessment and procedure for school uniform grants and school trips
- How families in need are made aware of their rights

- How good practices are promoted in the area
- How consistency and fairness is measured
- What kind of problems do the LA come across and need addressing, for example, the up-take of FSM
- How can the bureau help to promote good policies
- (See Appendix 8 for semi-structured interview format)

## **PART 3: FINDINGS**

### **5. School Policies and Practices (General): Research Findings**

#### **5.1. Part 3: Introduction**

The report research findings are broken down into three categories; general practice findings, school uniform findings and school trips findings. The lines of enquiry (questions) are defined at the beginning of each category. Each question was coded and analysed appropriately to identify good or poor practices in a number of areas that included:

- Consistency
- Affordability
- Awareness
- Inclusion
- Specific impact on single parents, low income and/or large families
- Environment and practicality<sup>22</sup>

The good practices that were identified followed three routes, that of:

1. School policies that are promoted well within our area. Report findings to be disseminated where schools will be commended and encouraged to continue to promote good policy practices
2. Are promoted in some schools but needs greater dissemination to either all schools in the area or to all secondary schools
3. Research found limited evidence; however, a) initial concerns/ideas will be voiced and either disseminated to all schools in the area or to all secondary schools or b) there is no need for any further action

The poor practices that were identified also followed three routes, that of:

1. Widely used and therefore a need for policy change. Report findings to be disseminated where schools will be commended and encouraged to continue to promote good policy practices
2. Poor practice promoted in a notable number of schools and therefore optional good practice or alternative could be disseminated to either all schools in the area or to all secondary schools
3. Research found limited evidence; however, a) initial concerns/ideas will be voiced and either disseminated to all schools in the area or to all secondary schools or b) there is no need for any further action

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<sup>22</sup> In line with Government recommendations that advocate policies on recycling (i.e. second-hand uniform schemes) and practical/safe clothing for older children to wear on bikes or when walking to and from school (i.e. weather versatile and reflective etc). Environmental policy implications and application are discussed later on in the report with view to develop in the next stage of the research if the SP Team feels it is appropriate

A flag symbol is used throughout part 3 to note the response rate (RR) of the specific line of enquiry and any variable (V) that has been factored in. A tick symbol  is used throughout this section to note good practice and a cross symbol  to note poor practice.

## **5.2. General Practice Findings from Uniform and Trips Research**

This section discusses findings in general terms, that-is-to-say, themes that overlap with both school uniform policy findings and school trips policy findings.

The section includes:

- How need is assessed
- Local Education Authority (LEA) funded support
- Family up-take of support offered
- School's offer of support beyond eligibility criteria

## **5.3. How Need is Assessed**

The LA advocates that a child in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) is used as an indicator for other support and entitlements, for example, a uniform transfer grant (currently £65 but subject to change) and support with costs of LA endorsed residential trips (see section 5.3 later on). Criteria for FSM are parent(s) or guardian(s) should be in receipt of either:

- Income Support
  - Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance
  - Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Child Tax Credit with an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) of less than £16,040 and not in receipt of Working Tax Credit.
  - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - Guarantee element of State Pension
- (See Form CO39 O4/10)

However, it was suggested that "not all children who are entitled to FSM receive them" and most notably "there is a drop in up-take for children at secondary schools despite the fact that schools use a token system for school meals payment" and therefore receipt of FSM are anonymous (Interview: Education Officer). Possible reasons suggested were a "lack of awareness and perceived stigmatisation" (Interview 2010: Education Officer). Terminology related to perceived stigmatisations was also used in the parent surveys, most notably they were linked to affordability and their ability to pay:

"I feel ashamed because I can't afford to buy another [jumper] and I'm turning her out in frayed clothes." (Family 2)

“ ... “I won’t be able to afford for my child to go on a school trip and this would cause embarrassment.” (Family 12)

How schools define and establish need can be key to providing broader support and adopting policies that impact positively on families of students, most notably if definitions of need adopted are consistent with other schools, the LA, government guidelines or have been broadened effectively enough to compensate for low up- takes (perceptions of stigmatisation or reluctance to ask for help due to ‘embarrassment’ or ‘shame’, individual need and borderline cases: just above the FSM criteria threshold , changes of circumstances due to the recession, large families) and lack of awareness regarding entitlements or specific policies promoted within individual schools. In addition, the criteria of entitlement are narrow and parent(s)/guardian(s) outside the criteria expressed concerns about the lack of help available to them. A single parent said:

“[I’m] on low income (Tax Credits) and no help for me.” (Family 10)

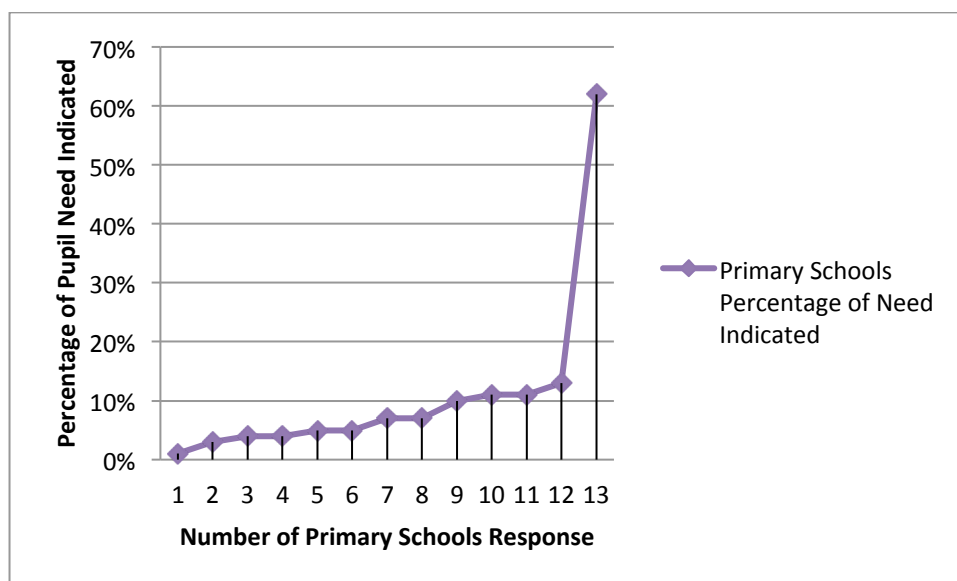


Table 5 - Primary School Percentage of Need Indicated by Individual Schools

How many pupils were considered to be ‘in need’ by individual primary school presented patchy results from 1% to 62% with 4 non-response.

(Hv): The 62% indicator is clearly outside the other schools range of response and therefore cannot be considered as general, consensus or average. It should be noted that the school in question stated that they used the “NYCC definition of ‘vulnerable children’” as their indicator of need.

Response Rate 12:17 in Primary School questionnaires (PSQs) for this question with 62% variable taken out. Range of pupils in need indicated by the schools is between 1%-13% and

therefore the median (percentile) reflected an average of 6.75% of students in need in Harrogate and the surrounding area (See Table 6).

FSM should be a universal indicator to schools to identify family/student need. However, the combination of non-up-takes, limited criteria of entitlement and the notion of helping all 'recession stressed parents' (as defined in the CAB National Campaign) would imply that more than one indicator should be adopted by schools.

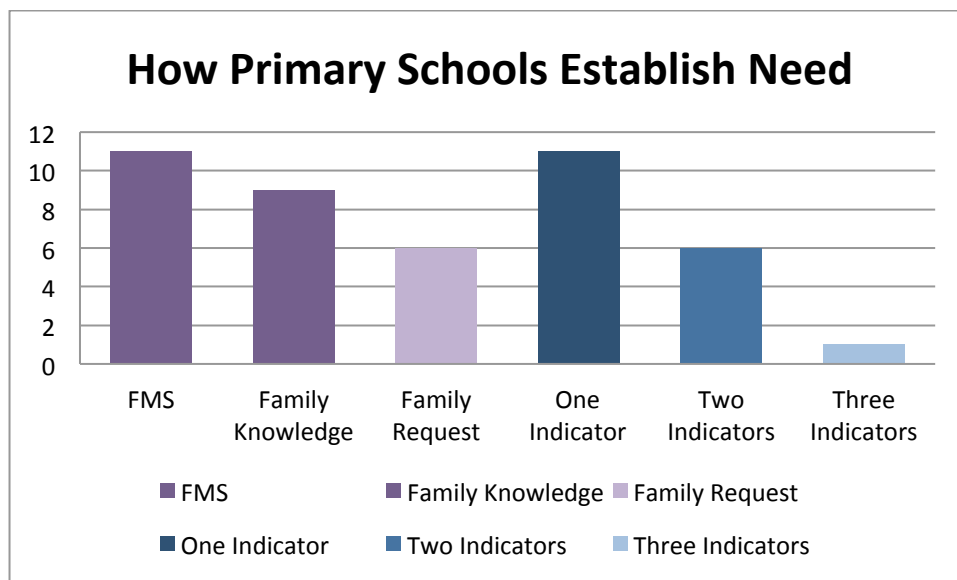


Table 6 - How Pupil Need is Established by Infant/Primary Schools

(RR17:20PSQs): 11 (65%) of infant/primary schools in the questionnaire (PSQs) used FSM as an indicator of need. 9 (53%) said they used knowledge of the family as an indicator of need and 6 (35%) said they used family request. 11 (65%) of infant/primary schools used 1 indicator to establish need and 4 of these established need via parental request. Parental request alone could be a less effective way to establish need beyond the individual who is asking for support because (as noted earlier) the asker has to be already aware of their rights and it creates an environment where parent(s) or guardian(s) may feel uncomfortable and even embarrassed or stigmatised. 6 (35%) of infant/primary schools used two indicators, most notably FSM with one other and 1 school used 3 indicators; FSM, knowledge of the family and family request.

The participating secondary school claimed that 20% of their students were in need and used 3 indicators to establish need; FSM, professional knowledge and primary feeder.

☒ FSMs should be universal indicator; however, 35% (a notable amount) of the PSQs did not put FSM down as an indicator of student need

- Using FSM as an indicator of need to be disseminated as a universal policy

☒ PSQs show some indication that schools definition of 'student need' was inconsistent

- Clear and universal definition of ‘student need’ underpins consistent policy practices and will be disseminated to all schools

65% of infant/primary schools used only one indicator to identify need

Two schools used 3 indicators

4 infant/primary schools used parental request as their one and only indicator. Although parental request is an important indicator, schools need to be aware that some parent(s) or guardian(s) are reluctant or will not ask for assistance and consequently they and/or their child(ren) will be silently experiencing hardship that potentially could impact on individual students attainment

- The definition of need and amount of indicators should be broadened to allow for low take ups of FSM, individual need, border-line cases, dramatic changes in family circumstances, large families and lack of awareness. Ideas on multiple alternative indicators used by a minority of schools should therefore be disseminated as a good policy practice

There was some evidence to support that information regarding student need was being successfully passed on to secondary schools via primary schools feeder

#### **5.4. LEA Funded Support**

“Local Education Authorities (LEAs) must give parents written information about what help they can give with educational costs, the criteria for getting help and how parents can apply.” (AdviserNet)<sup>23</sup>

Examples of financial include:

- Free School Meals
- School milk
- School clothing
- Home access grant for computers (England only)
- School transport
- Free accommodation on educational school residential trips
- Visiting a pupil at a maintained special school (AdviserNet)<sup>24</sup>

As discussed earlier, the receipt of FSMs transports the recipient to other entitlements. Entitlements related to this report include:

<sup>23</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 2)

<sup>24</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 1)

- LEA funded uniform grant(s)<sup>25</sup>
- LEA funded discretionary clothing payments (i.e. shoes, sports kit)<sup>26</sup>
- Free board and lodging for residential educational school trips<sup>27</sup>

However, “the school, not the LEA, must pay for the pupil’s board and lodging (Policy guidelines, legislation and recommended funding regarding all schools trips and implications are discussed in greater detail in the schools trips findings section 7)

LEAs policies on school uniform grants and/or discretionary payments “vary widely” and

“Some restrict help to school uniforms only, some pay a one-off grant when the pupil starts school and others pay regular grants as the pupil grows and needs new clothes.”(AdviserNet)<sup>28</sup>

Equally the amount paid are also variable, in Wales, for instance a one-off grant of £105 is given to eligible “pupils entering secondary school” (AdviserNet).<sup>29</sup> Harrogate District Local Education Authority (HDLEA) currently awards a one-off grant of £65 to children who are transferring from primary or middle schools to secondary school. Every parent or guardian is asked to complete the transfer form. The form asks them to indicate if their child is in receipt of FSMs and if so they will be automatically offered a transfer grant by the LEA (Interview: Education Officer). It is therefore paramount that schools, parents and guardians are aware of student entitlement to FSMs at primary school level and moreover they take-up the offer. However, it would appear that frequency of payment and amount of financial support is subject to a postcode lottery despite the criteria for eligibility being universally accepted by LEAs.

Whether a one-off transfer uniform grant is sufficient is questionable. P/Gs surveys suggested several reasons why uniforms need to be replaced on a regular basis including:

“Children grow out of their uniform before they have worn them out, so there is a constant buying throughout a year.” (Family 9) and some uniform items do not stand up to wear and tear of children’s play “...my eldest son’s uniform seemed to last five minutes.” (Family 6) In addition, one survey noted that some uniform items are poor quality and “ladder” or “fray.”(Family 2)

However, HDLEA is one of the 40 per cent that still provides school clothing grants and like many other LAs, budget are limited and are currently bracing themselves for further cuts. January CAB campaign newsletter warns bureau SP campaigners to:

<sup>25</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 15)

<sup>26</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 14)

<sup>27</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 41)

<sup>28</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 15)

<sup>29</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 21a)

“...make sure the grants don’t become victims of cuts.” (CABLink, Jan 11 Campaign Newsletter)<sup>30</sup>

All families would benefit from more affordable, hard wearing and practical school uniform policies (full discussion: policy guidelines, legislation, affordability and recommended funding regarding schools uniform and implications are discussed in greater detail in the ‘schools uniform findings section’ 6

(P/RR9:12P/G Surveys): In addition, the P/Gs survey findings revealed only 1 out of 9 was aware that help to buy school uniforms was available from the LA, 8 out of 9 stated that they had not been offered any help to buy a uniform despite 3 of them were single parent households and 1 a large family. Parental eligibility and the child’s age clearly are important considerations, however, the survey findings suggest a low level parent/guardian awareness regarding grants and therefore schools and HDLEA could consider profiling eligibility and entitlements beyond the transfer form, for example, policies on uniform grant availability and discretionary payments on school newsletters, web-sites and prospectuses and in the local media. This finding also overlaps with parental awareness of policies in schools and is also discussed later on in the uniform findings section 6.3.1. It should be noted that recently HDLEA have distributed information, entitlement and how to apply for FSMs and help with residential trips via Form CO39 O4/10 and are also working on promoting greater awareness in the area.

How payment is made to families also varies

“Some LEAs give help as cash grants, others give vouchers to be used at local shops and others give actual items of clothing.” (AdviserNet)<sup>31</sup>

However, AdviserNet warns:

“If vouchers are issued for a parent to exchange for clothes, [they] may find that there are very few local shops which are willing to accept the vouchers.” (AdviserNet)<sup>32</sup>

HDLEA currently uses a voucher system which unfortunately is not universally accepted by shops selling uniforms, most notably a cheap supermarket out-let (Interview: Education Officer). As a result families in the greatest need of financial support choice of where to purchase uniforms is limited and they do not reap the full benefit of all main street supplier discounts. Universal acceptance of grant vouchers by school uniform suppliers or cash payments by HDLEA would alleviate this problem.

HDLEA offer some discretionary one-off payments based on individual cases, most notably to help with expensive items like school shoes (Interview: Education Officer). In the P/Gs surveys shoes, Jumpers/cardigans and items with a logo were the most frequently stated as a very expensive item (see Table 15: Expensive Items in section 6.2.1). Discretionary

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<sup>30</sup> CAB Campaign Newsletter, (Jan 2011), CABLink, <http://www.cablink.org.uk/bureaux/socialpolicy/campaigns/sp-addingup.htm>

<sup>31</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 16)

<sup>32</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 ‘Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age’ (Para 16)

payments are therefore welcomed. However, the level of which schools are aware of such payments is currently unclear and therefore further investigation would be needed.

HDLEA does offer one-off uniform grant for children transferring from primary/middle schools to secondary school

Whether a one-off uniform grant is sufficient is questionable

- Limited evidence regarding HDLEA's ability to stretch their budget to beyond one-off uniform grants: Harrogate CAB recognises and support HDLEA in continuing to provide a school uniform grant

All parent(s) are notified of their entitlement and automatically offered the uniform grant through the mandatory completion of a transfer form

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) surveys (P/G surveys) indicate low awareness regarding school uniform grant

- Policy change: promoting awareness needed. Schools could disseminate information to parents/guardians via newsletters, prospectuses and school web sites and LEA could utilise local media

HDLEA are currently working towards promoting greater awareness on FSM entitlement and help with residential educational school trips

- HDLEA already active in this area

Lack of consistency from LEAs policies regarding the amount of financial support offered to families in need of help towards the cost of school uniforms

Lack of consistency from LEAs policies regarding the frequency of which grants are paid to families in need of help towards the cost of school uniforms

- Universal national policy on the amount of financial support and frequency of which the grants are paid to eligible families

Voucher system not universally accepted by main street suppliers/supermarket out-lets

- Policy change: either the main street suppliers could be persuaded to accept vouchers for school uniforms or LEA persuaded to change to cash payments (as adopted in some other LEAs). Harrogate CAB will investigate the feasibility of both options

LEA offers discretionary one-off payments

- Limited evidence regarding schools awareness of parental entitlement and up-take: report findings to be disseminated to all schools in the area

### 5.5. Family Up-Take of Support Offered

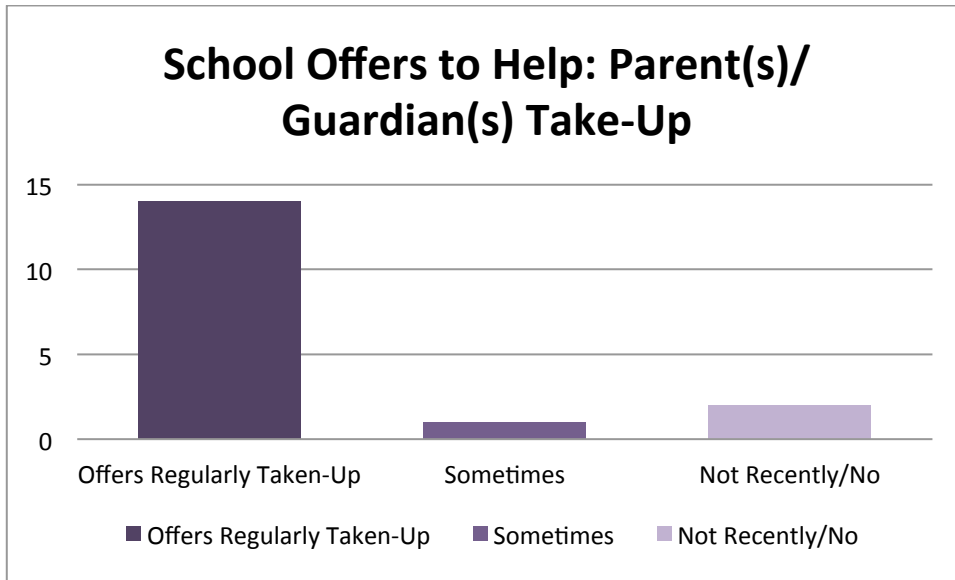


Table 7 - P/Gs surveys Taking-Up Offers of Help

(RR17:20PSQs): 14 PSQs indicated that families in need of extra support took up offers of help on a regular basis, 1 said sometimes, 1 said not recently and 1 said that offers were not taken-up.

(RR-V- 6:11P/G Surveys): P/Gs surveys question that asked “would you take up offers to help with costs of school trips”; 6 said they would take up offers to help with costs of school trips. 2 were single parents, 1 whose child is in receipt of FSMs and 4 were from double income families. Parental perception of need clearly does not correlate with eligibility. It should also be noted that this indicates that parents are willing to take-up offers of help and further indicates that expansion of eligibility and greater awareness school policies is needed.

