

1^{IN}5

**RAISING
AWARENESS
OF CHILD
POVERTY**

**TOP TIPS FOR
SCHOOLS**

1 in 5: Raising Awareness of Child Poverty

Top Tips for Schools

The following is a list of ideas or things to consider suggested by 390 staff, parents and carers and children and young people who took part in the '1 in 5: Cost of the School Day' focus groups and training in the past 6 months. Some of the things you will already be doing but some may give you food for thought.

SCHOOL CLOTHING



- * 'Be flexible about uniform and allow for purchase from a range of suppliers.'
- * 'Hold regular uniform sales and use positive language (avoid advertising as 'second hand clothing' and instead call sales Pop-up shops, Flash sales or Clothing Recycling Events instead).'
- * 'Link uniform sales into other schools initiatives, eg eco schools and recycling to overcome any perceived stigma.'
- * 'Advise parents that you will recycle all lost property after a certain period of time.'
- * 'Make PE kit available to children who need it without them having to ask every week.'

FOOD & SNACKS

- * 'Provide opportunities for children to eat breakfast before starting school.'
- * 'Save uneaten fruit, yogurts and snack bars from packed lunches and make them available for children who would like them.'
- * 'If someone regularly doesn't have lunch money, discreetly ask about the reasons for this and cover the costs of lunch for an agreed period of time for non FSM pupils whose parents are having financial difficulties.'



IN THE CLASSROOM



- * 'Let parents know what the school will provide for their child (eg stationery) as well as what they need to bring.'
- * 'Have a stationery box at the front of each classroom that all pupils can use at any time.'
- * 'Encourage donations of stationery from the local community to help resource school supplies.'
- * 'Be aware that some children may not be having a party and get cards and presents for their birthday so consider how to ensure children's birthdays are celebrated in class.'

HOMWORK & OUT OF SCHOOL LEARNING

- * 'Provide a homework club which has appropriate materials and access to online resources and encourage parents to attend and help support children.'
- * 'Bear in mind when setting homework that not all children have access to the internet or money for resources for arts and crafts.'
- * 'Know who your pupils in SIMD 1-3 are and provide extra attention and support, especially with regards to literacy initiatives.'



CHARITY AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES/SPECIAL EVENTS



- * 'Encourage 'show and tell' or golden time activities not to involve electronic toys as this may lead to competition and stigmatisation.'
- * 'Could dress down days be themed days instead? This way a fancy dress box can be provided or opportunities set up for children to make masks or other items in class beforehand.'
- * 'Consider arranging book swaps rather than book fairs which put pressure on parents to buy certain books for their child.'
- * 'Instead of asking families for money, explore how children can support good causes in other ways, such as helping at an event to raise awareness or doing a bag pack.'
- * 'Is there any way of making school photographs more affordable? Can there be a cheaper digital option?'
- * 'Instead of an 'American-style' prom which can become competitive, consider low cost alternatives like a day at the beach or making the event about doing something for the local community.'

SCHOOL TRIPS & ACTIVITIES

- * 'Add up the amount of money requested from parents in all the letters that are sent home during a pupil's time in school and consider spacing things out more.'
- * 'Inform parents at the start of the year how much may be needed for activities so they have plenty of advance warning.'
- * 'Revise any first come (with payment)-first serve policies for activities. This is not fair on parents who cannot produce the money immediately.'



- * 'Encourage parent councils to allocate a proportion of their income raised to a hardship fund which the school administers for pupils from low income families. This helps keep the families involved anonymously.'
- * 'Reading out the names of those who have not paid for activities can be embarrassing. Make direct contact with the parents and see if you can understand whether there is a reason for non-payment.'
- * 'Letters requesting money should come to parents directly through email or sealed envelopes as children may hide them if they are worried their parents cannot pay.'

OTHER

- * 'Hold high expectations of all pupils but be understanding of the circumstances of each.'
- * 'Use the 1 in 5 training. It's a great way to raise awareness amongst staff.'
- * 'Anti-bullying policies should include clear statements on money-based bullying and staff should be mindful of this.'
- * 'Developing positive relationships with parents is crucial. Staff being in the playground to meet and greet at the start of the school day has made a big difference in some schools.'
- * 'Support parents to claim the benefits they are entitled to by signposting to agencies and other forms of support/advice or hold information events in school.'
- * 'Encourage handmade letters and presents for teachers. Discourage class collections of money for teacher gifts or even consider asking pupils not to buy presents at all.'
- * 'Review reward and merit systems to ensure they are not given for things that could be related to finances at home, such as 'correct' uniform or having a pencil.'

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

EIS (2015) Face Up to Poverty www.eis.org.uk/Campaigns/Child-Poverty

CPAG (2015) Cost of the School Day Report

TRAINING REQUESTS?

If you would like your school staff to take part in the **1 in 5 Raising Awareness of Child Poverty Workshop and Focus Groups** please contact childpoverty@edinburgh.gov.uk

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