

Subject:	The cost of secondary school uniform		
Date of Meeting:	8 March 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Families Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Mark Storey	Tel: 01273 294410
	Email:	mark.storey@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 This report has been produced as a result of the Labour Group recommendation to reduce the costs of secondary school uniform in Brighton and Hove presented at the Children and Young People Committee on 9th January 2021.

1.2 This report:

- details the uniform policy and associated costs for a pupil in each local authority secondary school, voluntary sector secondary school and secondary academy in our city;
- describes the support currently available for any families experiencing economic hardship and struggling to ensure compliance with the uniform policy for their school;
- provides options to further reduce the financial burden of school uniform requirements on disadvantaged families (to be explored in partnership with school head teachers and governors).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the report is noted and referred to for consideration.

2.2 That the committee note that further options to be discussed with secondary school Headteachers and Governors include:

- More detailed information to be provided on school websites to support families in accessing cheaper school uniform.
- For secondary schools to consider the number of branded items required, removing these where at all possible so that uniform cost is minimised.
- That secondary schools do not frequently change their uniform requirements for pupils.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The government recognises that uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. Many Headteachers believe that school uniform is a social leveller that benefits all pupils. School uniform policy is determined by the school leadership and governing body of each individual school.
- 3.2 The issues around school uniform costs and the implications of these on families have been communicated to leaders and governors through the Poverty Proofing Programme (see Appendix 1). Subsequent communications have followed in order to keep the issue high profile.
- 3.3 School uniform is decided by Headteachers and their Governing body. Schools report they are keen to support any family who struggle to have correct school uniform.
- 3.4 Following the Poverty Proofing recommendations, secondary schools reviewed their uniform policies (Appendix 2). They considered how to provide a smart, practical, affordable school uniform, while maintaining each school's unique identity. Specifically, they considered reducing the number of items requiring logos. Items without logos are less expensive, can be brought from multiple outlets and allow uniform to be recycled between pupils in different schools.
- 3.5 Schools have indicated on their website whether items are compulsory, optional and whether non-branded alternatives can be worn. There are minimal gender specific items of clothing for all school.
- 3.6 Headteachers are acutely aware of the financial burden on some families of providing school uniform. These will be exacerbated by the challenges faced as a result of Covid-19.
- 3.7 All schools make strenuous efforts to offer pre-loved uniform to families, often supported by their parents' associations. Schools also offer financial support to families to spread the cost of uniform, and many will buy items of uniform outright for targeted families.
- 3.8 This issue has been previously discussed between Councillors and the ten secondary Headteachers. This was followed up with a letter last year by Councillor Kate Knight (See appendix 3). As a result, the secondary Headteachers signed a collective pledge to help families struggling to pay for school uniform (See Appendix 4).

The pledge from secondary Heads states: "Each of us leads a different school serving a different local community. So, we do things differently. Supporting struggling families with the cost of school uniform is one such thing. However, this does not prevent us from offering the following collective pledge. If you are struggling with the cost of school uniform we will help." Schools are clear that they have systems to support families.

- 3.9 All secondary schools have a named contact who will support parents with uniform if where necessary. For example they are aware of charities (see appendix 5) in Brighton and Hove that can support with supplying uniform.
- 3.10 The charity [Smarter Uniforms](#) has launched their own dedicated e-commerce site where they sell low-cost school uniforms and have eight school partners across the city from which they collect donated uniforms. They are also able to provide free uniforms via referrals from community organisations across the city. (See Appendix 6).
- 3.11 Secondary schools have been asked to consider cheaper alternatives to suppliers (See Appendix 2) e.g. supermarkets and/or allowing parents to pay for uniform in instalments to spread the cost.
- 3.12 Secondary schools were asked to consider the use of sanctions for incorrect uniform. Headteachers recognise that this may be beyond the individual student's control and are committed to supporting families in need.

[Brighton and Hove City Councillors](#) have supported a bill put forward in Parliament by [Mike Amesbury MP](#) calling on the government to put a legal limit on the number of more expensive branded items required for a school uniform. <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2020/council-calls-cheaper-school-uniforms>

- 3.13 Phase two of a fully funded Poverty Proofing Programme (Appendix 1) is scheduled to take place in the Spring Term of 2021 in response to the pandemic to support schools in identifying strategies to best aid children living in poverty, including the issue of school uniform.