☒ Parent(s)/guardian(s) outside the criteria for extra support expressed concerns about the lack of help available to them

☒ PSQs and P/G surveys have inconsistent findings which may indicate a lack of awareness regarding parental view on this matter

- Report findings to be disseminated to all schools in the area

## 5.6. School's Offer of Support to Families Beyond Eligibility Criteria

We have already discussed how perceived 'stigmatisation,' 'embarrassment,' and 'shame' can act as a barrier to families to ask for help. We have also suggested that the scope to offer support should be broad enough to incorporate a wide range of families beyond official eligibility of need. PSQs revealed that some primary schools adopt adaptive, imaginative and purposive policies that include:

- Universal pupil inclusion
- Universal inclusion for specific events
- Strategies that help to keep costs down
- Strategies that help to keep frequency down, for example, the amount of clothing and equipment that has to be provided from family budget and how many trips the family budget has to fund
- Specific fund-raising for special events, trips and equipment
- Specific funds for families in need of extra support

2 primary schools suggested that they had good family knowledge because the school are very small.

"We are a very small school and have close contact with families. It is quite clear when families are struggling." (PSQ 12)

A more intimate relationship between school staff, students and their families gives broader scope for the acquisition of personal knowledge and when used appropriately can be utilised to offer tailor made discreet support beyond LEA or government requirements. However, larger schools and secondary schools (who have less parent contact via the playground) may find it difficult to gauge individual family need without using several clear indicators or bench marks. In addition, broader support beyond the scope of official requirements are likely to stop when the child moves to another schools as this kind of information is not officially documented or past on.

Personal knowledge on families and a sensitive attitude helps but is problematic for larger schools

- Acquisition of family knowledge and a intimate relationship between families and staff should be encouraged where possible

## **6. School Uniform Findings**

The school uniforms findings specifically looks at uniform policies used in schools and the impact on pupils and their families in three key overlapping areas:

- Decision making, changes and conformity
- Cost of uniforms
- Supporting low income families

### **6.1. Decision Making, Changes and Conformity**

Decision making, changes and conformity issues considered in this section include:

- Decision making on uniforms
- Clear uniform descriptors
- Changes to the uniform
- Student conformity
- Possible areas for future investigation

#### **6.1.1. Decision Making on Uniforms**

Education Department Government guidelines strongly encourage schools to have uniforms because:

- It can instil pride
- Supports positive behaviour and discipline
- Encourages identity with, and support for, school ethos
- Ensures pupils of all races and backgrounds feel welcome
- Protects children from social pressures to dress in a particular way
- Nurtures coalition and promote good relations between different groups of pupils<sup>33</sup>

However, “there is no legislation that specifically deals with uniforms” and therefore it is the “governing body of the school decision whether there should be a uniform and other rules relating to appearance... [In addition], a school should ensure that its school uniform policy is fair and reasonable.”(TeacherNet)<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> DCSF guidance to schools on school uniform and related policies,' TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/index.cfm?code=main>, (Para 1)

<sup>34</sup> DCSF guidance to schools on school uniform and related policies,' TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/index.cfm?code=main>, (Para 2-4)

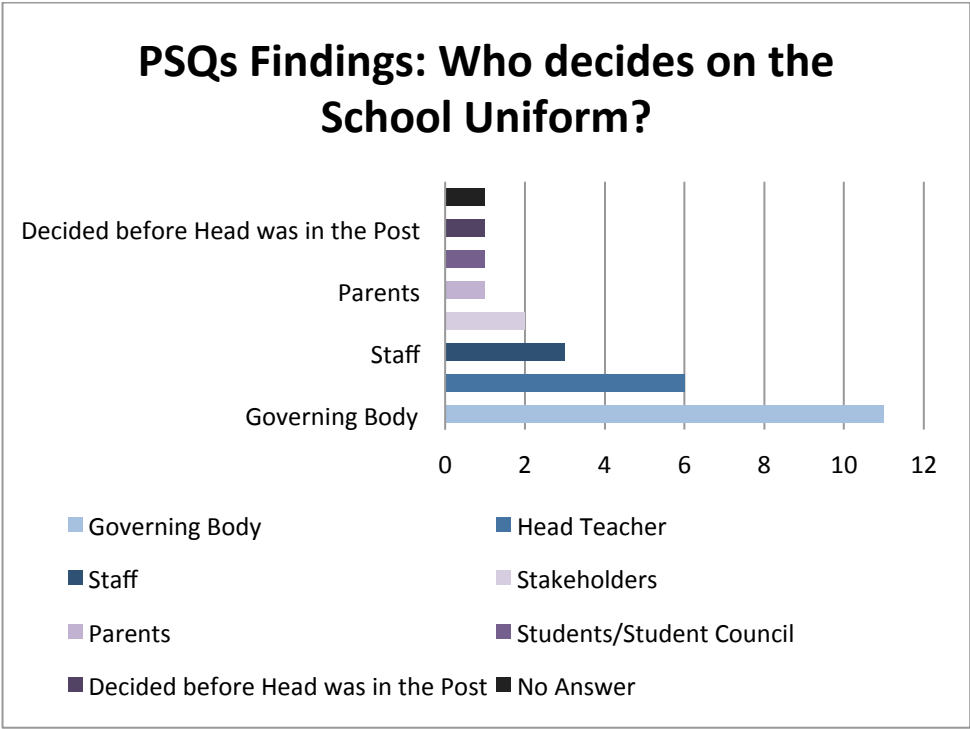


Table 8 - PSQs Findings on Who Decides on the School Uniform

(RR18:19PSQs): 11 PSQs said that their governing body decided on the uniform, although more often than not, it was not their decision alone but done in collaboration with others. 6 PSQs said that Head Teacher was involved in uniform decision making, 3 said the school staff, 2 the school stakeholders and 1 said either, parents, students, was decided before they were in the post so therefore they did not know or did not give an answer.

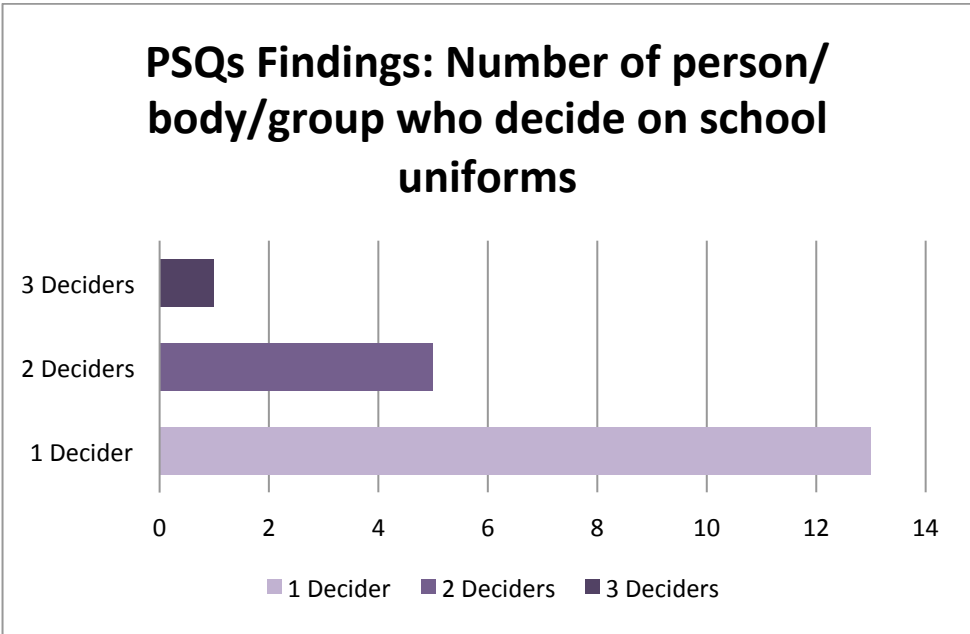


Table 9 - PSQs Findings on Number of Deciders

(RR18:19PSQs): PSQs shows that 13 schools have only 1 person/body/group who decides on the uniform, 11 of which were the governing body. 5 schools used 2 person/body/group to decide and 1 used 3. The most common combined deciders are the governing body and the head teacher. However, 1 schools uniform was decided via parent questionnaire and another by the students themselves. Government guidelines note that:

“Many schools also engage pupils, including school councils, in drawing up a school uniform policy...” (TeacherNet)<sup>35</sup>

The secondary school questionnaire also revealed that the students and the governing body chose the uniform. However, this option is more appropriate for older children. The PSQs do however reveal low consultation with parents in regards to deciding on uniforms.

High governing body decision making on uniforms

Low parent and/or student consultation and decision making on uniforms

- Greater consultation and decision making on uniforms to be disseminated as a good policy practice

### 6.1.2. Clear Uniform Descriptors

Government guidelines suggest that schools:

“... describe uniform/appearance policies clearly and publicise [them] well, for example, on the school website, in clear rules, and in any admissions or general school perspectives...Pupils and parents/carers should receive information that makes them aware of school expectations before they are required to express a preference for a school.” (TeacherNet)<sup>36</sup>

(RR12:12P/G Surveys): P/Gs survey universally indicated that school uniform descriptors were clear and well publicised.

(RR17:21PSQs): 16 out of 17 PSQs also said that they had clear uniform descriptors which correlate with the P/Gs survey findings. 1 school claimed it did not but this was due to having a relaxed view on students wearing a school uniform.

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<sup>35</sup> TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/>, (Para 5)

<sup>36</sup> TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/>, (Para 4)

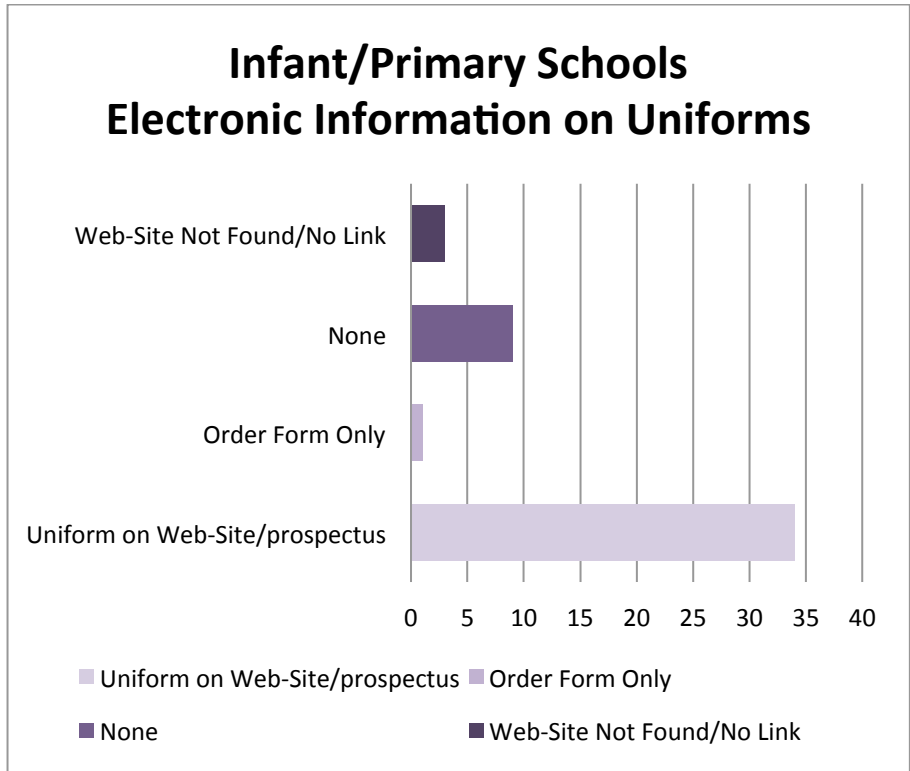


Table 10 - Infant/Primary Schools Electronic Information on Uniforms

(H 46:49 Infant/Primary Schools): An internet research on all the schools in the area web-sites indicated that 34 primary schools have school uniforms, 9 did not post uniform information and 3 infant/primary school web-sites could not be found. However, it was clear from the search that those schools that did not have uniform information on their web-sites did have uniforms. In fact uniforms are universally worn by school children in this area with the exception of 2 infant/primary schools who have an optional uniform policy in place. Uniform details and suppliers of the schools that had posted information are in most cases easy to find and included in the electronic version of the prospectus. In addition, schools were very clear on describing the appropriate uniform for their school and some schools included a price list and order forms.

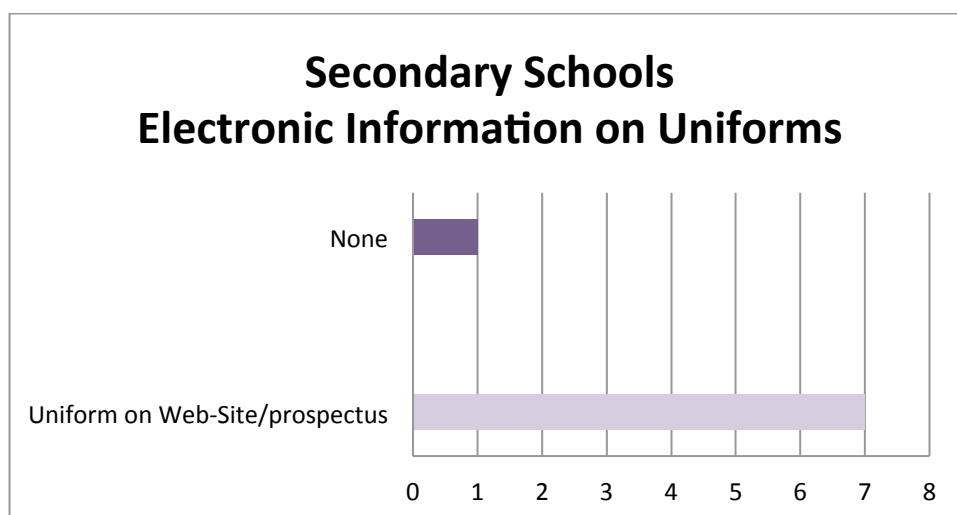


Table 11 - Secondary School Electronic Information on Uniforms

(P 7:8 Secondary Schools): 1 secondary school web-site did not have uniform information posted but the other 7 had specific links to comprehensive uniform policies and dress code expectations. However, emphasis on the importance of wearing a uniform did differ, some gave uniform details only, some gave uniform details along with reasons why uniforms were in place and others gave uniform details along with school rules:

“School uniform is worn at [name of school]; casual dress, including jeans, is not allowed. The uniform is determined by the governors and is reviewed from time to time. The uniform has been selected to:

1. give students a real pride of their appearance and in their school;
2. train students in presenting themselves as smartly as possible;
3. enable students to dress well, irrespective of their home economic circumstances, in clothes that are cheaply available, yet practical and hard wearing.

No uniform can prescribe every detail. It is hoped that parents and students will try to follow the spirit of the regulations as well as the letter and, if there are any doubts, it is useful to ring the school **before** an item is brought, or call in at the school office to see the complete uniform. This would be especially useful to do before purchasing girls trousers from any shop other than the main suppliers, [name of sole supplier] as girls’ trousers are not so easily available in the approved tailored style. The uniform comprises of...” (Quote 1: taken from a secondary school in the Harrogate district)

“**School uniform** - Our school uniform ensures that you are smartly dressed while at school and identified as a member of [name of school]. Please keep your uniform neat at all times. This means your top button fastened and shirt tucked in. Your hair too should be kept tidy and smart and **no extreme styles are allowed**. All items of uniform and kit should be clearly marked with your name. **You must wear full, correct school uniform each day**. The school **governors** and staff insist on this and when your parents accept a place for you at [name of school] they agree that you will abide by the uniform regulations. There are occasional 'non-

uniform' days when you can wear **sensible** non-uniform clothes if you make a donation to charity." (Quote 2: taken from a secondary school in the Harrogate district)

The first quote clearly states the positive reasons for having a school uniform and asks for both parental and student support. It also gives some practical advice. However, there is recognition that girls' tailored trousers "are not so easily available" other than from the sole specialist supplier. The second quote uses bolded text reflects a strong uniform wearing ethic promoted in the school. In addition, further uniform policy is suggested of 'paying a small fee' to not wear a uniform on selected days, usually the last day of term. This can be a nice way to raise money for the school's annual charities and is thought to be popular with the students. However, the positive aspect of "enable[ing] students to dress well, irrespective of their home economic circumstances," is somewhat lost. Furthermore, the wording suggests that the "donation to charity" is compulsory and not wearing a uniform is a treat. Only one secondary school had included a price list with uniform details on their web-site.

P/Gs surveys and PSQs revealed that schools uniform descriptors were clear and well published within the school community.

Although the majority of schools did give details of their uniform/dress code expectation, 9 infant/primary schools did not. Parents' electronically accessed information is therefore limited and they may be unable to make decisions about uniform policies before they apply to the school. This is in clear contradiction of government guidelines.

Several infant/primary schools appeared not have web-site access

- All school should have web-sites that are easy to access and navigate by parents/guardians and have a prospectus with uniform details available in hard-copy and electronically. Needs disseminating to schools in the area.

All schools gave very clear descriptors of school uniforms

Enforces on why uniform is worn varied

Non-uniform days may have unintended consequences.

- Inconsistent policies on why uniforms are important, particularly from secondary schools. Needs disseminating to schools in the area.

Indication that 'tailored trousers are not easily available' suggests that governors should re-think the uniform availability and suppliers. Students should have uniforms that are readily available.

- Findings to be disseminated to all secondary schools

### 6.1.3. Changes to the Uniform

Government guidelines suggest that schools:

“Consider the timeframe for introducing a new uniform policy and amending an existing one [and have] a transitional period on phasing out the old uniform and introducing a new one...” (TeacherNet)<sup>37</sup>

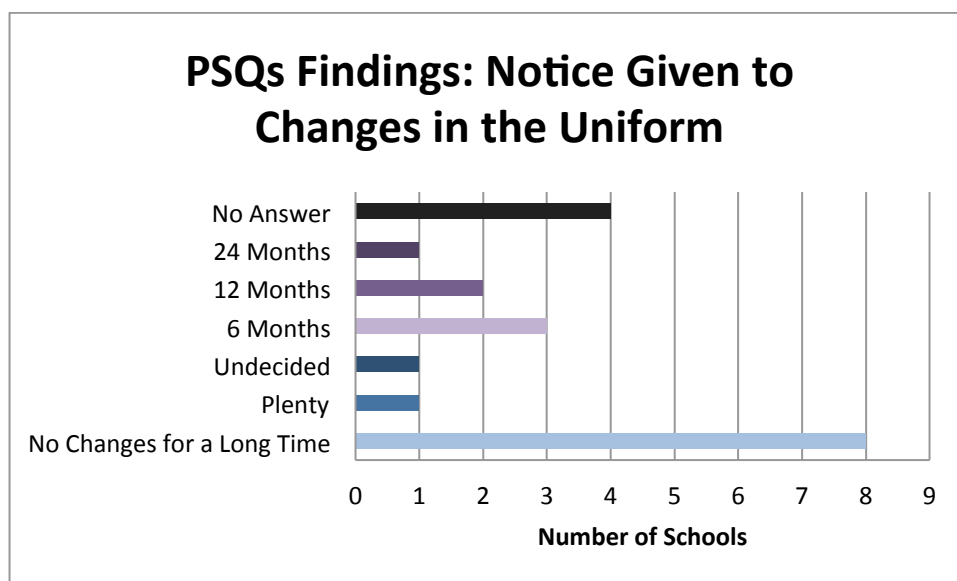


Table 12 - PSQs Findings: Notice Given by Schools to Families before Changing the Uniform

(RR16:20PSQs): 8 out of 16 PSQs said that they had not had made any changes to their school uniform “for a long time,” 1 said that they gave parents/guardians plenty of notice before changing the uniform and another 1 said they were “undecided.” 3 schools gave parents/guardians at least 6 months notice, 2 gave 12 months notice and 1 gave 24 months notice. The secondary school questionnaire (SSQ) said that they gave 6 months notice.

(RR8:12P/G Surveys): 3 P/G survey replied N/A to this question and 2 said that there had not been any changes to the uniform, however, 3 indicated that they were only given 3 months notice or a term before changes were made to the uniform. Two of the surveys also commented that they were given 3 months notice to change specific items of uniform:

“Girls not to wear skirts, trousers only.” (Family 9: Secondary School Student)

“Child was made to wear jumper...No concerns” (Family 10: Secondary School Student)

A further 2 P/G surveys commented on changes made to the uniform; one said that the

<sup>37</sup> DCSF guidance to schools on school uniform and related policies, TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/index.cfm?code=main>, (Para 4)

“Kilt colours’ were changed ‘to identify year groups” (Family 4: Secondary School Student)

And the other said that there had been changes

“Two years ago” because the “school had changed from the LA to a C of E school” and “parents were given no option...”(Family 2: Primary School Student)

PSQs indicate that school attempt to give a reasonable amount of notice before making changes to the uniform

P/Gs do not correlate with PSQs findings with 3 saying that they only got 3 months notice before the uniform was changed. However, all the children were in secondary schools

P/Gs indicate that reasons for changing the uniform are variable and policies appear to be inconsistent

- P/G surveys indicate that there may be a problem with secondary school giving short notice to parents/guardians before changing their uniforms. Report findings to be disseminated to all secondary schools

#### **6.1.4. Student Conformity**

Uniform conformity is rarely an issue with primary school children and therefore this section is somewhat redundant due to the low secondary school response. However, the one secondary school that responded claimed that they had 5% of their students who have non-conformity issues and that 2% of those could be put down to cost secondary school questionnaire (SSQ).

