School Uniforms Update

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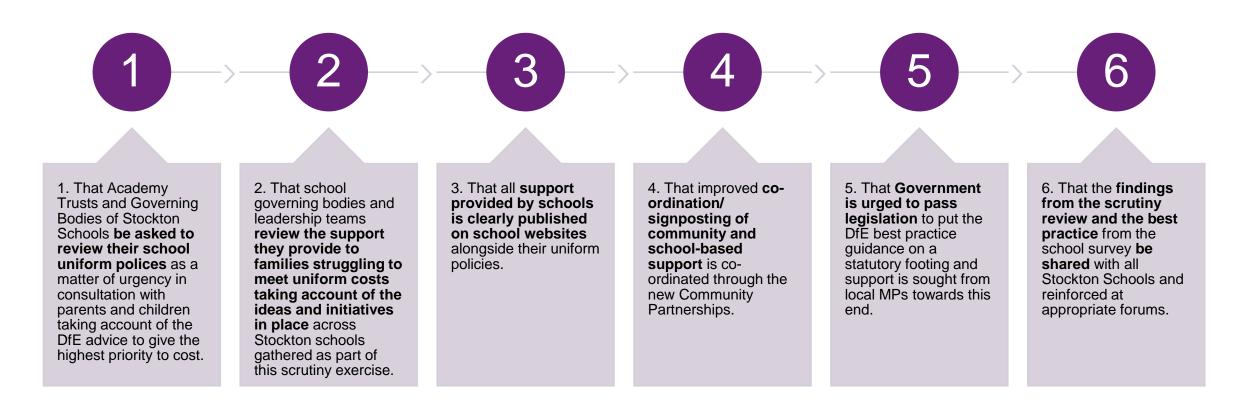
Service Lead Education and Wellbeing

6th November 2023

Stockton-on-Tees BOROUGH COUNCIL

School Uniform

Scrutiny Recommendations

1 → **2** → **3** → **4** → **5** → **6**

1. That Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies of Stockton Schools **be asked to review their school uniform polices** as a matter of urgency in consultation with parents and children taking account of the DfE advice to give the highest priority to cost.

2. That school governing bodies and leadership teams **review the support they provide to families struggling to meet uniform costs taking account of the ideas and initiatives in place** across Stockton schools gathered as part of this scrutiny exercise.

3. That all **support provided by schools is clearly published on school websites** alongside their uniform policies.

4. That improved **co-ordination/ signposting of community and school-based support** is co-ordinated through the new Community Partnerships.

5. That **Government is urged to pass legislation** to put the DfE best practice guidance on a statutory footing and support is sought from local MPs towards this end.

6. That the **findings from the scrutiny review and the best practice** from the school survey **be shared** with all Stockton Schools and reinforced at appropriate forums.

School Uniforms

The DfE produced statutory guidance on the cost of school uniforms which schools must have regard to when developing and implementing their school uniform policy. This guidance requires schools to publish their uniform policy on their website.

The published uniform policy should be easy to understand and, where a school has a school uniform, should:

- clearly state whether an item is optional or required

- make clear if the item will only be worn at certain times of the year (for example, if it's summer or winter uniform)

- make clear whether a generic item will be accepted or if a branded item is required

- make clear whether an item can only be purchased from a specific retailer or if it can be purchased more widely, including from second-hand retailers

DfE policy on school uniform

*It is for the **governing body of a school** to decide . . . what (the school uniform policy) should be. This flows from the duties placed upon all governing bodies by statute to ensure that school policies* **promote good behaviour** *and* **discipline** *amongst the pupil body. It is also for the governing body to decide how the uniform should be sourced.*

Stockton-on-Tees
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DfE policy on school uniform

*The Department strongly encourages schools to have a uniform as it can play a valuable role in contributing to the **ethos** of a school and setting an **appropriate tone**.*

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Best Practice and Resources

School Uniforms Guide

Child Poverty Action Group

https://cpag.org.uk/system/files_force/files/page/Final-School-Uniforms-Guide_0.pdf

Affordable school uniforms: a guide

School Uniforms Guide

Content

- New legislation
- Advice on updating school uniform policies
- Setting up a pre-loved school uniform shop
- Promoting pre-loved uniform provision
- Case studies

School Uniform

Considerations

☐ The impact of stipulating variations in uniform

☐ Avoiding frequent changes to minimise financial impact

☐ How the costs affect different groups of pupils

☐ The views of parents and pupils

☐ Avoiding additional uniform requirements for extra-curricular

☐ The use of branded items is kept to a minimum

☐ Parents are not required to purchase multiple expensive items

☐ Your contracts and arrangements with suppliers help parents get value for

LINK: NGA information on affordable school uniform policy

Questions for governors/ trustees

1. Based on this information, what changes should be made to our uniform policy to ensure that it is affordable to families and reflects the circumstances of the communities we serve?

2. How are stakeholders – including pupils and their families – being consulted on our uniform requirements? Have we been proactive in seeking views from all groups?

3. What are parents telling us about the impact of our uniform policy on them?

4. Does the information/data on compliance with our uniform policy suggest any issues with affordability and inclusivity?

5. How do we support families to comply with our uniform policy and ensure that issues of non-compliance are dealt with sensitively?

6. How do we positively promote our second-hand uniform provision and remove any stigma parents may attach to it?

7. How are we using good procurement practice and developing relationships with uniform suppliers to ensure costs are kept low?

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Dissemination

School Forums

Headteachers and senior leaders

- Closing the Gap – termly

- Education Matters

- Pupil Premium Leadership training

Governors

- Governor Briefings – half termly

- Pupil Premium Governor training

Wider Forums

Stockton Borough Council

- Education Improvement Service
- Cost of Living
- Child Poverty
- Fairer Stockton

VCSE

- Catalyst

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