4. CONCLUSION:

- 4.1 There is a commitment across the city, from Councillors, council officers and the Secondary School Partnerships to continue to work together on the issue of reducing school uniform costs.
- 4.2 Further discussions will take place between council officers and secondary Heads regarding this matter to reduce costs for families.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications on central local authority budgets identified within the report. However, secondary schools may incur costs in supporting disadvantaged families with the costs.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steve Williams

Date: 14/01/21

6.0 Legal Implications:

- 6.1 It is for the governing body of a school to decide whether there should be a school uniform policy and if so what that should be. This flows from the duties placed upon all governing bodies under section 88 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to ensure that school policies promote good behaviour and discipline amongst the pupil body.

6.2 The School Admissions Code 2014 states that admission authorities must ensure that policies around school uniform do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child. This is reinforced in DfE Guidance on School Uniform (September 2013) which states that “no school uniform should be so expensive as to leave pupils or their families feeling unable to apply to, or attend, a school of their choice, due to the cost of the uniform. School governing bodies should therefore give high priority to cost considerations”.

Lawyer Consulted:

Serena Kynaston

Date:11/02/2021

7.0 Equalities Implications:

7.1 Issues around uniform could impact on pupils’ attendance and engagement in learning if they do not have access or funding to acquire the specified uniform.

8.0 Sustainability Implications:

8.1 We are currently unaware of sustainability implications. However, reusing and recycling of school uniform is being promoted in our city’s schools. (See Appendix 5)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. What is Poverty Proofing?

Poverty Proofing the School Day is a project developed by Children North East. The project provides a toolkit to reduce stigma around poverty, remove barriers to learning and assist schools in exploring the most effective ways to spend their pupil premium allocation. Poverty Proofing the School Day consists of an audit for each individual school, providing questions to ask of pupils, staff, parents and governors. The result is an action plan tailored to each individual school to address any stigmatising policies or practices.

2. **Brighton and Hove School uniform prices** (this spreadsheet has been populated using information from uniform stockists recommended by schools. However, there are some items where cheaper alternatives can be sourced).

Schools	Link to school policy	Where to buy	School insignia	Price
Blatchington Mill School	https://www.blatchingtonmill.org.uk/for-students/uniform/	https://khalsaschoolwear.co.uk/school/blatchington-mill/	jacket	from £13
	Only items with compulsory next to them need to be purchase from Khalsa everything else is optional/ can be purchased from any supplier	School also support families each year with a hardship fund that can be accessed for uniforms - this supports families in need each year and is worth £5000.	Compulsory - jumper	from £23.20
			tie	£4.50
			long sleeved shirts (twin pack)	from £13.50
			short sleeved shirts (twin pack)	from £13.50
			short sleeved blouses (twin pack)	from £13.50
			boys slim trousers	from £14.50
			senior boys slim trousers	from £17
			senior boys regular trousers	from £17
			girls slim trousers	from £18
			kilt	from £28
			Y7 PE polo	from £16.50
			y8-11 PE polo	from £16.50
			PE sweatshirt	from £13
			PE shorts	from £12
			skort	from £14.50
			training pants	from £14

[Brighton
Aldridge
Community
Academy](https://www.baca-uk.org.uk/Uniform/)

<https://www.baca-uk.org.uk/Uniform/>

<https://www.sussexuniforms.co.uk/collections/brighton-aldridge>

sport leggings from £17.50
games socks from £6.50
short socks from £7.50
knee high socks from £7.50
boys blazer from £29.95

girls blazer from 29.95
jumper from £19.95
tie £7.95
boys shirt (twin pack) from £15.95
tie collar blouse (twin pack) from £15.95
boys suit trousers from £19.95
boys shorts from £17.95
skirt from £18.95
girls suit trousers from £22.95
socks (3pack) from £5.95
tights (twin pack) £5.95
Dr. Martens £94.95
senior boys shoes £44.95
senior boys shoes - wider fit £39.95
senior girls shoes £49.95
PE polo from £25.95
training pants from £22.95
sports leggings from £17.95
football socks from £5.95
trainers from £29.99
football boots from £35.95
PE bag £3.95
gum shield £4.50