Lack of data in this area

- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

#### **6.1.5. Possible Areas for Future Investigation**

Further considerations regarding uniform government guidelines that could be investigated in a future report by Harrogate CAB include equality and discrimination, practicality and appropriateness and environmental issues:

“In formulating a uniform/appearance policy, schools will need to consider obligations not to discriminate unlawfully [or indirectly] on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief.”(TeacherNet)<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/>, (Para 22)

“Every school should choose a PE uniform which is practical, comfortable and appropriate for activities involved.” (TeacherNet)<sup>39</sup>

“Schools should encourage children to walk or cycle to school and give consideration to this when determining the design and style of the uniform... light colours... reflective materials...[and] policies to ensure that children are able to walk and cycle safely throughout the year.” (TeacherNet)<sup>40</sup>

## **6.2. Cost of Uniforms**

This section covers:

- Cost of uniforms and affordability
- Supermarkets outlets v specialist suppliers and branding (i.e. logos)
- Uniform extras: cost of specialist clothing and equipment

### **6.2.1. Cost of Uniforms and Affordability**

Government guidelines advocate that:

“When deciding on a uniform policy, all schools are expected to give a high priority to cost considerations. No school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils and their families feeling excluded...[In addition], consider the cost and availability of non-standard sizes. (DirectGov)<sup>41</sup>

As pointed out earlier it is the school governing body that is responsible for drawing-up and activating school uniform policies. It is also:

“...the schools governing body decision on how the uniform should be sourced. The governing body should be able to demonstrate to parents how best value has been achieved and keep the costs of supplying the uniform under review.” (TeacherNet)<sup>42</sup>

However, a recent statement by the CAB Chief Executive, Gillian Guy, revealed that there was:

“...evidence from our bureaux networks shows that many schools are continuing to overlook official guidance which says that cost of uniforms, sports kits and other “essentials” should be kept to a minimum...” (Gillian Guy, 2010)<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/>, (Para 11)

<sup>40</sup> TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/>, (Para 15)

<sup>41</sup> DirectGov, [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG\\_4010678](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_4010678)

<sup>42</sup> DCSF guidance to schools on school uniform and related policies, TeacherNet, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/index.cfm?code=main>, (Para 2-4)

<sup>43</sup> ‘Uniform costs keep adding up as schools ignore guidance on affordability’, (27th of August 2010), [http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press\\_index/press\\_2010\\_0828a.htm](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press_index/press_2010_0828a.htm), P. 1

The PSQs and the SSQ did not explicitly ask to give uniform prices and therefore it is difficult to determine an average price range from the schools perspective. In addition, only a very few schools prices and/or uniform order forms on their web-pages. However, we randomly sampled 3 infant/primary school uniform price lists.

Item	School 1	School 2	School 3
Sweatshirts with Logo	£9.50	£8.50	£7.00
Polo Shirts	£7.50	£8.50	£5.50
Cardigan		£9.50	£7.50
PE Shirt	£5.50	£5.00	£4.50
PE Shorts		£5.00	£3.50
Fleece with logo	£11.00		£11.00
School Bag with logo	£3.00		
Summer Cap	£2.50		
Knitted Hat	£5.00		

Table 13 - Random Sample Infant/Primary School Price List

Note Table 14 shows the starting price. School 2 confines their uniform expectations to tops and PE kit and like most infant/primary schools trousers, pinafores and skirts are usually grey or black and available from main street suppliers. School 1 also has uniform extras, for example, hats and bags. The amount of uniform items appears to be variable with some limiting their uniform criteria to a minimum and others have several extra items like specifically coloured tights, waterproof coats and fleeces, joggers, homework bag and PE bag. In addition, girls can often wear a school summer dress. This criteria also varied from “any summer dress colour” to a specific colour/shade/design used by school.

Only one secondary school posted a comprehensive price list. However, uniforms in general were extended to more expensive items like school blazers and kilts (tartan design), and comprehensive PE kits that included soccer and rugby kit and boots, games skirts, shin-pads, tracksuits and heavy sports tops. Some schools also asked for plain coloured trousers and skirts to be tailored in a special way and have the school logo on them

(RR12:12P/G Surveys): P/G surveys said that the cost of infant/primary school uniforms ranged from £15-£50 (average price £35). However, 1 P/G survey explained that their child’s school had changed to an all logo uniform and therefore trousers cost £18 a pair and the cardigans and jumpers cost £16. These prices are much higher than those highlighted on Table 14.

Secondary school uniforms ranged from £40-£250 (average £150).

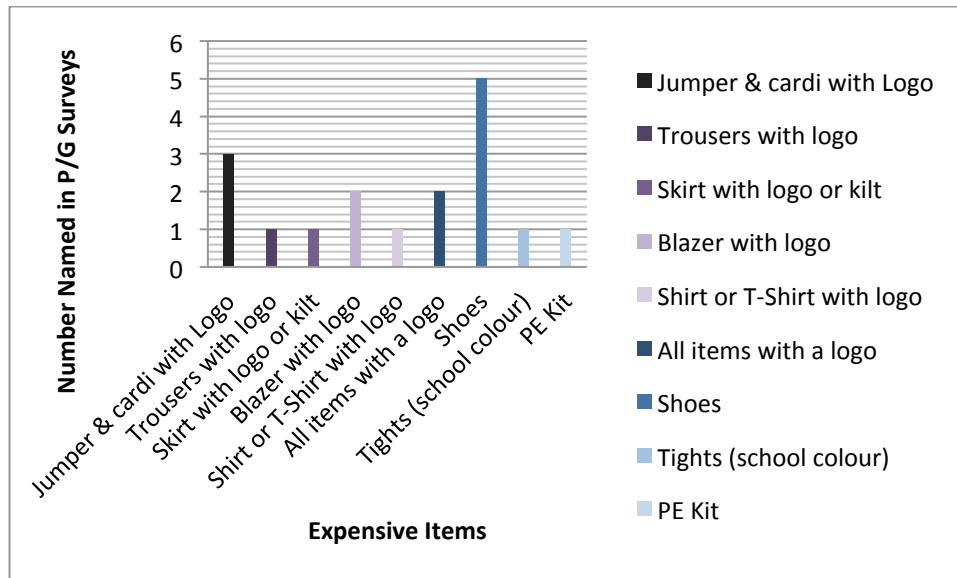


Table 14 - P/G survey: Expensive Items

5 P/G surveys said that school shoes were too expensive, 3 said jumper or cardigans were too expensive and 2 said any logo item were too expensive. Trousers, skirts, blazers, shirts and tights were also named as expensive items in the P/G surveys. It should also be noted that P/G surveys indicated that uniforms became more expensive once their child(ren) went to secondary school. In fact all the secondary schools in Harrogate itself were named in the P/G surveys except one. In addition, 25% of P/Gs survey said that they had problems meeting uniform requirements.

Infant/primary school policy on limiting specialist items to a few items was identified in some cases

Some infant/primary school appear to offer sensible cheap extras like a summer cap for £2.50

Findings on how many items are needed to make-up a uniform were inconsistent in infant/primary and secondary school web-site research

Some P/Gs surveys indicated that there is family concern over the cost of some primary school uniform and the majority expressed concerns over the cost of secondary school uniforms

- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

### 6.2.2. Supermarket Outlets V Specialist Suppliers and Branding (i.e. Logos)

Adding-Up Campaign recession busting top ten tips include:

- Make sure uniforms are available from a range of outlets rather than one sole supplier
- Offer sew-on badges that can be put on plain clothing
- Choose colours that can be carried onto the next school

Government guidelines suggest that:

“Governing bodies *should* ensure that the uniform chosen is widely available in high street shops and other retail outlets, and Internet suppliers rather than from an expensive sole supplier; schools can use their own purchasing power to buy in bulk and pass on the savings to parents. Governing bodies *should not* seek to operate as sole suppliers in order to raise additional funds through the sale of new school uniforms.” (DirectGov)<sup>44</sup>

This question looks at supermarket outlets versus specialist supplier and branding (i.e. logos) and adopting uniforms that are practical and reusable (i.e. generic colours).

It has already been established that schools take great pride in having an individual identity and this identity can be promoted through the students wearing a school uniform. Emblems, motifs and logos give a school a unique look that sets them apart from other schools. Harrogate and surrounding area is often highlighted for having excellent schools and schools, students and their families quite rightly take pride in this fact. It is therefore important for a balance to be met; schools need to have uniforms that do not put unnecessary strains on family budgets while at the same time maintaining their unique identity. Moreover, specialists suppliers are often small local businesses also provide a unique service. They have individual knowledge of what each school in their area requires and can help with amount of uniform required and sizing. It should also be noted that main street suppliers do have the luxury of purchasing in quantities way beyond the ability of a small wholesaler. A further aspect is who makes the items in the first place and are they operating under fair-trade legislation?

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<sup>44</sup> DirectGov, [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG\\_4010678](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_4010678) (Para 8); Also see TeacherNet (Last up-date Nov 2009), <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/> (Para 7)

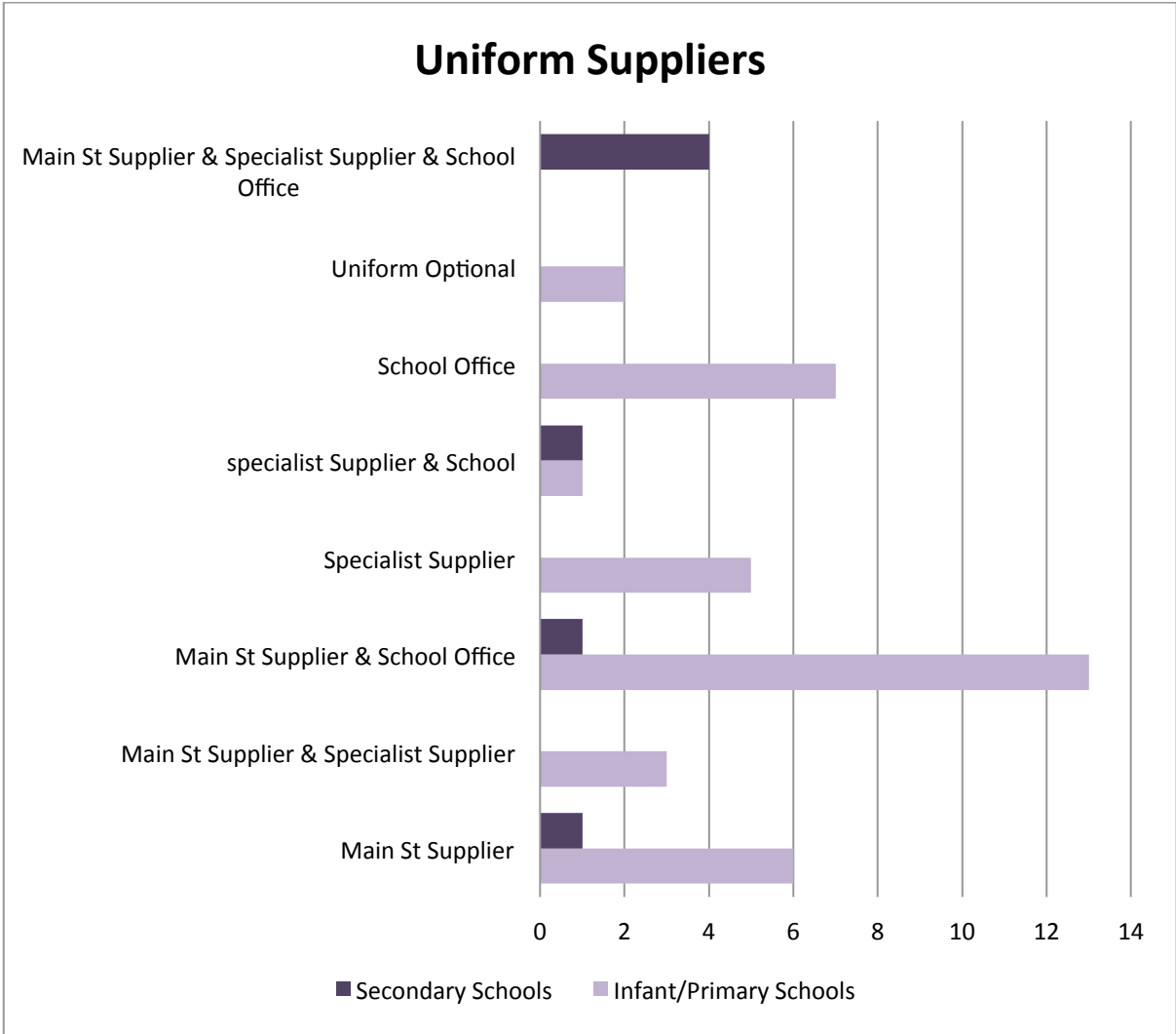


Table 15 - Suppliers Used by Infant/Primary Schools: Web-Site Research

(P37:49): School web-site research found that 35% (13) of infant/primary schools had a uniform that combined main street suppliers for items like trousers and skirts and the school office for items with a logo like jumpers and cardigans. 19% (7) sole supplier was the school themselves. However, some schools appear to take advantage of their power to bulk buy and pass on those savings to parent(s)/guardian(s) by guaranteed low prices:

“School office-low price” (PSQ 6)

“We sell at cost.” (PSQ 14)

As we will see later on the selling of uniform through the school office can also facilitate an environment where families can ask for support or discreet offers of support can be expressed by the school. 16% (6) of infant/primary schools uniforms could be entirely purchased from large out-lets and 14% (5) from specialist suppliers only. 8% (3) used a combination of large supermarket out-lets with specialist retailers and 3% (1) combined specialist supplier with their school office. 5% (2) said their uniform was optional.

(P7:8): 57% (4) secondary schools used a combination of the school office, specialist supplier and supermarket out-let to supply their uniforms. 2 schools used main street supplier and the school and the other used specialist supplier and the school. A web-site price list of one of the schools using a Main St and school office indicated that this particular school was sourcing certain items and selling them relatively cheaply with sweatshirt at £11.50, tie £4.00 and shirts £9.50. 1 P/G survey also claimed that the secondary school that her child attended was “relaxed” about uniforms and “not too expensive.” (Family 10)

However, if you cast your eyes back to ‘Expensive Items’ Table 16 you can see that the P/G surveys expressed concerns about the price of item bought through specialist retailers noting items with a logo as a point of contention. P/G survey comments included:

“...school jumpers and cardigans have to have the school logo on them and can only be bought from [two specialist suppliers in the area]...and cost £16. They don’t wear well and ladder at the seams...I can only afford to buy one and feel ashamed because I’m turning her (client’s daughter) out in frayed clothes.” (Family 2)

“[Name of School] uniform is all logo and you can only buy it at [name of specialist supplier].” (Family 3)

P/Gs Item of Clothing	Age	Type of School	Specialist Suppliers Price	Supermarket Out-let Price	Saving
Logo Jumper (f)	11 Years	Primary	£16.00	£3.00	£13.00
Logo Cardigan (f)	11 Years	Primary	£16.00	£5.00	£9.00
School Trousers (f)	11 Years	Primary	£18.00	£5.00	£13.00
Logo Blazer (f)	11 Years	Secondary	£30.25	£20.00	£10.50
Logo Skirt (f)	11 Years	Secondary	£23.50	£6.50	£17.00
Logo Jumper (m)	14 Years	Secondary	£19.50	£5.00	£14.50
Logo Trousers (m)	14 Years	Secondary	£27.75	£6.00	£21.75
Logo Jumper (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£16.99	£5.00	£11.99
School Kilt (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£41.25	£12.00 (kilt style)	£29.25
School Tights (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£6.25 x 1	£6.00 x 2	£3.25 each
PE Kit Top1 (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£12.99	£7.00 (sweatshirt Style)	£5.99
PE Kit Top 2 (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£12.25	£6.00 x 3 (T-shirts)	£10.25 each
PE Kit Shorts (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£8.99	£6.00	£2.99
PE Kit Socks (f)	13 Years	Secondary	£6.25 x 1	£6.00 x 3 (sport socks)	£4.25
Logo Blazer (m)	17 Years	Secondary	£33.50	£24.00	£9.50
School Trousers (f)	11 Years	Secondary	£25.75	£6.50	£19.25
Logo Sweater (f)	11 Years	Secondary	£20.75	£5.00	£15.75

Table 16 - Price Comparison

Table 16 shows specialist supplier items that were named as expensive in the P/G surveys and a comparison price from a main street supplier and a supermarket in Harrogate. In shops were by no means the cheapest in the area but their cheapest equivalent was used. The colour for each item selected was black with the exception of a 2 PE items which were white. There was an attempt to find the most similar style. Some of the savings were quite

dramatic, for instance, savings of £29.25 on a girls kilt and £21.75 on a pair of boys school trouser (boys trouser were both black). Client's total savings per child worked out to be £35, £27.50, £36.50, £67.97, £9.50 and £35 if their school changed their uniform supplier from the sole specialist supplier to a main street supplier. Even with benefits of using a specialist supplier and supporting a local business, P/G survey findings strongly indicate that logo items and specific school styles are very expensive, most notably, in most (with the exception of 2 and 1 unknown) secondary schools in this area and their governing bodies are not considering government guidelines on sourcing uniforms by:

- ensur[ing] that the uniform chosen is widely available in high street shops and other retail outlets, and Internet suppliers rather than from an expensive sole supplier;
- us[ing] their own purchasing power to buy in bulk and pass on the savings to parents. (DirectGov)<sup>45</sup>

Infant/primary schools generally used a mixture of main street suppliers with some logo items, however, logo items were often sourced by the schools and sold for reasonable prices in the school offices

School offices can also be a place where the need to support a family can be identified and offered discreetly

There is some inconsistency on school uniform policies, sourcing and pricing with the infant/primary school community and a few use expensive sole suppliers

- Good practice used in many infant/primary schools on sourcing and pricing should be disseminated to all schools

At least 2 secondary schools in the area have affordable uniform policies in place

- Good practices report findings to all secondary schools in the area in view of developing these practices

Findings from secondary schools are disappointing with little evidence to support school's taking note of government guidelines on affordable uniforms. P/Gs surveys named 5 schools as having expensive items and some schools were named in more than 1 survey.

- Initial findings suggest poor practice in operation in the majority of secondary schools and therefore concerns will be disseminated to all secondary schools

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<sup>45</sup> DirectGov, [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG\\_4010678](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_4010678) (Para 8); Also see TeacherNet (Last up-date Nov 2009), <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/u/uniform/> (Para 7)

### 6.2.3. Uniform Extras: Cost of Specialist Clothing and Equipment

This section applies to secondary schools only; however, there is no data from the schools in this category. Web-site research indicates that a typical secondary schools PE kit includes:

For Girls	For Boys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE Skirt</li> <li>• PE Shorts</li> <li>• Tracksuit Bottoms</li> <li>• Hockey Socks</li> <li>• Shin Pads</li> <li>• Polo Top</li> <li>• Ankle Socks</li> <li>• Indoor Trainers</li> <li>• Outdoor Trainers</li> <li>• Hooded Sweatshirt</li> <li>• Towel</li> <li>• Waterproof Jacket (optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Football Shorts</li> <li>• Rugby Shirt</li> <li>• Tracksuit Bottoms</li> <li>• Football Socks</li> <li>• Shin Pads</li> <li>• Polo Top</li> <li>• Gym Socks</li> <li>• Towel</li> <li>• Football Boots</li> <li>• Indoor Trainers</li> <li>• Outdoor Trainers</li> <li>• Hooded Sweatshirt</li> <li>• Waterproof Jacket (optional)</li> </ul>

Table 17 - Secondary School PE Kit

It was also clear from the research that many of these items are also have a school motif on them, for instance, polo shirts, hooded sweatshirts and optional waterproofs. PE Kits for secondary school students appear to be comprehensive. Boys for instance are asked to have 3 different pairs of shoes for PE and a pair of black school shoes.

(RR10:12P/G Surveys): 4 P/Gs surveys said that their school provided some extra equipment, 2 noting help with PE Kit and 6 said they had no help with clothing/equipment extras. If we refer back to Table 15 we can see that 1 P/G survey highlighted PE Kit as being too expensive with 2 tops, a pair of shorts and a pair of socks coming to £40.48.

Initial findings suggest that secondary school PE Kit are both comprehensive and expensive

- Report finding on PE Kit criteria and price to be disseminated to all secondary schools

### 6.3. Supporting Families on Low Income

It is an obvious assumption to make that by lowering the cost of all school items, school will help all students' families but most notably it will help those who are in the most profound need. We have already discussed LEAs and government guidelines regarding eligibility in the 'general findings' in section 5 of this report.

This section looks at how schools can and do help families directly via uniform policies by:

- Raising cash and providing specific funding for low income families
- Operating second-hand ("pre-loved) uniform shops and swap-shops ("recycling schemes")

#### 6.3.1. Raising Cash and Providing Specific Funding for Low Income Families

Firstly, it is important to establish if specific fund-raising for low income families is carried out by schools.

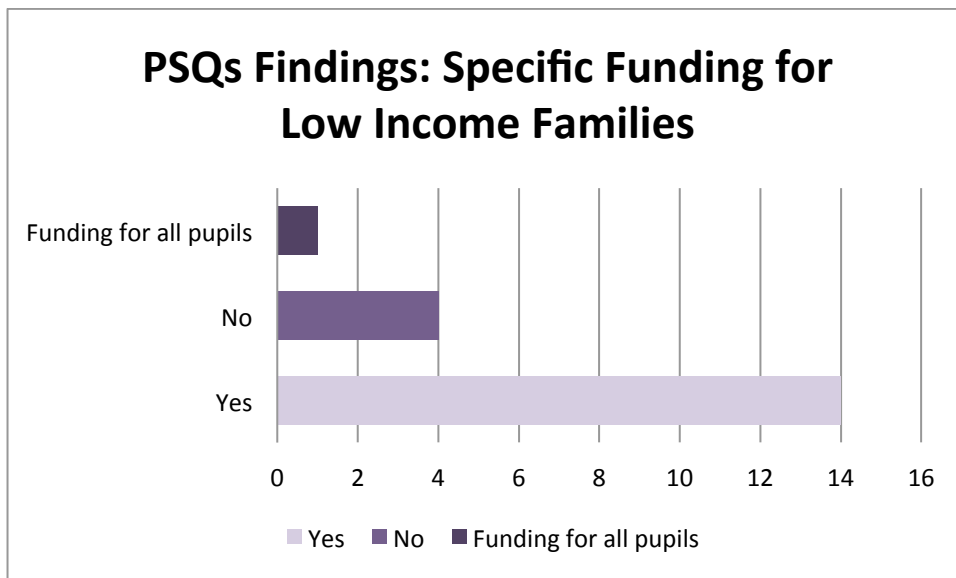


Table 18 - PSQs Findings: Specific Funding for Low Income Families

(RR19:19PSQs): 14 PSQs indicated that they had specific funds available to help families in need of support, 4 PSQs said that they did not and 1 school stated that all funds were used to benefit all of their students.

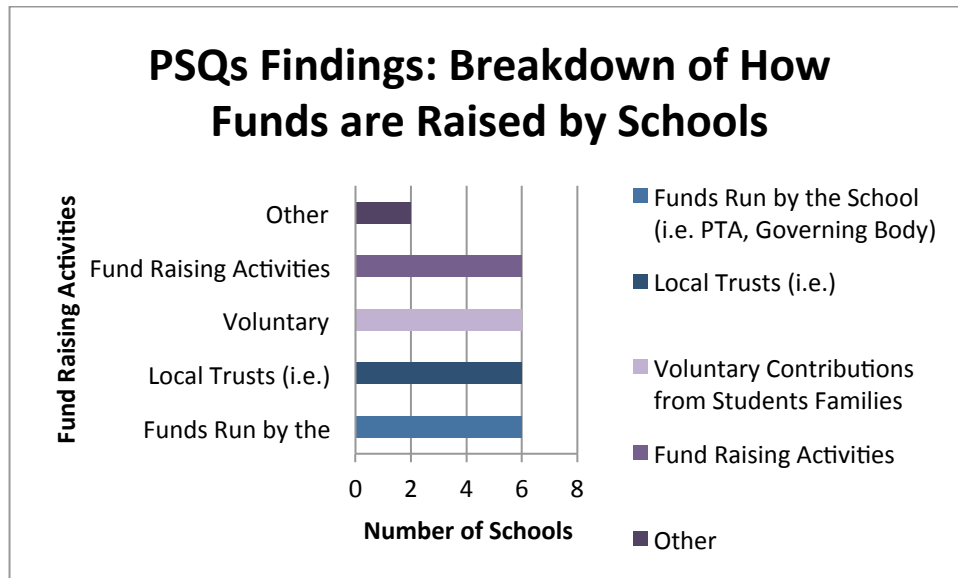


Table 19 - PSQs Findings: Breakdown of How Funds are Raised by Schools

(RR19:19PSQs): 6 PSQs indicated that they used fund-raising activities, voluntary contributions from students families, local trusts and/or school funds to boost income so they can support families in need of support more effectively. 2 used unspecified other means.

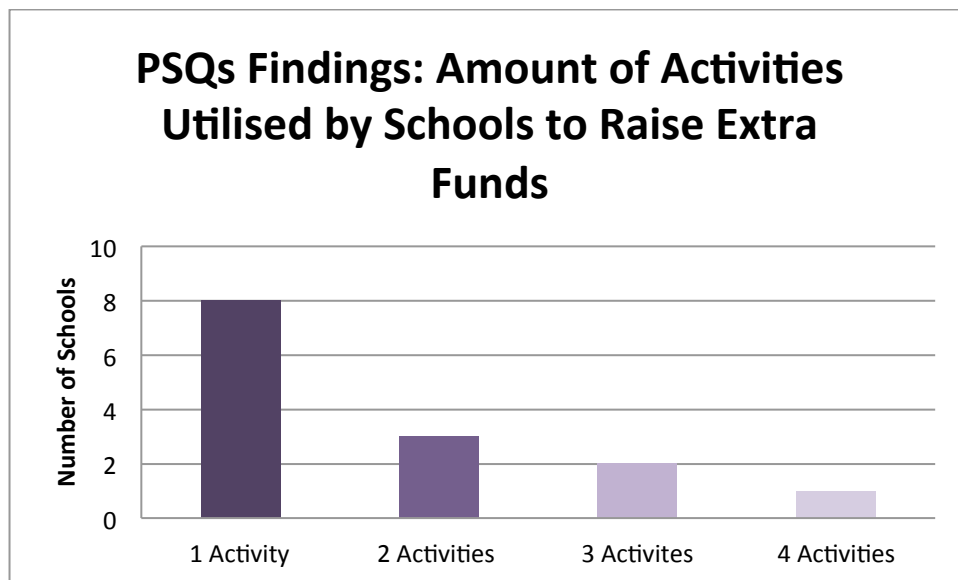


Table 20 - PSQs Findings: Amount of Activities Utilised by Schools to Raise Extra Funds

Most interestingly PSQs findings revealed that schools are often creative and use a plethora of ways to raise more funds to help families in need of extra support. Notably, schools that had inclusion policies also raised money via a multitude of ways. 8 PSQs used only one method to raise more funds, 3 used 2 methods, 2 used 3 methods and 1 school raised extra funds via 4 different methods.

The majority of infant/primary schools put aside extra funds to specifically help families in need of extra support.

1 school had a universal agenda to help all families regardless

There is some evidence to indicate that a minority of infant/primary school neither have specific funds to help families in need of extra support or have a universal policy

- No data available from secondary schools due to low response. Good practices and imaginative fund-raising methods is commendable and ideas will be disseminated to all schools in the area

No secondary school data in this category

- Low response variable
- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

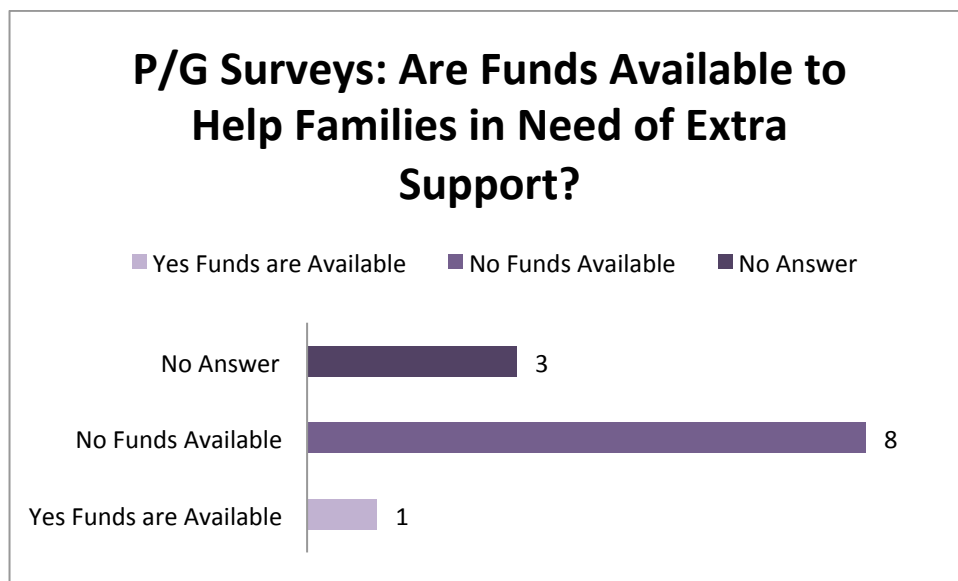


Table 21 - P/G Surveys: Are Funds Available to Help Families in Need of Extra Support?

Despite 79% of PSQs indicated that they raised money via various means to help support families in need of extra support P/Gs surveys did not correlate with that finding.

(RR9:12P/G Surveys): P/G surveys revealed that families are simply not aware that funds are available: in fact only 1 survey said that they knew that funds were available and 8 did not think that any funds were available at all.

Low awareness of fund availability to help with the cost of uniforms in P/G surveys

- Low response variable

- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

### 6.3.2. Operating Second-Hand (“Pre-Loved Uniform) Shops and Swap-Shops (“Recycling Schemes”)

Second-hand or pre-loved uniform schemes are an excellent way to keep school uniform costs down while reinforcing environmentally friendly ethos.

(RR19:19PSQs): All PSQs said that they had active second-hand schemes and 2 schools either gave second-hand uniforms away “for a contribution” (PSQs 5) or said that “we give away to families.” (PSQs 4) The secondary school did not have a second-hand uniform scheme in place. A further 14 infant/primary schools have second-hand uniforms available at low cost.

“We have a ‘PLUS’ team (Pre-Loved Uniform Sale). Parents sell uniforms to us when [it is] outgrown and our children recycle it by selling it on with a 50p profit on each item...”

(PSQ 15)

“Yes, second-hand uniform is sold extremely cheaply.” (PSQ 18)

The positive terminology adopted in the school in the quote from PSQs 15; “Pre-Loved Uniform Sale,” and “Recycling” helps to combat ‘stigmatisation’ whilst enforcing environmentally friendly attitudes.

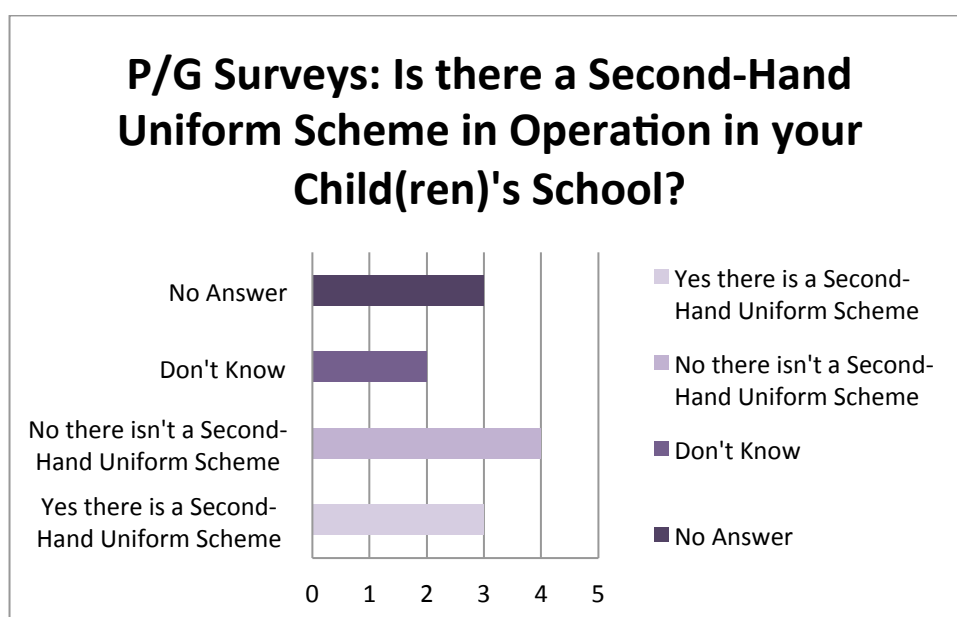


Table 22 - P/G surveys: Is there a Second-Hand Uniform Scheme in Operation in your Child(ren)'s School?

(P RR9:12P/G Surveys): Parental awareness regarding second-hand schemes operating in their child(ren)s schools appears to be low; only 3 definitely knew that their school had them, 4 said their school did not have any such schemes and 2 did not know.

PSQs indicated universal second-hand schemes in operation

Unfortunately P/G survey finding indicated low awareness regarding second-hand schemes

- Policies on better internal advertising by schools needs to be disseminated

PSQs indicated active second-hand schemes in operation within the school environment

Positive terminology was adopted by one school “Pre-Loved Uniform Sale,” and “Recycling” uniforms which help to combat ‘stigmatisation’ whilst enforcing environmentally friendly attitudes which were briefly touch upon in section 5.3.1e ‘Possible Areas for Future Investigation.’

- Policies on positive terminology and promoting second-hand schemes for their environmental quality should be disseminated

The participating secondary school did not have a second hand scheme

- Encourage second-hand schemes in secondary schools

## **7. School Trips Findings**

The school trip findings specifically looks at regulations and LEA support regarding school trips, policies and practices used in schools and the impact on pupils and their families in five key overlapping areas:

- School trip regulations, remission policies and LA endorsed trips
- Reasons for trips and frequency
- Cost of trips
- Supporting low income families
- Paying for trips

### **7.1. School Trips Regulations’, Remissions Policies and LA Endorsed Trips**

School trip regulations, remission policies and LA endorsed trips considered in this section include:

- Rules on charging for school trips
- Remissions policies and LA endorsed residential trips

### 7.1.1. Rules on Charging

“All schools except independent schools, must provide free education and cannot charge for any activity (or materials, books, examination entry fees or equipment for use in connection with the activity) which:

- is an essential part of the national curriculum or religious education syllabus; *and/or*
- is an essential part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination; *and/or*
- takes place wholly or mainly during school hours” (AdviserNet)<sup>46</sup>

“The following may be charged for:

- optional extras
- board and lodging
- an activity during school hours which is arranged by a third party” (AdviserNet)<sup>47</sup>

“However, whether the activity is defined as being essential will vary, depending on which course syllabus the school teaches. For example, one English literature syllabus may specify that pupils must visit a theatre but another syllabus does not require this.” Therefore, the pupils who have to visit a theatre as part of the syllabus cannot be charged, but the pupils who do not have to visit the theatre could be charged if a theatre trip were arranged” (AdviserNet).<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, “an activity cannot be charged for if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours... with the exception of charging for...small group tuition...in playing a musical instrument. A charge cannot be made for any other tuition if it is an essential part of the national curriculum [including] activit[ies] which takes place outside school hours ” (AdviserNet).<sup>49</sup>

Activities, that take place that are “wholly or mainly outside school hours” but are not “an essential part of the national curriculum or religious education syllabus or is an essential part of the syllabus for the prescribed public examination...[are] defined as an optional extra activity and can be charged for” (AdviserNet).<sup>50</sup>

“A charge can be made for board and lodgings when a pupil takes part of an activity which involves her/him being away from home for at least one night [with the exception of]

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<sup>46</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 52-54) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 53) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 54) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 57-58); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 58) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

parents in receipt of certain benefits or tax credits”(AdviserNet).<sup>51</sup> Remissions policy is discussed in the next section.

“The school or the LEA can ask for voluntary contributions towards activities and the policies must give details of voluntary charges that can be requested”(AdviserNet).<sup>52</sup> Note voluntary contributions are discussed later on in section 7.4.3 ‘Paying for Trips: Voluntary Contributions.’

To investigate how schools implement regulations on school trips we would have to have full details of every trip including whether it was part of the; national curriculum or religious education syllabus, part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination and takes place wholly or mainly during school hours. In addition, we would also have to have individual costing and sourcing of each trip and any other related aspects. This is beyond the research scope possibilities of our bureau as it would need all schools in the area to provide a comprehensive amount of data. Moreover, full guidelines are available from the Department of Children, Schools and Families on the TeacherNet website, which is an information tool that that is regularly utilised by schools. However, it is unclear whether parents or guardians are well informed about charging regulations. A recent (after the survey close date) parent/client enquiry in the bureau was on the “excessively high cost of expensive school trips” where “children [were] being given to understand that these very expensive trips are a necessary part of the child’s education.” The client’s main concern focussed on a “trip to Arizona which is connected with [his daughters A Level in Politics] course” and costs £1,500 (E-BEF: 23 Nov 2010). The client who is experiencing recession related financial difficulties voiced the double negative impact on himself; a) “that he feels unable to support his daughter” and b) “that it could have a detrimental effect on his [daughters] attainment” and on his daughter who a) “feels she is missing out on experience that her fellow pupils are able to enjoy” and b) “it could affect her A Level results.” (E-BEF: 23 Nov 2010). We are currently investigating this particular case on behalf of our client. However, “whether the activity is defined as being essential will vary, depending on which course” (AdviserNet)<sup>53</sup> is problematic and at best school in this case has not made families aware of their rights about not charging for trips that are an “essential part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination” (Adviser Net).<sup>54</sup> PSQs and P/G survey findings on reasons given for school trips are discussed later on in section 7.2.1.

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<sup>51</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 59) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 62) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 54) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> CAB AdviserNet, ‘Charging for Education,’ (Para 52) ); Also see Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>

☒ It is difficult to clarify common and/or fair practices in specific policies on school trips because the rules are inconsistent and variable and would also need schools to provide a comprehensive amount of data

☒ Some indication that parental awareness about rights appears to be limited

☒ How schools promote their reasons for having an expensive school trip at secondary level is under investigation for the particular case in question but needs to be broadened to other secondary schools in the area

- Rules and government guidelines on paying for school trips are complicated and variable and as a result schools can interpret these rules differently
- Parental awareness about what they have to pay for and what they don't
- Is the trip part of the school curriculum or a enhancement to the educational process should be broadened
- School should be aware that parent(s)/guardians may feel that their child is missing out if they don't go on school trips, even when those trip are not vital to the child's education

#### **7.1.2. Background on Remissions Policies and LA Endorsed Residential Trips**

"...[p]upils whose parents get the following benefits (see 'How need is assessed,' section 5.2) aren't required to pay any charge. " This is in addition to having free school lunches entitlement. Furthermore, "[p]arents are entitled to information about the school charging and remissions policy and the governing body must ensure that it is available on request during school hours (TeacherNet).<sup>55</sup>

The school does not have discretion about whether or not to pay for residential educational school trips. The pupil has a legal right to free board and lodging as long as s/he meets eligibility criteria" (AdviserNet).<sup>56</sup> It is therefore the responsibility of the head teacher to inform all eligible parents of the right to claim.<sup>57</sup>

Residential educational school trips in this area include:

- Bewerley Park
- Humphrey Head
- East Barnby
- Great Fryupdale

At this point it is important to note that:

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<sup>55</sup> TeacherNet, 'Charging for School Activities,'

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/c/chargingforactivities/> (eligibility the same as FSMs)

<sup>56</sup> CAB AdviserNet: 5.6.46.2 'Help with the cost of education for pupils of compulsory school age' (Para 41a); Also see Fair Access Division Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009)pp 3-4 (eligibility criteria the same as FSMs)

<sup>57</sup> Fair Access Division Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009)p.7

“Schools may fund some Learning Outside the Classroom activities entirely or partly from their delegated core budgets. They are [also] permitted to direct funding towards young people in need, but are advised to do so in accordance with arrangements agreed by governors as part of the school’s remissions policy. [In addition] schools can also seek external funding.”(Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy)<sup>58</sup>

If or how schools fund school trips is discussed later on in sections 7.3 and 7.5.