[Cardinal
Newman
Catholic
School](#)

[Uniform | Cardinal
Newman Catholic School,
Hove, East Sussex, UK
\(cncs.co.uk\)](#)

<https://www.sussexuniforms.co.uk/collections/cardinal-newman>

scientific calculator	£16.95
polo (different colour for each year)	from £9.95
jumper (different colour for each year)	from £12.95
skirt	from £26.95
tights (twin pack)	£5.95
senior girls trousers	from £19.95
slim fit senior boys trousers	from £19.95
sturdy fit senior boys trousers	from £21.95
boys shorts	from £16.95
socks (3pack)	from £5.95
boys PE top	from £14.95
girls PE top	from £15.95
football shorts	from £7.95
rugby shorts	from £10.95
PE fleece	from £19.95
boys tracksuit top	from £19.95
year 10/11 PE hoodie	£18.95
rugby shirt	from £18.95
skort	from £15.95
training pants	from £23.95
sports leggings	from £19.95
PE rain jacket	from £22.95
dance tshirt	from £8.95
football socks	from £5.95
games socks (3pack)	£7.95
trainers	from £29.95
football boots	from £35.95

Dorothy Stringer School	uniform (dorothy-stringer.co.uk)	Dorothy Stringer – Sussex Uniforms	shin pads	£13.95
			gum shield	£4.50
			sweatshirt	from £15.50
			Stringer sweatshirt	from £15.95
			polo	from £7.95
			fitted polo	£8.95
			PE polo	from £7.95
			1/4 zip mid layer	from £21.95
			PE shorts	from £6.95
			track pants (optional)	from £18.95
Hove Park School	https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/a492de17/files/uploaded/School%2BUniform%2BPolicy%2B14-16%2B%28ratified%29%2B%284%29_pTNflh5QSdqUA0wETtEH.pdf	https://www.logosports.co.uk/blank/Hove-Park-Secondary-School?c=2890522&pn=1	Leggings (optional)	from £18.95
			Socks (discontinued)	from £6.95
			PE socks	from £6.95
			PE shorts	from £3.75
			rugby shirt	from £19.50
			PE socks	from £5
			PE t shirt	from £8
			PE vest	from £8
			midlayer	from £18.95
			PE skort	from £14.75
girls leggings	from £19.35			

King's School (free school)	https://www.kingsschoolhome.org.uk/uniform.php	https://www.logosports.co.uk/blank/Kings-High-School?c=2890537&pn=1	girls PE polo	from £14
			PE half zip	from £16
			girls PE skort	from £14.75
			rugby shirt	from £19.50
			football socks	from £4
			PE shorts	from £5.50
			boys PE polo tie	from £14
			girls blazer	from £6.50
			boys blazer	from £36
			jumper	from £36
			cardigan	from £13.50
			girls long sleeved shirt	from £15
			girls short sleeved shirt	from £13
			boys long sleeved shirt	from £13
			boys short sleeved shirt	from £14.50
			sports leggings	from £14.50
			trousers	from £17
			PE locker bag	from £16.50
			rucksack	from £15
			skirt	from £10
Longhill High School	School Uniform - Longhill High School	https://www.sussexuniforms.co.uk/collections/longhill-high-school	boys blazer	from £23
			girls blazer	from £31.95
			jumper	from £31.95
			tie	from £19.95
			boys shirt (twin pack)	£6.50
			tie collar blouse (twin pack)	from £15.95
				from £15.95

slim fit senior boys trousers	from £17.95
boys shorts	from £17.95
skirt	from £19.95
senior girls trousers	from £19.95
tights (twin pack)	£5.95
socks (3pack)	from £5.95
boys shoes - wider fit	from £39.95
boys shoes - slip on	from £44.95
boys shoes - lace up	from £44.95
Dr Martens	£94.95
girls shoes	£49.95
dance jumper	from £14.95
dance tshirt	from £10.95
boys PE top	from £15.95
PE shorts	from £11.50
girls PE top	from £15.95
PE skort	from £17.50
fleece	from £21.95
tracksuit bottoms	from £21.50
PE leggings	from £20.50
football socks	from £5.95
PE rain jacket	from £16.95
trainers	from £29.95
PE bag	£3.95
shin pads	£13.95
skirt	from £20
polo	from £8
ladies polo	from £8
support student polo	from £8