Remissions policy does not include the cost of extra clothing and/or equipment needed for specific trips which can be comprehensive and/or expensive or spending money. Therefore, low income families may still find LEA trips expensive (see ‘Extra Costs, section 7.3.2).

## **7.2. Reasons of Trips and Frequency**

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<sup>58</sup> Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’ <http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtc%20policy.pdf>, p.1; Also see Fair Access Division Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009)

Reasons for trips and frequency section include PSQs and P/G survey findings on:<sup>59</sup>

- Reasons why schools go on trips
- How often students go on school trips

### 7.2.1. Reasons why Schools go on Trips

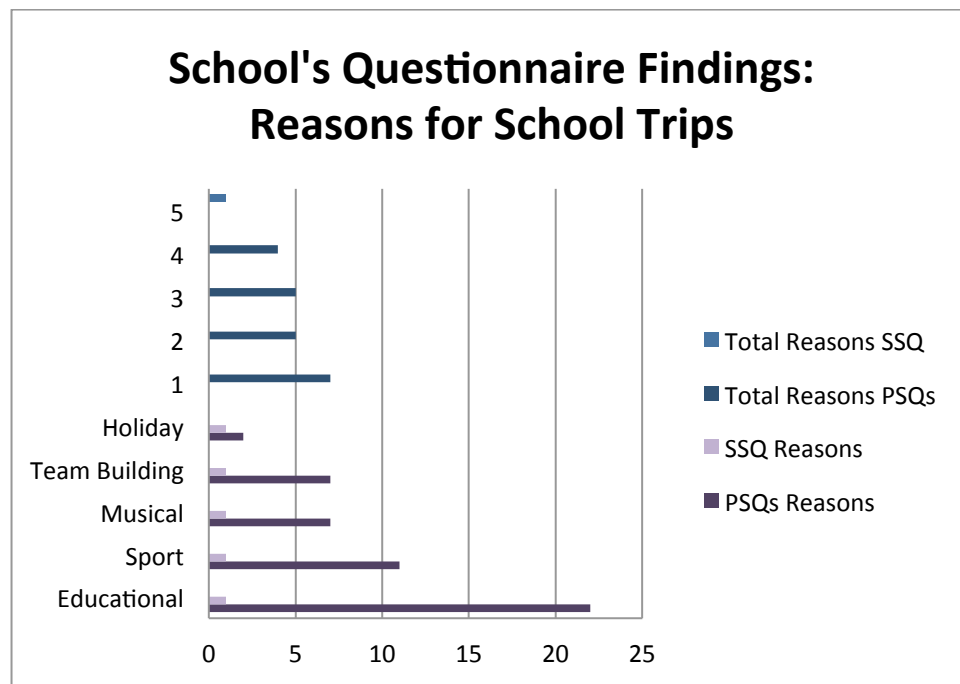


Table 23 - PSQs & SSQ Findings: Reasons for School Trips

(RR22:22PSQs & 1:1SSQ): All school questionnaires said that the main reason for school trips was for educational purposes. 11 PSQs also had trips for sport, 7 for musical and/or team building and 2 for holiday. 7 PSQs gave their one and only reason for school trips as educational, 5 gave 2 different reasons and a further 5 gave 3 different reasons. The most common combined reasons were educational with either sport and/or musical. 4 PSQs has 4 different reasons for having school trips and the SSQ gave all 5 reasons for having school trips.

<sup>59</sup> Note bureau research enquiry limitations pointed out in the previous section

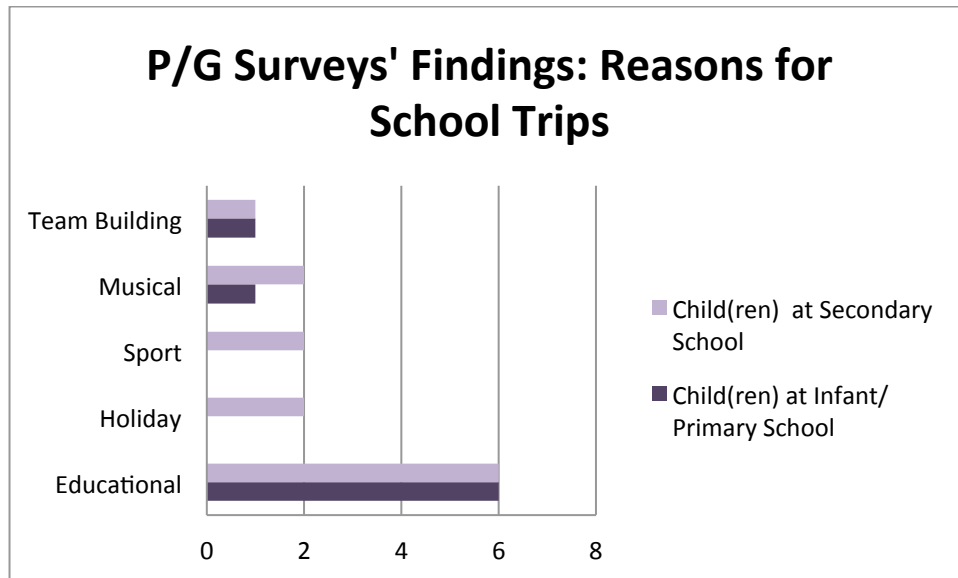


Table 24 - P/G Surveys' Findings: Reasons for School Trips

(RR-V-10:11P/G Surveys, NOTE (V) surveys skewed towards answering on secondary schools): A total of 12 P/G surveys noted that their child(ren) went on school trips for educational purposes (6 secondary, 6 infant/primary). A further 1 said that their primary school child(ren) also went on trips for musical reasons or team building purposes. P/G surveys for child(ren) at secondary school indicating more diverse reasons including; 6 saying educational, 2 saying either sport, musical and holiday and one also indicating team building. 2 P/G surveys with a child at secondary school gave 4 different reasons. More diverse reason would be expected for older students. SPQs/SSQ and P/G surveys correlate with one another indicating that schools give out clear information as to why they are going on a particular trip. This finding, however, should not be confused with parental awareness regarding educational purposes and 'essential educational' purposes noted in the previous section.

Good correlations of answers have been given in SPQs/SSQ and P/G surveys answer regarding reason why students go on school trips.

There is the outstanding issue of whether trips are essential to the student course/exam/education. There appears to be a grey area where parents/students perceive trips, most notably those promoted as educational, as an essential to the student's education rather than an enhanced optional extra.

- Schools appear to be clear on why they are having a trips but further investigation is needed to ascertain whether they are clear about which trips are an essential part of the student's education and which ones are enhanced optional extras. Investigation of individual client's experience and associated schools will go ahead and concerns disseminated to all schools in the area

### 7.2.2. How often Students go on Trips

“I understand that these trips can be educational, however I have four children all asking to go on trips, primary is not so bad but once they get to secondary the trips are all very expensive and if I send one then I have to send the others and this gets very expensive.”  
(Family 3)

The quote from Family 3 reveals several issues regarding school trips:

1. A recognition that trips ‘can be’ educational but sometime are not
2. Problem’s raised by having a larger family as trips are increased by the amount of student’s in the family
3. Emotion attached to treating all the children the same
4. The frequency of trips themselves
5. The cost of trips; most notably secondary school trips “are all” very expensive

Issues regarding the cost of school trips and related issues are discussed in the next sections and frequency of school trips in this section. However, before we go on we should once again raise the issue of practical policies that support all families. Family 3 is a professional two income family and yet their P/G survey indicates that they struggle to fund multiple hidden costs of education from their family budget. Large families and/or families with twins, triplets etc carry a greater financial burden. These families are put under further pressure as their children get older because school expenses, including uniforms and school trips go up over time. This can be further exacerbated if the family circumstances change, either through bereavement, divorce, loss of job(s) or illness which inevitably leaves families at risk of being in the profoundest of need.

☒ Larger families and families with twins, triplets etc are exposed to unnecessary and/or greater hardship because their financial burden is magnified by the amount of students they have in their family.

- More research is needed in to the special circumstances of larger families and/or families with multiple birth children
- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

## PSQs Findings: How Many Trips are Offered to a Student within a School Year?

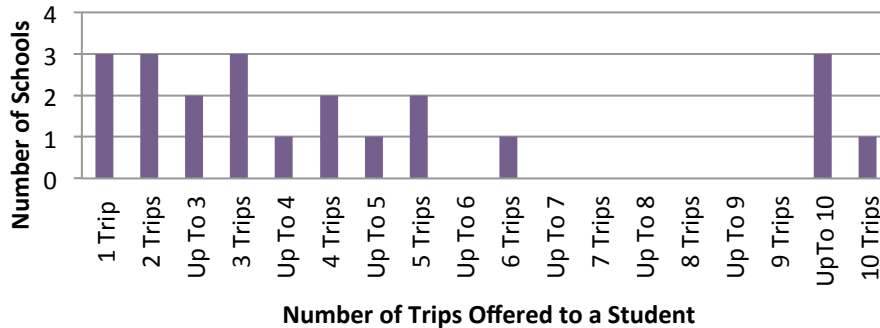


Table 25 - PSQs Findings: How Many Trips are offered to Student’s within a School Year?

(RR22:22PSQs): PSQs defined the amount of trips offered to an individual student either by a) a set amount of trips offered within the year or b) by giving a up to but no more than amount. 3 PSQs said either 1 trip a year, 2 trips, 3 trips a year or up to 10 trips respectively. PSQs that are over and above 3 trips a year are offering student’s more than one trip per term. 50% of PSQs offer 3 trips a year or less, nearly 32% offer 6 trips a year or less and 18% offer up to/or 10 trips every school year. 59% of PSQs said that frequency of trips was considered.

## P/G Survey Findings: Trips Offered to Students within the School Year

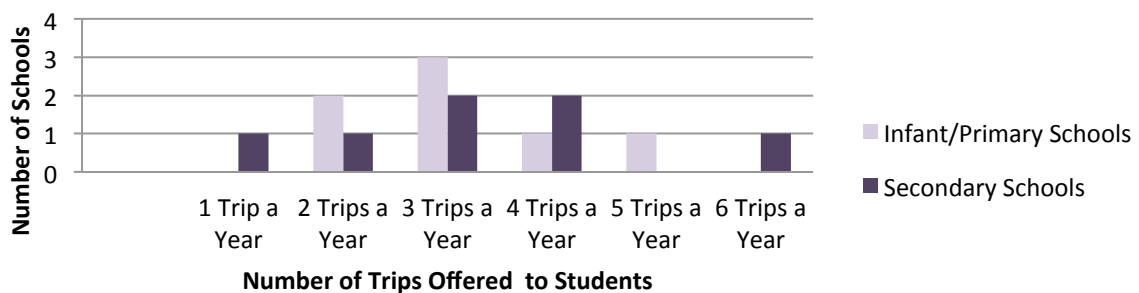


Table 26 – P/G Survey Findings: Trips Offered to Students within the Course of a Year

(14 Students Represented: 7 Infant or Primary and 7 Secondary): P/G surveys suggested that their children were offered no more than 6 trips a year which correlates with 82% PSQs. However, none of the P/G survey, with the exception of Family 3 (quoted on p 56), expressed concerns about the frequency school trips. It should be noted that infant/primary school trips in most cases are referring to day trips. However, the odd residential trip is

offered to older children and an LEA endorsed residential trip is offered to year 6 children. Secondary school trips also include day trips, however, residential and trips abroad are also offered to all school years or are linked to certain subjects, for example, Art, History, Music, Geography and Politics. In addition, holiday trips are offered during school vacations, most notably offering students the opportunity to go skiing.

High correlation of findings on trip frequency found between PSQs and P/G surveys

Low concern expressed in P/G surveys about frequency on trips

- Research findings indicate good policy practice on the frequency of school trips in the majority of schools represented in the P/G surveys

### **7.3. Cost of School Trips**

The 'cost of school trips section covers:

- Voluntary contributions
- Cost of trips
- Extra costs

#### **7.3.1. Voluntary Contributions**

There are three types of trips:

- Day trips (mostly during school hours)
- Residential trips
- Trips abroad

Rules regarding school time activities largely apply to day trips because they are often during school hours. TeacherNet says:

“When an activity is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. This even includes activities that might cost the school money, like swimming lessons at a local pool or a museum.” (TeacherNet)<sup>60</sup>

However:

“Head teachers or governing bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place during school hours
- School equipment

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<sup>60</sup> TeacherNet, 'Charging for School Activities,' <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/c/chargingforactivities/>

- School funds in general

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, and the pupils of the parents who can't or don't want to contribute cannot be excluded from the activity.” (TeacherNet)<sup>61</sup>

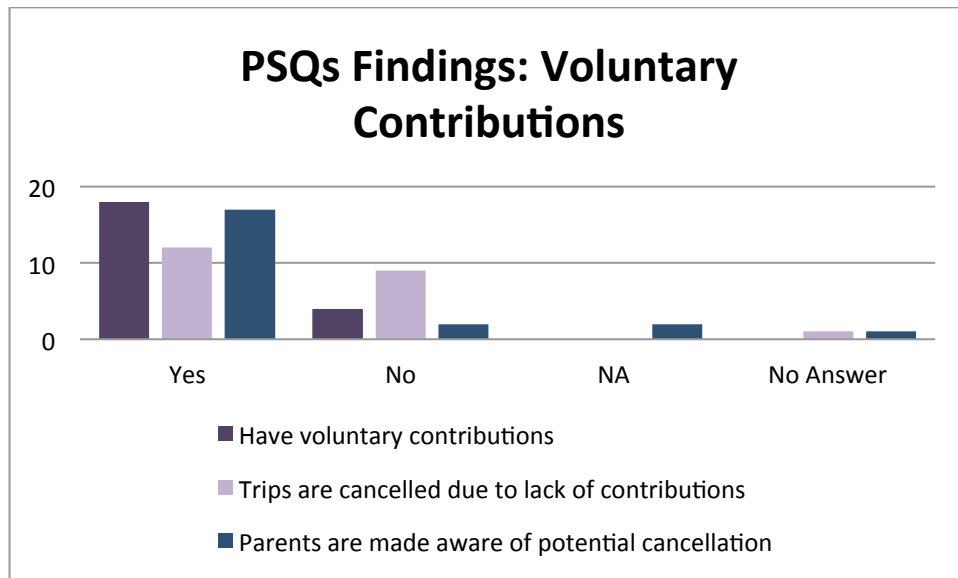


Table 27 - PSQs Findings: Voluntary Contributions

(RR22:22PSQs): 18 PSQs said that they asked students families to contribute towards school trips and 4 said that they did not ask for contributions. One school noted that “this is the only way you can ask for money for school trips but we don’t need this” (PSQ 13). 12 PSQs said that did or would cancel trips due to lack of contributions but 9 said that they subsidise any shortfalls and therefore never have to cancel trips. 17 PSQs made student families aware potential cancellation if they did not receive enough contributions, 2 said they did not and 2 said the question did not apply because they did not ask for contributions.

<sup>61</sup> TeacherNet, ‘Charging for School Activities,’ <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/c/chargingforactivities/>

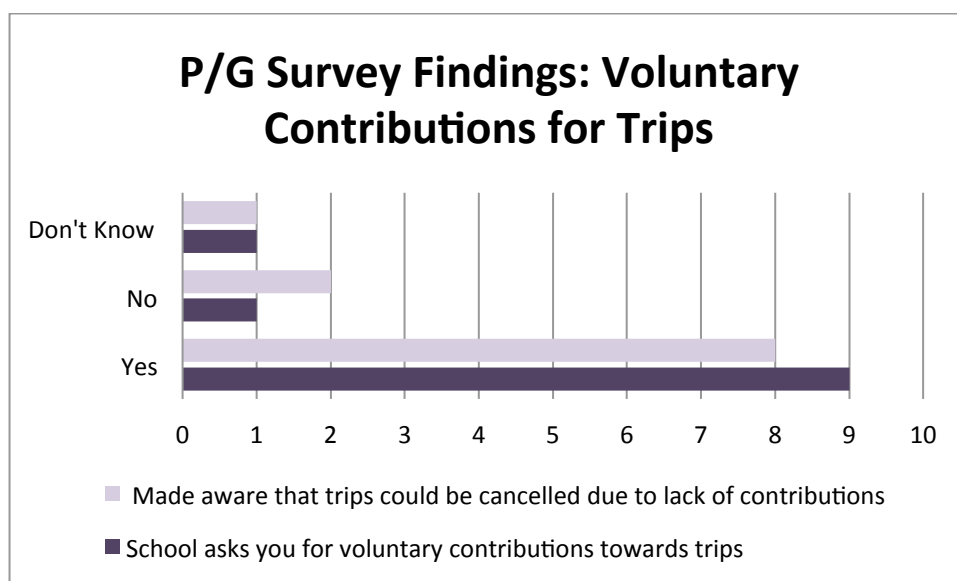


Table 28 – P/G Survey Findings: Voluntary Contributions for Trips

(RR11:11P/G Surveys): 9 P/G surveys claimed that their child(ren)’s school(s) asked for voluntary contributions towards school trips and 8 were also made aware that the trip would be cancelled if contributions were not sufficient. However, Family 2 said they were no longer asked for voluntary contributions because it was “mandatory to pay or the child is left in the school...one child for four days” (Family 2). This is clearly outside government regulations that state that: “contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of the parents who can’t or don’t want to contribute cannot be excluded from the activity.” Family 8, who’s child is in receipt of FSMs, felt “that it’s not really voluntary” because the school threatened cancellations due to lack of contributions. This suggests that some parents do feel pressurised into contributing and are therefore obliged to give beyond their means.

☒ Voluntary contributions can be problematic because schools do need to find funds to pay for school time activities and day trips. However, despite 75% of PSQs saying they did not cancel school trips but subsidised shortfalls, the majority of schools also made families aware that trips would be cancelled if contributions were low. The CAB Adding Up campaign suggests that this is unfair pressure to put upon recession stressed families. In addition, P/G perception was that it is not voluntary at all.

☒ A worse alternative to asking for voluntary contribution was revealed in a P/G survey where at least one school in our area simply sends out bills to families to cover the cost of day trips. Children of families that cannot or do not want to pay are excluded from the trip. This particular school is acting outside government regulations.

- Parent’s views on being pressurised into contributing to be disseminated to all schools in the area
- Any school using practices outside regulations to be notified of voluntary contribution criteria

- Schools will be asked to be more sensitive when asking for voluntary contributions i.e. how often they ask for a contribution and how much they ask for
- Schools could adopt universal inclusion policies and look for different and more imaginative ways to raise money for school trips (broader discussion in sections 7.3.4 & 7.3.5)

### 7.3.2. Cost of Trips

It has already been established that school can and do ask for voluntary contribution and “... can charge for the cost of accommodation during the overnight school trips, but the schools may not charge more than the accommodation actually costs.” (TeacherNet)<sup>62</sup>

In addition:

“No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or Local Authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodgings that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.” (Fair Access Division, Department of Children, Schools and Families)<sup>63</sup>

The development of learning outside the classroom policy advocates that the:

“Most effective ways of achieving the inclusion of all young people in learning outside the classroom is by controlling the cost of the opportunities offered.”(Learning Outside the Classroom)<sup>64</sup>

(P<sub>RR22:22</sub>PSQs): Along with school considering how often they offered school trips (see section 7.2.2) 21 out of 22 PSQs said that they considered the cost of school trips.

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<sup>62</sup> TeacherNet, ‘Charging for School Activities,’

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/c/chargingforactivities/>

<sup>63</sup> Fair Access Division Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009), ‘Charging for Schools Activities: Revised Report’ p. 4

<sup>64</sup> Guidance on School policies for ‘Learning Outside the Classroom: Charging Policy,’ (2008), p. 2

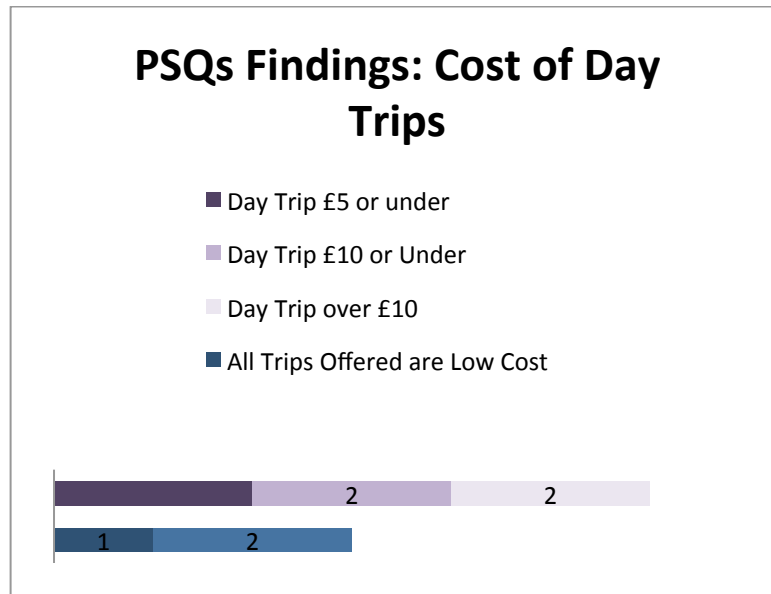


Table 29 - PSQs Findings: Cost of Day Trips

(RR-V- 9:22PSQs 1:1SSQ): However, the actual cost of school trips is variable between schools. In addition, very few schools (6) in the PSQs stated how much their school trips cost. Day trips appear to be anything between £5 to over £10. One other PSQ said that “all trips offered were at low cost” (PSQ 5) and a further 2 said they made sure that certain trips were either low or free (PSQs 8 & 12). Primary school residential trips ranged from between £250-£700, although the average lay at the lower quote of £250. SSQ stated that they considered cost “within reason” and “when appropriate frequency” (SSQ) but unfortunately gave no further information regarding actual cost.

(V- P/G surveys): Data from the P/G surveys on the actual cost of school trips was patchy and variable. The estimated cost of an infant/primary school day trip was between £5 and £15, secondary school day trips were estimated up to £30. Here we should note that this amount is often covered by voluntary contribution schemes and can be asked for on multiple occasions. In section 7.2.2 PSQs revealed that some schools go on trips up to 10 times a year. P/G surveys suggested that residential trips cost about £200 for primary school students and £250 for secondary school students. Trips abroad only apply to secondary school students and are far more expensive. P/G surveys quoted for secondary school students trips abroad were:

“Ski Trip £1200.” (Family 5)

“Hundreds.” (Family 4)

“French trip, 1 night £150.” (Family 3)

“Last trip (France) £425.” (Family 10)

P/G surveys also (like Family 3 quoted in section 7.2.2) specified how expensive they thought secondary school trips were and expressed concerns about affordability:

“Some trips are too expensive such as skiing.” (Family 6)

“...I won’t be able to afford for my child to go on a school trip...” (Family 12)

“...trip to Arizona...£1500 [and] further... details of a proposed skiing trip to Canada. He [the client] is unable to afford either of these.” (E-BEF 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2010)

Infant/primary schools operate good policy practice in regards to keeping cost low for day trips.

Infant/primary school residential trips cost varied, with 1 PSQ stating that their residential trip cost £750. This appear to be much higher than other quotes of approximately £250

No concerns were expressed in the P/G surveys about the cost of day trips for infant/primary school student and secondary school students.

The data indicates that the cost of secondary school trips abroad is considered too expensive for some parent(s)/guardian(s). In addition, expensive school trips are putting a strain on family budgets and are a cause of anxiety for some parents.

- Good practices from schools on low cost day trips is commendable, however, some residential trips are far more expensive than others and schools could consider the cheaper options
- Trips abroad for secondary school students are often considered too expensive by parents, put a strain on family budgets and cause unnecessary anxiety. Ideas that could be disseminated by the bureau include:
  - Secondary schools could offer more day trips or low cost trips and have fewer trips abroad.
  - Be more vigil in the types of trips they offer and think about value for money.
  - Recognise that some students (often the same students) are being economically excluded from an enhanced education which may cause them and their family anxiety and embarrassment. In addition, older students can become disaffected by the negative experience of being left out. Every child matters policies should not only apply to younger children but to all children, including those at secondary school.

### 7.3.3. Extra Costs

School trips can incur extra costs, for instance specialist clothing or equipment. These extra costs are not included in the remissions policy therefore families on low income are expected to provide extra items from their family budget. Rules regarding voluntary contribution do apply to additional costs. Some schools provide specialist clothing and/or equipment or keep a stock of second-hand equipment and/or clothing for certain trip activities. Some schools choose trips where all equipment and/or extra clothing are provided by the centre or institute or as part of a package. This is a matter of careful selection to secure good value for money.

(RR21:22 PSQs & 1:1 SSQ): 16 PSQs stated that their school trips incurred no extra costs. 3 said that residential trips needed extra clothing, 1 said water-park and 1 said adventure activities and music. SSQ said that their school trips did not incur extra costs.

(RR10:11P/G Surveys): 10 P/G surveys said that school trips often had extra costs attached to them, most notably residential trips and trips abroad.

One survey said that they had to supply: “5 pairs of trousers (not jeans), 5 pairs of shorts, 5 jumpers and 2 pairs of trainers.” Some of these items had to be brought because the child did not already have them. The items purchased included: “5 pairs of trousers for £46, 2 pairs of shorts for £10, 1 jumper for £12 and a pair of trainers for £20.” (Family 2)

2 surveys specified that skiing equipment was particularly expensive (Family 5 & 6).

Infant/primary schools rarely incur extra cost for school trips other than a residential trip.

Some residential include extra clothing and equipment

Residential that are not inclusive ask for several items of the same type of clothing to be supplied which would not normally be found in the average child’s wardrobe.

- Inclusive residential could be picked above those that do not supply extra clothing and equipment
- Schools and HDLEA could keep a stock of second-hand clothing, especially activity clothing and specific equipment needed for trips. Families could be asked to return the items after the trip

### 7.4. Supporting Low Income Families

What this section will cover

- Special support and fund availability
- Universal inclusion policy

### 7.4.1. Special Support and Fund Availability

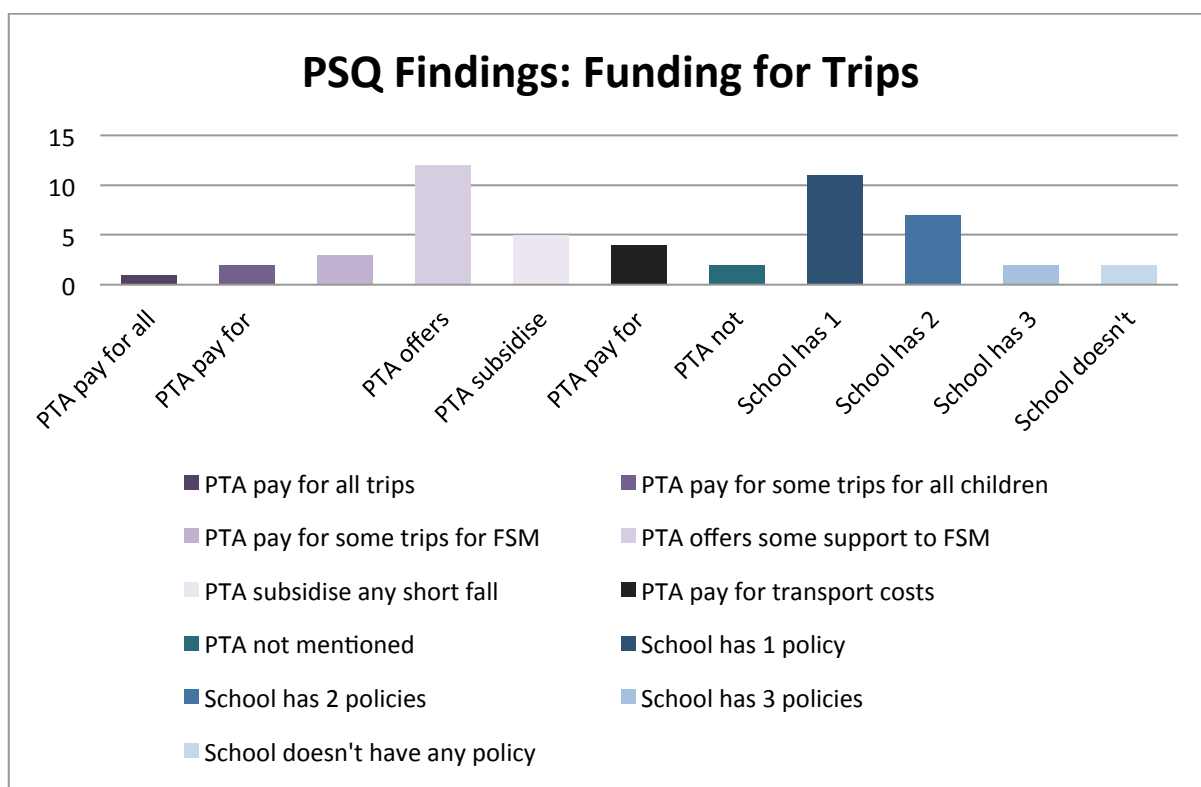


Table 30 – PSQs Findings: Funding School Trips

School PTAs and/or governing bodies can use school funds to pay for or help with school trips cost and therefore keep cost lower. There are plethora’s of ways in which schools can support student’s families that include:

- Pay for all school trips
- Guaranteeing all shortfalls will be subsidised
- Pay for some trips for all children
- Pay for transport

Alternatively schools may choose to support students who are in the greatest need by paying for their trips and/or offer extra support or they may choose to adopt a universal inclusion policy (see section 7.4.2). In addition, schools may choose a variety of ways.

(RR20:22PSQs): Only 2 PSQs did not utilise PTA funds to pay for or subsidise school trips. 1 PSQ said that their PTA paid for all trips, 2 said that their PTA paid for some trips for all students, 5 said that PTA funds are used to subsidise any short falls and 4 PSQs used PTA funds to pay for all transport. The hire of school buses can be the most expensive part of any day trip. 3 PSQs claimed that their PTA specifically paid for students in receipt of FSMs to go on some trips and a further 12 said that they offered some support to students in

receipt of FSMs although the level of support is variable. 11 PSQs suggested that they used 1 way to lower the cost of school trips, 7 used 2 different methods and 2 used 3 methods.

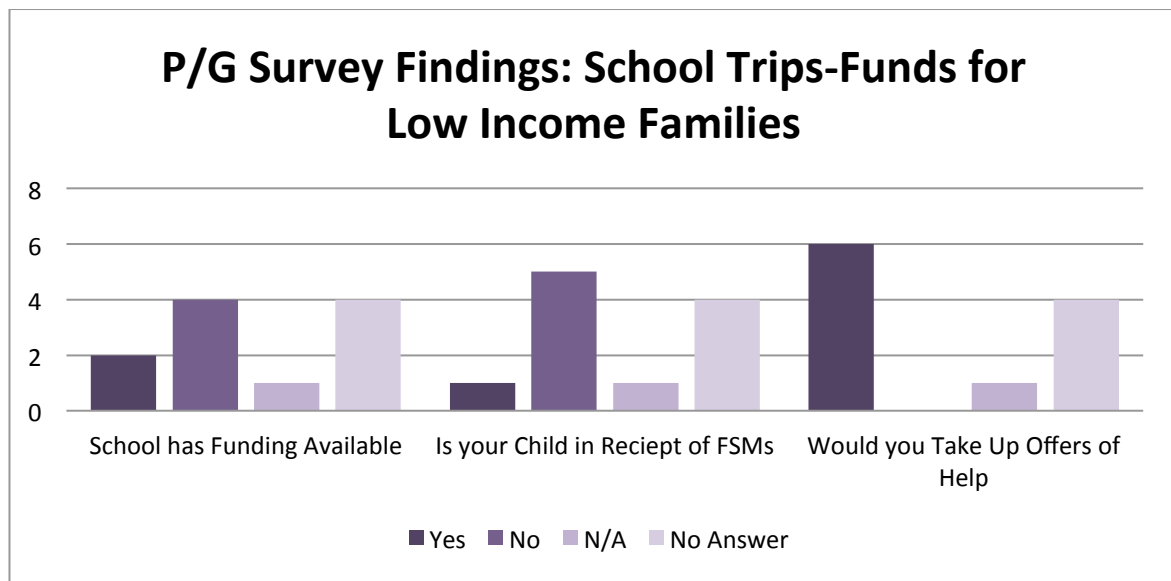


Table 31 – P/G Survey Findings: School Trips-Help for Families on Low Income

(RR-V- 6:11P/G Surveys): Response rate was 54% and only one P/G survey respondent’s child in receipt of FSMs. However, another 1 respondent was a single parent and 1 respondent represented a larger family. The other 3 respondents were from double income families. 4 (67%) P/G surveys said that their child(ren)’s school(s) did not have any funds available for school trips and 2 said they did. Family 6 commented that:

“I don’t know whether all children who cannot afford to go are accounted for or given a fair chance of participating but I hope they would be.” (Family 6)

All 6 responding P/G surveys said that they would take up any offers to help with school trips costs. This is despite 50% of them coming from double income families which would suggest that a many families find funding school trips difficult.

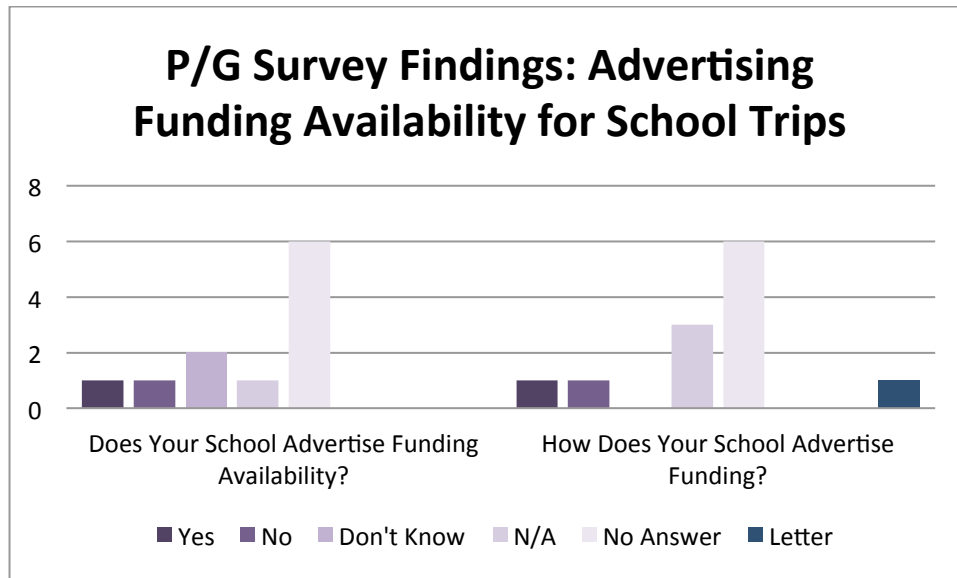


Table 32 – P/G Survey Findings: Advertising Funding Availability for School Trips

(RR-V- 5:11P/G Surveys): 1 P/G survey said that there was a fund available at their child’s school for school trips and this was also advertised in the school news letter. 1 P/G survey indicated that there was no funds available to help with the cost of school trips and therefore definitely no advertising. 2 P/G surveys said that they did not know whether any specific funds were available or not and a further 3 said that they did not know if the school advertised fund availability, which in itself would suggest they do not.

PSQs suggested several ways that PTA s boost school trips funds which in turn is filter into keeping the cost of trips low.

- Good policies in practice. Ideas about different way the PTA can help to keep the cost of school trips down to be disseminated

75% PSQs had specific school trips funds

- 25% of PSQs do not have specific funds available. Dissemination of specific funds for school trips to be disseminated to all schools in the area

10% PSQs had no funds available to help families in need of extra support. However, some schools have universal inclusion policies in operation and therefore do not need them.

- All schools should have either specific funds available to help families in need pay for school trips or a total inclusion policy in operation

67% P/G survey thought that there were no school funds available for school trips

No data on secondary schools available.

- P/G survey findings indicate that there may be a lack of awareness in regards to help availability. Ideas on how to promote help more widely could be disseminated to all schools, including using school newsletters, public notice boards and school websites. Ideas could be disseminated
- Bureau data base is set in place with view for future research and development if appropriate

#### 7.4.2. Universal Inclusion Policy

This line of enquiry specifically investigates the notion of universal inclusion on school trips. We have already discussed PTA funding and/subsidise that make it possible for all students to be included in all trips, for example; a) the PTA pays for all school trips, b) the PTA pays for at least one trip (if not more) in its entirety and, c) the PTA subsidises all shortfalls (see Table 31). The PTA paying for all students in receipt of FSMs does guarantee that students in the greatest of need are included but it does not, however, guarantee universal inclusion because some students families may be struggling but are not in receipt of FSMs or are entitled but do not claim FSMs or their family may feel that they cannot/do not want to pay for every/some school trips. Adopting a universal inclusion policy for school trips is the only ways of making sure that all these scenarios are cater for.

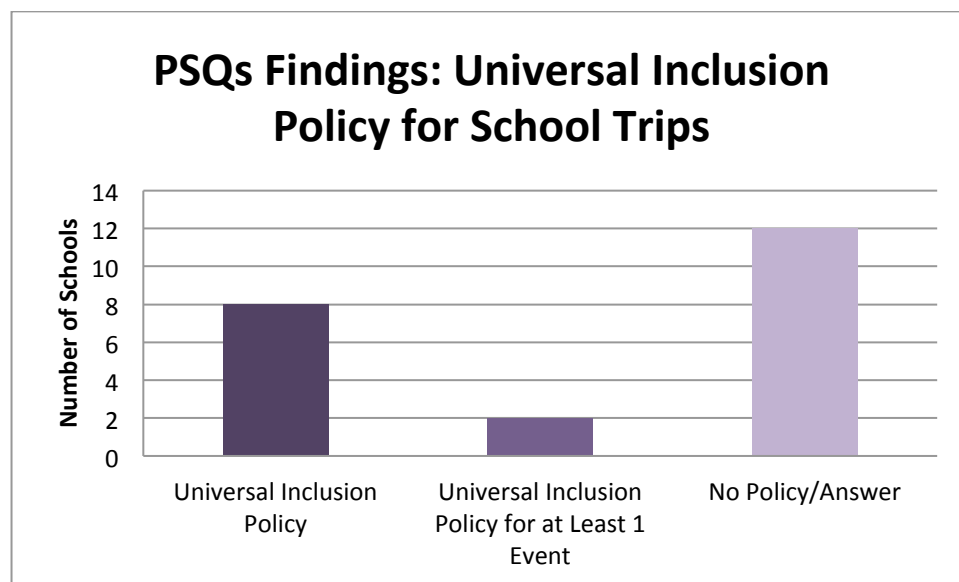


Table 33 – PSQs Findings: Universal Inclusion Policy for School Trips

(RR22:22PSQs): PSQs revealed that 36% of primary schools had an inclusion policy for all students and a further 9% of primary schools paid for all their students to go on at least one

trip a year. School funds are used to either pay for all trips or specific trips. Parent/guardian stress regarding the ability to pay, obligation to contribute beyond their means, emotive feelings and fear that their child(ren) could miss out or potentially be ostracized are eliminated when universal inclusion policies are active. However, secondary schools offer a more diverse school trip experience including trips abroad that can be expensive. The destination choice, students overall experience, safety and specific knowledge gained from an overseas 'adventure' could be compromised if budgets for school trips are curtailed too much.

Universal inclusion policy adopted in some primary schools

Universal inclusion policy for specific events adopted in some primary schools

- Inclusion policies or full inclusion for some events throughout the year could be disseminated to all schools. However, sensitivity and flexibility needs to be considered in regards to how workable these options are for the sorts of trips that are currently offered to older students

### **7.5. Paying for Trips**

Another way that schools can offer practical help to student's families is to give a reasonable amount of time so parents can budget accordingly and have budgeting scheme so the cost can be spread over time. The latter is particularly relevant to residential trips and trips abroad. Therefore this section considers:

- Notice
- Budgeting Schemes

#### **7.5.1. Notice**

RR-V-6:22PSQs): Unfortunately there was a low PSQ response to this question, only 6. 1 PSQ related their answer to day trips only and said that they gave at least 2 weeks' notice. 2 PSQs answered both for day trips and residential trips; 1 saying that they gave on average 2 weeks' notice for day trips and 9 months notice for residential trips and the other said that they gave 3-4 weeks' notice for day trips and 2 month notice for residential. The final 3 PSQs answers related to residential trips only and were 1-2 months, 3 months and 6 months respectively. It should be remembered that PSQs claimed that residential trips could cost up to £750.

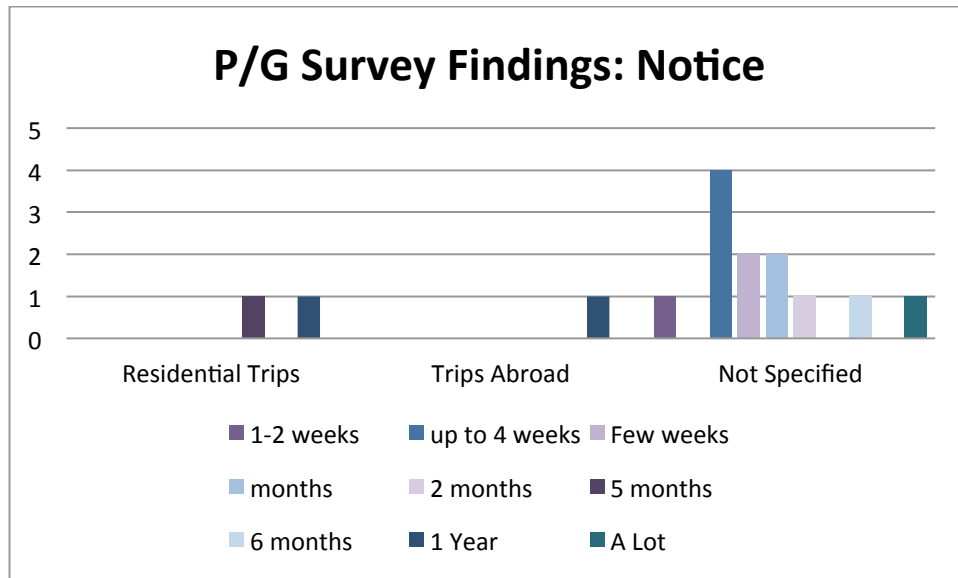


Table 34 – P/G Survey Findings: Notice given by Schools before School Trips

(RR10:11P/G Surveys): Although P/G surveys in general did not specify what type of trip 5 P/G surveys did however indicate that their child(ren)’s school gave them at least 5 months notice. Moreover, the same residential trips are offered on annual basis. None of the P/G surveys noted any problems with school’s giving short notice.

PSQs and P/G surveys correlate with one another and indicate that in most cases a generous amount of notice if given particularly for more expensive trips. In addition, residential trips are offered on an annual basis.

- Findings indicate good practice and therefore no further action is required

### 7.5.2. Budgeting Schemes

(RR17:21PSQs 1:1 SSQ): 13 PSQs and the SSQ said that they had either saving schemes or credit unions for residential and/or trips abroad.

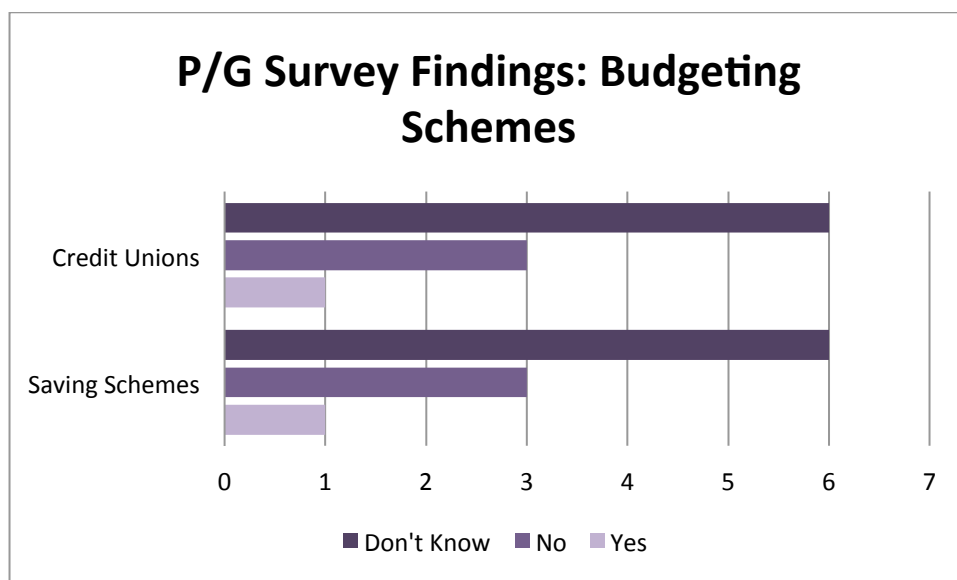


Table 35 – P/G Survey Findings: Budgeting Schemes offered by Schools

(RR11:11P/G surveys): 1 P/G survey said that their child(ren)'s school offered a saving scheme and another P/G survey said that their child(ren)'s school had a credit union in operation. However, 3 P/G surveys said that there was no budgeting scheme available at their child(ren)'s school and a further 6 were not aware of any budgeting scheme availability. It should be noted that many of the families represented in the P/G surveys have children in secondary school education and therefore are offered expensive trips on a regular basis.

76% of PSQs and the SSQ said that they offered some kind of budgeting scheme, most notably for expensive trips.

P/G surveys do not correlate with PSQs or SSQ findings and indicated that either no schemes are offered or they do not know if such schemes are offered.

- Low awareness and/or availability of budgeting schemes. Ideas on how to offer easy payment schemes to families for residential trips and trips abroad to be disseminated to all schools in the area

## **PART 4: REPORT CONCLUSION**

### **8. Concluding Thought and Bureau Action: The Next Step**

This section concludes this report and gives a short briefing in regards to the Harrogate CAB next step. A summary of the report findings recommendations can be found at the end of the report.

#### **8.1. Concluding Thought and Summary of Report Findings**

This report is the result of several months of research and in-depth analysis and born out of a genuine desire to help recession stressed families with school aged child(ren) and a passion to promote the best school uniform and school trips policy practices in our area . The report has been carefully designed in a user friendly format. Most of the findings have a related table or graph that quantifies the data findings. Appropriate symbols are used to easily identify good or poor practices at the end of each line of enquiry.

Careful consideration has been given and social science research techniques applied to ensure the highest response rates possible and give a balanced and fair view of practices, policies, thoughts and perceptions of the people and organisations that the report represents. It is with some regret that the report had to go ahead with a low response rate variable from the secondary schools in the area. However, we possibly could have lifted the rates by sending out the questionnaires earlier and with two follow up reminders. In addition, any future request to participate will be accompanied with a summary of findings from this research project. That said we are very grateful to all of those you took personal time out to complete the school questionnaires and parent(s)/guardian(s) surveys. A special thank you goes out to the HDLEA representative who obviously cares deeply about the welfare of school students and their families. In addition, we should acknowledge that 'providing for our children' is an emotive subject and the job of being a parent or guardian of a child is all too often undervalued within society. This report used both quantitative and qualitative methodology. We can give you the dry statistics but it is our client's quotes and their personal stories that bring them to life. We would like to thank each and everyone for their honesty and time.

The report has been underpinned by the national CAB Adding-Up Campaign and CAB's 'recession busting top ten tips'. The CAB's background and our bureau's views on the campaign are explained in terms of 'hidden costs of education' that come under the umbrella of either the cost of school uniforms or the cost of school trips. Harrogate bureau's research aims and objectives are set-out to identify with our client's concerns. The research design and development remained fluid and flexible throughout the research process which has resulted in a unique tailor made report. All data from the PSQs, SSQ and P/G surveys was coded to identify good and poor practices in a number of keys areas that included: consistency, affordability, awareness, inclusion and/or specific impact on single

parents, low income and/or large families. We also reviewed national and regional policies, practices and guidelines. Report recommendations are therefore in terms of; national findings, HDLEA findings, infant and/or primary school findings and secondary school findings with the latter two making up the main body of the report. We are pleased to report that we discovered many good policy practices in operation in our area, most notably in the infant and/or primary schools. These practices have been explained throughout the report and all schools are welcome to request a copy of the full report or ask for specific sections. However, there were also some poor or misguide practices identified, most notably in the secondary schools. Sadly, many surveys expressed concerns about the cost of secondary school uniforms and how expensive secondary school trips abroad are. The surveys also noted that residential and trips abroad also asked for expensive extras to be purchased.

The campaign research project had to be sympathetic to the everyday workings of our bureau. With this in view, we decided that a sample survey was the most appropriate and efficient way to gauge the views and concerns of parents and guardians in our area. Since completing the data analysis we can reliably state that the research findings back-up observations and concerns expressed in our bureau, that-is-to-say that there is growing concerns among the parental community about 'hidden' educational expenses and they are indeed putting a strain on family budgets. Recession related uncertainty and increasing changes of circumstances have served to exacerbate financial anxiety and insecurity. We hope that this report will prove to be helpful for future research in our bureau, the CAB regional community and for regional and national policy tracking. The campaign research was designed to be flexible and act as a template for a) a full scale comprehensive Harrogate bureau regional case study and b) for other bureaux to utilise and develop into their own tailor made campaign project. In addition, the bespoke data base created for this study can be now used to track policy development in our area, if the bureau so desires. Multiple regional tracking of school policies offer the potential for a future comparative regional case study, where local policies can be viewed, compared and tweaked into workable and successful policy models.

## **8.2. Bureau Action: The Next Step**

Harrogate Bureau's next steps will be disseminating the report to:

- CAB National Campaign
- Local MP
- HDLEA
- Within our Bureau (including the Management team, the Social Policy Team and have a copy available to all staff)
- North CAB cluster group
- Copy available to anyone who requests it

Appropriate Summaries of the report will be posted to:

- All LEA schools in the area
- Schools will be notified that the full copy is available in the bureau

Harrogate bureau is happy to help with any enquiries

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### **Summary of Report Findings Recommendations**

#### **Summary of National Findings Report Recommendations**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

Level of support offered varies regionally with some LEAs offering regular grants and support and others offering nothing at all. Inconsistent national policies from LEAs add to the notion of a 'post-code lottery' where some children in receipt of FSMs will get regular uniform grants and support and others get very little support.

- We express concerns about inconsistent practices nationally with a view to promoting fair and consistent policies

Research findings indicate that FSMs eligibility may be too limited.

Government have rules for charging and remissions policies that can be accessed via government information web-sites. However, it is difficult to clarify common and/or fair practices in specific policies on school trips because the rules are inconsistent and open to individual school interpretation, for example, rules on activities during school hours and part of the curriculum/exam. Our research discovered that parental awareness about rights appears to be limited.

- Rules and government guidelines on paying for school trips are complicated and variable and as a result schools can interpret these rules differently
- We support government guidelines that give parent(s)/guardian(s) clear information regarding remissions policies and any other related rights

The way school promote schools trips, most notably in secondary schools, leaves families confused and in some cases places unnecessary pressure to pay for trips that are not vital to their child(ren)'s education. Parental awareness about what they have to pay for and what they don't, for example, is the trip part of the school curriculum or an enhancement to the educational process should be broadened. Government policies should note that the unintended consequence of a flexible system is that some parent(s)/guardian(s) in our survey felt that their child(ren) are missing out if they don't go on school trips, even when the trips were not vital to their education.

- We support government guidelines that encourage schools to give clear reasons for school trips and we note that in special cases this may have to some form of out-side regulation.

### **Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: General**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

All families of students under HDLEA jurisdiction transferring to secondary school are given a transfer form where students in receipt of FSMs are identified and information is passed onto their new school.

- CAB endorse the automatic identification of need through the transfer form

### **Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: School Uniforms**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

HDLEA offers a one-off uniform grant when a child transfers to secondary school.

- Harrogate CAB supports HDLEA to continue paying grants and one off payments to student's in need with a view to expand grants where possible

HDLEA pays the grant via a voucher system which is not accepted by all uniform retailers, most notably one of the cheapest uniform suppliers in the town.

- HDLEA could re-think using vouchers and give cash payments instead or persuade uniform retailers to accept the vouchers.

HDLEA will give one off payments in exceptional cases and are working with multiple agencies to promote greater awareness of eligibility and rights.

- HDLEA are working with other agencies (including CAB) towards promoting greater awareness.

### **Summary of HDLEA Findings Report Recommendations: School Trips**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

LEA endorsed residential trips incur extra cost, most notably asking for multiple pieces of clothing.

- HDLEA could keep a second-hand stock of practical clothing for residential trip

## **Summary of Infant and/or Primary schools & Secondary Schools Report**

### **Recommendations: General**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

We recognise that schools in our area use different methods to identify need and would ask that schools adopt a universal and consistent method that correlates with other schools in the area

- We Promote Free School Meals (FSMs) as a universal indicator of student/family need
- We suggest that schools adopt several methods to identify student/family need
- We would like schools to recognise that parent(s)/guardian(s) may be reluctant to come forward and therefore more subtle ways of reaching out to families may be more beneficial

### **Summary of Infant and/or Primary Report Recommendations: School Uniforms**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

Research findings revealed that school governing bodies had a high input on uniforms but there was low parental consultation on the choice of uniform.

- Harrogate bureau supports greater consultation and decision making on uniforms by families of students

Although the majority of schools clearly published details of their uniform/dress code expectations, most notably on school web-sites and/or prospectus, some did not.

- All schools should have web-sites that are easy to access and navigate by parent(s)/guardian(s) and in addition have a hard-copy of their prospectus with uniform details

The cost of school uniforms is one of most notably the greatest areas of concern. The report findings revealed that often infant and/or primary schools often had only a few specialist items (items with logo) and some evened offered sensible cheap extras. Some parent(s)/guardians expressed concerns about the cost of primary school uniforms but the majority of surveys specifically noted that secondary school uniforms were too expensive. The most expensive school uniform items were those that could only be purchased from a sole specialist supplier.

- Good practice used in many infant and/or primary schools on sourcing and pricing of uniforms, however, this is not universal and we urge that all schools to develop such practices

The number of items that are needed to make up a school uniform varied from one school to the next with some having a fairly comprehensive list of uniform requirements.

- We urge schools to keep uniforms to essential clothing and sensible extra, for example, sun hats

Schools can also help to keep uniform costs down, most notably for low income families, by raising funds specifically aimed at supporting families in the greatest of need. Research findings identified that most infant and/or primary schools put aside extra funds to specifically help families in need of extra support or a universal policy to help all families, however, there is evidence that a minority of infant and/or primary school have neither. Schools that do have specific funds available often bolster their school with imaginative and multiple methods of raising extra cash.

- Good practices and imaginative fund-raising methods are commendable. We would urge all schools to follow suit, if they do not already

Research findings indicate that some infant and/or primary schools operate second-hand schemes (pre-loved uniform or recycling schemes), although parent(s)/guardian(s) survey suggested that very few families were aware that their child(ren)'s schools had second-hand uniforms available.

- Appropriate schools could consider adopting policies using positive terminology and promoting second-hand schemes for their environmental quality
- We encourage second-hand (recycling uniform) schemes to be in all schools
- Schools should consider policies on better internal advertising

### **Summary of Infant and/or Primary Schools Report Recommendations: School Trips**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

There was some indication that parents perceive every school trip as essential and/or mandatory, although many infant and/or primary school expressed a sensitive attitude in this regard and have already adopted compensatory policies. Schools should be aware that some parents will always pay, even when they cannot afford to do so.

- We would urge schools to give clear reasons to families about why their child(ren) are going on a trip. Budgeting families need to know the facts so they can make real informed decisions without unnecessary pressure or guilt

The costs of trips are the main concern for parents, for example; voluntary contributions, actual cost of trips and extra costs related to trips. Like school uniforms purchase, greater expense occurs with larger families, families with multiple births and low income families.

Voluntary contributions can be problematic because schools do need to find funds to pay for school time activities and day trips. Our research discovered that the majority of schools made families aware that trips would be cancelled if contributions were low. Some families perceived voluntary contribution as not voluntary at all. The CAB Adding-Up campaign suggests that this is unfair pressure to put upon recession stressed families.

- We ask schools to be more sensitive when asking for voluntary contributions i.e. how often they ask for a contribution, how much they ask for and to make it clear that the contribution are not mandatory
- Schools could adopt universal inclusion policies and look for different and more imaginative ways to raise money for school trips. Please note that some infant and/or primary schools in our area already successfully operate such schemes

Our research also exposed that at least one primary school in our area simply sends out bills to families to cover the cost of day trips. Children of families that cannot or do not want to pay are excluded from the trip which is in violation of government regulations.

- Any school using practices outside regulations will be notified of voluntary contribution criteria

The cost of school trips varied considerably with some infant and/or primary schools offering day trips for a few pounds or offering some free trips. Residential trips were considered more expensive and also the cost varied.

- Good practices from schools on low cost day trips is commendable, however, some residential trips are far more expensive than others and schools could consider the cheaper options

In addition to the cost of the actual trip and the students spending money, many residential trips and longer trips abroad incur extra costs like specialist clothing and equipment. Our research recommendations include:

- All inclusive residential trips could be picked above those that do not supply extra clothing and equipment
- Schools and HDLEA could keep a stock of second-hand clothing, especially activity clothing and specific equipment needed for trips. Families could be asked to return cleaned items after the trip

Schools can also adopt practices that help families, for example, having funds specifically for trips, universal inclusion policy, budgeting schemes and reasonable notice before a trip so families can save accordingly.

Our research revealed that infant and/or primary schools use several methods to boost school trips funds, although a minority did not.

- Some good policies in practice. We would urge PTAs that do not do specific fund raising to look at different ways that they can boost their funds
- All schools should have either specific funds available to help families in need pay for school trips or a total inclusion policy in operation

Some infant and/or primary schools operate either total inclusion policies for school trips or offer at least some trips for free.

- We commend inclusion policies or full inclusion for some trips and would urge all schools to look at this

Parent(s)/guardian(s) survey indicated that a high percentage of families are unaware that their school has specific help available; even in cases where there is help available. Some parents were also not aware that there was budgeting schemes available in their child(ren)'s school.

- Schools could promote awareness on help availability and budget schemes via; school newsletters, public notice boards and school web-sites.

### **Summary of Secondary Schools Findings Report Recommendations: School Uniforms**

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

There are inconsistent explanations among the secondary school community as to why school uniforms are important.

- Government guideline set out in this report give solid reasons why uniforms are important.

Some school web-sites acknowledged that some uniform items were difficult to get hold of and therefore plenty of notice had to be given.

- Governing bodies should consider uniforms that are readily available

Report findings indicate that school attempt to give a reasonable amount of notice before making changes to the uniforms, however, some parent(s)/guardians surveys revealed that their child(ren)'s school had only given a short amount of notice before making changes.

- Schools, most notably secondary schools, should be aware that families need a reasonable amount of notice before changing the uniform

The majority of parental concerns in our survey were on the cost of secondary school uniforms. The most expensive school uniform items were those with a logo and could only be purchased at a sole specialist supplier. We carried out a price comparison on behalf of surveyed clients which revealed some alarming findings, for instance, £29.25 saving on a

school kilt if the school changed their supplier from a specialist one to a main street supplier that sells a similar style kilt and a £19.25 saving on a pair of black school trousers that do not have a school logo on them. These sorts of savings would help all students' families but most notably would help single income, low income and larger families.

- Initial findings suggest poor practice in operation in the majority of secondary schools, most notably the over use of specialist suppliers and items with a logo on and therefore we would urge schools to look for alternative cheaper options

The number of items that are needed to make up a school uniform varied from one school to the next. Many secondary schools have a comprehensive list of items that they expect families of students to purchase.

- We would urge schools to confine their list to essential items and inexpensive sensible extras

Many secondary school uniforms also ask families of students to supply a comprehensive and expensive list of extras, including PE kits with school logos on them.

- Report finding expressed concerns on PE Kit criteria and price. We would urge schools to look at cheaper options, keep a stock of supplies and think about how much wear a student will have before asking their families to purchase expensive or unnecessary items

Schools can also help to keep uniform costs down, most notably for low income families, by raising funds specifically aimed at supporting families in the greatest of need. Some infant and/or primary schools use a plethora of imaginative ways to raise cash and boost school funds. They then translate that money to directly helping families of students in the greatest of need. We note there is a lack of data variable from secondary schools but parent(s)/guardian(s) surveys suggested that secondary schools do not operate any of these policies

- Good practices and imaginative fund-raising methods are commendable by infant and/or primary schools. We would urge all schools to follow suit if they do not already

Parent(s)/guardian(s) survey suggested that very few families were aware that their child(ren)'s schools had second-hand uniforms available. Please note there is a lack of data variable from secondary schools.

- We encourage second-hand (recycling uniform) schemes to be in all schools
- Schools should consider policies on better internal advertising

## Summary of Secondary Schools Findings Report Recommendations: School Trips

(For appropriate dissemination by Harrogate Bureau)

Although the schools in our survey take government guidelines on school trips very seriously, our research discovered some that parent(s) and /or guardian(s) seem to assume that trips are vital to their child(ren)'s education and there is a real fear that if they do not pay their child(ren) to go that they are limiting their educational experience and /or causing them embarrassment and stress. This finding was more profound in secondary schools, however, there was some evidence to support that this also occurs in a minority of infant and/or primary schools. The most worrying aspect for our clients was very expensive trips abroad that are connected to particular courses (i.e. GCSEs and A Levels) where 'recession stressed parent's' believe that their child(ren) are put at a course/examination disadvantage if they do not go.

- We would urge schools to give clear reasons to families about why their child(ren) are going on a trip. Budgeting families need to know the facts so they can make real informed decisions

The costs of trips are the main concern for parents, for example; voluntary contributions, actual cost of trips and extra costs related to trips. Like school uniforms purchase, greater expense occurs with larger families, families with multiple births and low income families.

Like infant and/or primary schools, secondary schools often ask for voluntary contributions. Our research suggests that secondary schools make families aware that trips will be cancelled if contributions were low. The CAB Adding-Up campaign suggests that this is unfair pressure to put upon recession stressed families.

- Schools should be aware of parent's views because some parent's feel pressurised into contributing and as a result they contribute beyond what their family budget allows.

Some families perceived voluntary contribution as not voluntary at all.

- Schools will be asked to be more sensitive when asking for voluntary contributions i.e. how often they ask for a contribution, how much they ask for and make it clear that the contribution is not mandatory. (Please note that this information goes beyond the research done for the report. The CAB is dealing with more debt clients than ever and we endeavour to help our clients to be financially aware and make saving where they can)
- Schools could adopt universal inclusion policies and look for different and more imaginative ways to raise money for school trips

Costs of secondary schools abroad were overwhelming expressed as the greatest concern for families. Some of these trips are well over a £1000. This report's recommendations include:

- Trips abroad for secondary school students are often considered too expensive by parents, put a strain on family budgets and cause unnecessary anxiety. Ideas include:
  - Secondary schools could offer more day trips or low cost trips and have fewer trips abroad
  - Be more vigilant in the types of trips they offer and think about value for money
  - Recognise that some students (often the same students) are being economically excluded from an enhanced education which may cause them and their family anxiety and embarrassment. In addition, older students can become disaffected by the negative experience of being left out. Every child matters policies should not only apply to younger children but to all children, including those at secondary school

As with infant and/or primary school findings, secondary schools residential trips and longer trips abroad incur extra costs like specialist clothing and equipment. Our research recommendations include:

- All inclusive residential trips could be picked above those that do not supply extra clothing and equipment
- Schools and HDLEA could keep a stock of second-hand clothing, especially activity clothing and specific equipment needed for trips. Families could be asked to return cleaned items after the trip

Schools can also adopt practices that help families, for example, having funds specifically for trips, universal inclusion policy, budgeting schemes and reasonable notice before a trip so families can save accordingly.

Our research revealed that infant and/or primary schools use several methods to boost school trips funds, although a minority did not. Parent(s)/guardian(s) survey suggest that secondary schools do not raise funds specifically for trips or at least they are not aware of this.

- Good policies in practice in infant and/or primary schools. PTAs could consider ways that they can help to keep the cost of school trips down by raising specific funds and/or have specific funds available to help families in need pay for school trips or adopt total inclusion policy

Most schools appear to give reasonable notice before a trip and offered some kind of budgeting scheme for more expensive trips. However, some parents were not aware that there was budgeting schemes available in their child(ren)'s school.

- Schools could promote awareness on help availability and budget schemes via; school newsletters, public notice boards and school web-sites.

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Many Thanks for your kind attention

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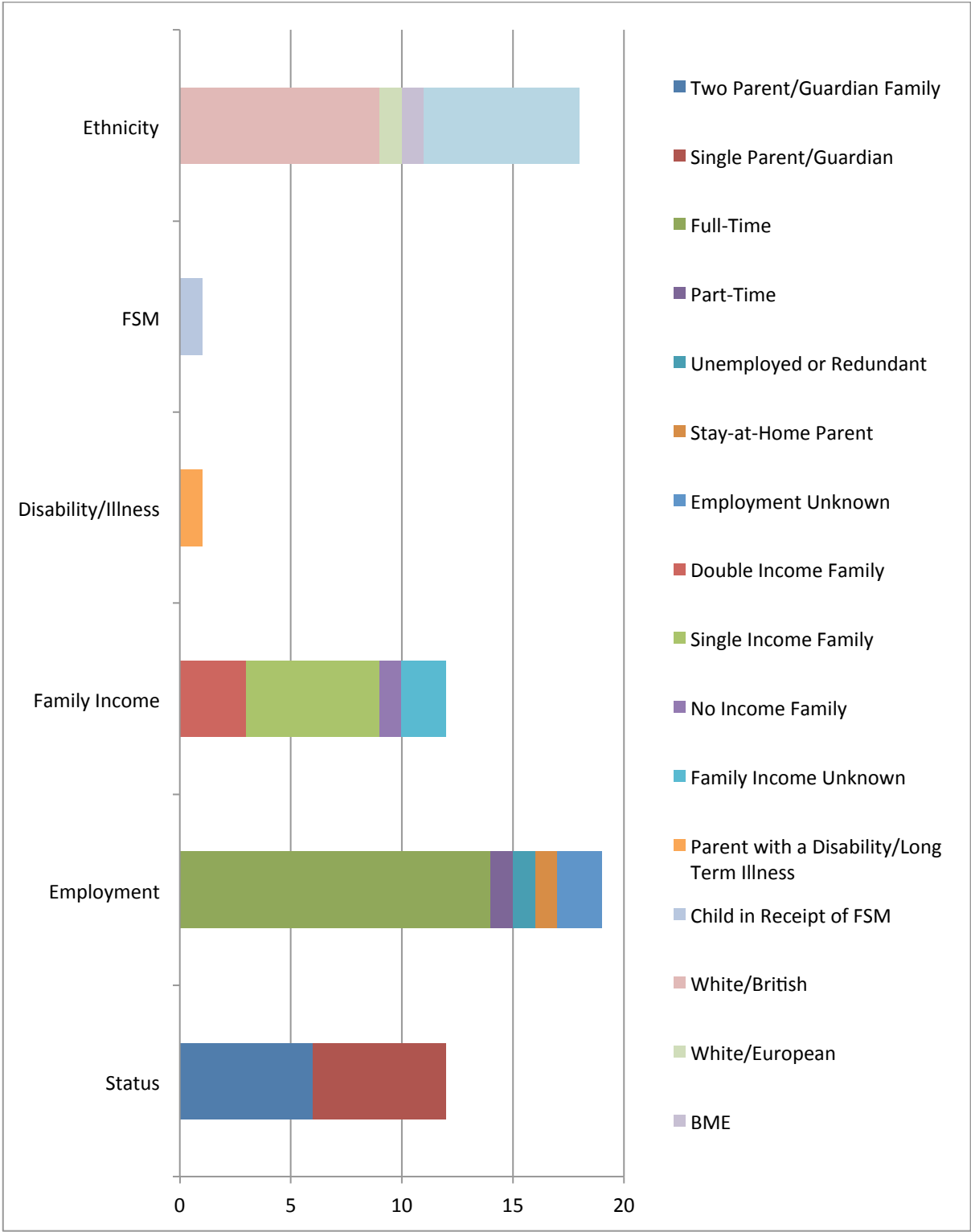
# Appendices



## Adding Up Campaign Time Line

Campaign Preparation			
Date (Week Commencing)	Action	Due for Completion	Date Completed
21/06/10	Start file		On-going
	Build directory of school in the area		25/06/10
	Draft questionnaires for school surveys, amend questionnaires & approve (Sylvia & Carol)		25/06/10
	Draft posters for campaign launch (Parent(s)/Guardian(s); Workers, amend and approve (Sylvia & Carol)		25/06/10
	Do SP notice board		25/06/10
	Notify workers of campaign	25/06/10	On-going
28/06/10	Do school survey monitoring table	1/07/10	On-going
5/07/10	Do list of campaign resources used		On-going
	Workers' feedback and thoughts on campaign		On-going
Campaign Launch			
Survey's (Schools)			
Date (Week Commencing)	Action	Due for Completion	Date Completed
5/07/10	Print 57 copies of trips & uniform school questionnaires		6/07/10
	Draft cover letter, amend & have approved (Sylvia & Carol)		6/07/10
	Address correspondence (i.e. envelopes/cover letter) using head teacher name: post school surveys, cover letter & stamped address envelopes to all schools in the area and post		6/07/10
	Place posters in appropriate public rooms, work rooms and on notice board		3/07/10
	Monitor response	On-going	
Sample survey's (Parent(s)/Guardian(s)) & other on-going data collection (i.e. Education Office interview). Empirical research and application, general admin, awareness etc			
Date (Week Commencing)	Action	Due for Completion	Date Completed
5/07/10	Draft questionnaires for parent(s)/guardian(s) surveys, amend questionnaires & approve (Sylvia & Carol)	16/07/10	14/07/10
	Sample survey Target (at least 10 parent(s) or Guardian(s)) of both surveys: Aim to collect a minimum of 15 school trips surveys and 15 school uniform surveys to allow for clear data and data cleaning		
	Print copies of surveys (enough for each interview room, the reception area and spares)	16/07/10	14/07/10
19/07/10	Distribute in public areas in bureau and interview rooms	19/07/10	Delayed until workers meeting 27/07/10
	Amend poster and re-distribute	19/07/10	19/07/10
	Do worker's surveys	23/07/10	23/07/10
	Do pending out-reach surveys	23/07/10	23/07/10
	Notify workers of surveys	23/07/10	23/07/10
2/08/10	Up-date notice board 1: with research aims and applied social policy issues, data tables & clients quotes	6/08/10	6/08/10
	Data collection via outreach, general workers & receptionists	On-going	
	Research from 'Every Child Matters,' 'Direct Gov,' 'Teachernet' & 'LA.'	On-going	
Sep/Oct	Notice Board up-date 2: good practice results from primary school surveys	6/09/10	6/09/10

	Design face-to-face interview with Education Office Rep covering Grants, costs of uniforms, cost of trips and frequency, promoting good practices and eradicating poor ones, greater awareness (i.e. FSM) & working together (clear with Sylvia)	29/10/10	29/10/10
	<b>Close bureau sample surveys (take down posters &amp; surveys)</b>	<b>29/10/10</b>	<b>29/10/10</b>
Nov	Contact Adrian Galvin (discuss with Sylvia) LARF		
	Contact Education Office (informal discussion-ask for interview)	15/11/10	15/11/10
	Campaign information pack for Education Office	24/11/10	19/11/10
	Face-to-face interview with (Welfare Team) Harrogate Education Office	24/11/10 10.30am	24/11/10
	Do LARF framework for Sylvia		22/11/10
	Notice Board: Bureau awareness on eligibility for FSM	22/11/10	22/11/10
	<b>Data Collection Close</b>	<b>24/11/10</b>	24/11/10
<b>Analysis &amp; Report</b>			
<b>Date (Week Commencing)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due for Completion</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Nov 2010	Code all data collected and put it onto Excel 2007	28/11/10	
	Do necessary tables, charts & graphs for report	30/11/10	
	Put together report framework	26/11/10	1/11/10
Dec 2010	Do notice Board Campaign up-date using Tables etc	3/12/10	
	Research school web-site for uniform information and prices		
	Identify gaps in data i.e. low response from Secondary schools and apply compensatory data using school web-sites		
	Do a comparative research and analysis of year & (transfer age) uniforms-secondary schools in H/gate & K/borough		
	Have all research completed	10/12/10	
Jan 2011	SP campaign Meeting: Draft report to be distributed to SP team members and Trustee before SP campaign meeting	2pm 21/1/2011	
Feb 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Report with few amendments</li> </ul> <p>Meeting Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some client profiles to be included</li> <li>• Executive Summary</li> <li>• Section 8: Concluding Thoughts &amp; Next Step</li> <li>• Full Report to be viewed by Bureau manager and dissemination authorised</li> <li>• Report to be sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CAB National Campaign</li> <li>○ Local MP</li> <li>○ HDLEA</li> <li>○ Available in the Bureau</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Briefing of Report Findings to be viewed by Bureau manager and dissemination authorised</li> <li>• Briefing of Report Findings to be sent out to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All schools in the area</li> <li>○ Schools to be notified that full report is available at the bureau</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3pm 24/2/2011	



NAME (Head Teacher)  
SCHOOL ADDRESS

Dear NAME (Head Teacher)

In the course of bureau debt work some of our clients have expressed concerns about the cost and frequency of school trips and therefore we are conducting a survey of all schools in the Harrogate area. It would be of great help if you or an appropriate member of staff could fill in and return the school trip survey enclosed. In addition, we are doing a follow-up survey on school uniforms which has also been enclosed. Please return the survey(s) in the stamped addressed envelope provided.

Yours Sincerely

Kaz Mills Social Policy

**CAB School Uniform or Dress Code Questionnaire**

1. Help provided for students from low income families

- a. How do you establish a student is in need?
  
- b. Are offers of help normally taken up?
  
- c. What percentage of students in need attend your school?
  
- d. Are uniform grants available for students?
  
- e. What is the percentage of up-take?
  
- f. Does your school have second-hand uniform shops, swap shops or other ways of passing on uniforms?
  
- g. Do you have funds for families in need? (Please Tick Yes or No)

Kind of Funding	YES	NO
Funds run by school		
Local Trust (i.e. Businesses)		
Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Contributions		
Fund Raising Activities		
Other		

- h. Do you perceive any problems with any fund raising strategies employed by your school?

### School Uniform Questionnaire Cont

#### 2. Changes in uniform or dress code

- a. How much notice is given to a change in uniform or dress code?
- b. What is the basis for change?

#### 3. Cost of uniforms

- a. Specialist suppliers and branding v supermarket outlets
  - i. Is the uniform available in a wide range of outlets?
  - ii. Are badges/logos that are sewn on to plain clothing acceptable?
  - iii. Can the colour of the uniform be carried onto the next school? (if applicable)
- b. Are there clear uniform or dress code descriptors and extension of uniform or dress code? i.e. hair styles, colour, jewellery etc
- c. Is there help with specialised clothing and equipment? i.e. shin pads, hockey sticks, cookery etc

#### 4. Decision making with Uniforms

- a. Who decides the uniform? And does uniform or dress code checks?
- b. Is there universal acceptance within the staff regarding decisions on uniforms or dress code?

#### 5. Non-conformity issues

- a. How many students have non-conformity issues?
- b. What percentage can be put down to cost?

Harrogate Social Policy Team would like to thank you for completing our survey 😊

## CAB School Trip Questionnaire

**1. How many trips are available on average to a student in the course of a year?**

**2. What is the purpose of the school trip?**

(a) Educational; (b) Holiday; (c) Sport; (d) Musical; (e) Team Building; (f) Other

**3. How much does a school trip cost?**

- a. How is expense and frequency considered?
- b. What concerns are expressed by parent(s) and/or staff (if any)?
- c. Is there funding available to support children from low income families or larger families?
- d. Do some trips occur extra costs i.e. specialist equipment and clothing?
- e. Which one(s)?
- f. Do you have a second-hand, swapping, affordable hiring, lending scheme, other?

## School Trip Questionnaire Cont

### 4. How much notice is given to parents to budget for a school trips?

- a. Do you have saving schemes or established links with credit unions?
- b. Do you have a voluntary contribution schemes?
  - i. Are trips under threat to be cancelled due to lack of contributions?
  - ii. Are parents made aware of this?
- c. Do you carry out specific fund raising for trips?

### 5. Are places oversubscribed? Or undersubscribed?

- a. Is there a balance of attendance of children from lower income/larger family groups? Yes/No (if No please state reasons)
- b. Has there been any recent change in school trip attendance? Yes/No (If Yes, what has attributed to the change?)

Harrogate Social Policy Team would like to thank you for completing our survey 😊



**CAB Parent(s)/Guardian(s) School Uniform and/or Dress Code Survey**

**1. Confidential Personal Information**

<b>Status</b> (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss)	
<b>Name</b> (Optional)	
<b>Contact Details</b> (Phone No or E-mail)	

	<b>You</b>	<b>Your Partner</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
<b>Any Other Useful Information</b> (i.e. are you a single parent or guardian; does your child(ren) get free school meals; do you or your partner have any disability(ies); any special circumstances)		

<b>Child (No)</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Disability(ies) or Special Circumstances</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
<b>Other(s)</b>			

**2. Cost of uniforms**

- a. Specialist suppliers and branding v supermarket outlets
  - i. Are your child(ren)s uniforms available in a wide range of outlets?
  - ii. Are badges/logos that are sewn available?
  - iii. Can the colour of the uniforms be carried onto the next school? (if applicable)
  - iv. What is the approximate cost of each uniform?
  - v. Do you consider any items to be expensive?
- b. Are you made clearly aware of what the uniform or dress code is?

- c. Have you had any problems with meeting your child(ren)s uniform or dress code requirements?
- d. Is there help with specialised clothing, materials and/or equipment for school activities? (cooking, art, PE, music, design technology etc)

**3. Changes in uniform or dress code**

- c. If there have been any changes in the school uniform or dress code, how much notice is given?
- d. What is the basis for change and does this cause any concerns?

**4. Help provided for students from low income families (Please fill in if you are from a low income family)**

- a. Have you been offered a help to buy uniform(s) for your child(ren)? (i.e. from the school, LA etc)  
Please give details
- b. Does your child(ren)s school have second-hand uniform shops, swap shops or other ways of passing on uniforms?

**5. What are your main concerns? (If any)**

Please give this survey to your advisor or the receptionist or post in the red box in the reception area

Harrogate Social Policy Team would like to thank you for completing our survey 😊

## CAB Parent(s)/Guardian(s) School Trip Survey

### 6. Confidential Personal Information

<b>Status</b> (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss)	
<b>Name</b> (Optional)	
<b>Contact Details</b> (Phone No or E-mail)	

	You	Your Partner
<b>Occupation</b>		
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
<b>Any Other Useful Information</b> (i.e. are you a single parent or guardian; does your child(ren) get free school meals; do you or your partner have any disability(ies); any special circumstances)		

Child (No)	Age	School	Disability(ies) or Special Circumstances
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
Other(s)			

**7. How many trips on average are offered to your child(ren) in the course of a year?**

**8. What is the purpose of the school trip?**

(a) Educational; (b) Holiday; (c) Sport; (d) Musical; (e) Team Building; (f) Other

**9. Cost of Trips**

a. How much will each school trip cost per child?

b. Do some trips incur extra costs i.e. specialist equipment and clothing?

c. Does your child(ren)s school offer any schemes to help with specialist equipment and clothing?  
Please give details or usefulness.

**10. Help for families on a low income** (please fill in if your child(ren) get free school meals)

- a. Does your child(ren)s school(s) have funding available to help you with cost of school trips? Yes/No. If Yes please give details
- b. How does the school(s) advertise funding availability? (i.e. in newsletters, school trip information, etc)
- c. Would you take up any offer to help with costs? Yes/No. If No why not?

**11. Notice and Budgeting**

- a. How much notice does your child(ren) school give regarding school trips?
- b. Does the school offer saving schemes or established links with credit unions?
- c. Does the school ask for voluntary contributions?
  - i. Are you made aware that trips may be cancelled due to lack of contributions?
- d. Does the school carry out specific fund raising for trips?

**12. What are your main concerns?** (If any)

Please give this survey to your advisor or the receptionist or post in the red box in the reception area

**Harrogate Social Policy Team would like to thank you for completing our survey ☺**

#### Questions for L A: uniforms (interview guide line)

1. Are grants available to parents and guardians of children in need?
2. What are the criteria?
  - a. Age of children (available to children at infant school, primary school and/or secondary school)
  - b. How is need assessed?
    - i. FSMs and/or receipt child tax credits with income less than £16,040, IS, income based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-Related Employment & Support Allowance, part VI Immigration & Asylum Act 1999, Guarantee element of State Pension Credit. Any other?
  - c. How frequent can a client's claim?
  - d. How many children can a client claimed for?
3. How is families made aware of their entitlements to grants?
4. Do the schools refer families to the LA for grants?
  - a. What percentage is the uptake?
5. Does the LA give schools guidance on keeping the cost of uniforms down especially in the current climate when families are being hit by the recession and more families have to tighten their family budget?
6. How are good practices promoted in our area, for example, encouraging schools to have cheaper uniforms that can be purchased from main street suppliers?
7. Is consistency and fairness measured?
8. Does the LA give schools in our area guidance on policies to promote environmental issues like uniform recycling and practical uniforms that can be worn in different weather's, for children walking to school or coming on bikes etc?
  - Can the welfare team help promote policy guidelines on affordable uniforms

Is there anything that has come up in your work that you feel is an issue?

#### Questions for LA: School Trips

No help is available for school trips other than LA recommended residential visits