[Patcham High School](#)

[Uniform and Equipment - Patcham High School](#)

<https://www.logosports.co.uk/crate/Patcham-High-School?c=2890542&pn=1>

[Portslade
Aldridge
Community
Academy](#)

[Portslade Aldridge
Community Academy
\(PACA\) - Uniform &
Equipment](#)

<https://www.sussexuniforms.co.uk/collections/portslade-aldridge>

ladies support polo	from £8
lead student polo	from £8
ladies lead student polo	from £8
cardigan	from £17.25
sweatshirt	from £11
lead student sweatshirt	from £11
PE t shirt	from £8
Dance tshirt	from £10
PE hoodie	from £13
dance sweatshirt	from £12
PE shorts	from £3.75
football socks	from £4
fleece	from £11.50
boys blazer	from £36.95
girls blazer	from £36.95
jumper	from £19.95
tie	£5.95
boys suit trousers	from £19.95
girls suit trousers	from £22.95
skirt	from £16.95
shirts (twin pack)	from £15.95
tie collar blouse (twin pack)	from £15.95
socks (3pack)	from £5.95
tights (twin pack)	£5.95
Dr Martens	£94.95
senior boys shoes - slip on	from £44.95
senior boys shoes - wider fit	from £39.95

[Varndean School](#)

Varndean School - Uniform

<https://khalsaschoolwear.co.uk/school/varndean-school/>

senior girls shoes	from £44.95
boys PE top	from £15.95
girls PE top	from £15.95
PE shorts	from £10.95
sweat track top	from £21.95
training pants	from £22.95
PE leggings	from £19.95
sports sock	from £6.95
games sock (3pack)	from £7.95
shin pads	£13.95
gum shield	£4.50
PE bag	£3.95
trainers	from £29.95
football boots	from £35.95
rugby boots	from £34.95
scientific calculator	£16.95
boys blazer	from £38
girls blazer	from £38
jumper	from £18
cardigan	from £19
tie	from £6.50
long sleeved shirt (twin pack)	from £13.50
short sleeved shirts (twin pack)	from £13.50
long sleeved blouse (twin pack)	from £13.50
short sleeved blouse (twin pack)	from £13.50
boys slim fit trousers	from £14.50
senior boys slim fit / regular trousers	from £17
girls slim fit trousers	from £18
skirt	from £15
PE jacket	from £28

long sleeved PE top	from £21
base layer top	from £18
PE polo	from £17
PE shorts	from £11.50
plain PE shorts	from £8
sports leggings	from £13
base layer leggings	from £20
games socks	from £7.35
short socks	from £7.50
knee high socks	from £7.50
tights	from £6

**ALL SCHOOLS REQUIRE CLOTHES
TO HAVE NAME TAGS/LABELS.**

FROM £4.50

3. Councillor Knight's letter to Secondary Headteachers



Leader's Office
First Floor, Room 193
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

To the Headteacher Colleagues and Chairs of Governors Blatchington Mill School Nevill Avenue Hove BN3 7BW	Date: Phone: e-mail:	1 st July 2020 01273 291011 Kate.knight@brighton-hove.gov.uk
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Dear Headteacher Colleagues and Chairs of Governors,

On behalf of the council, I want to thank you for all you have done and are continuing to do to support young people and their families through this very challenging time. As we and our communities move into the 'new normal', there will be further challenges for schools in addressing missed learning and enabling pupils and staff to return to school safely.

There also will be significant economic challenges for many families that have faced the lockdown period on reduced or no wages.

Prior to Covid-19, one of the major issues that arose during our focus on 'Poverty Proofing the School Day' was the cost of school uniforms.

For those starting new schools, or who have grown out of their uniforms, the costs of new items of uniform were already a potential barrier for some families.

As a Labour administration, we support the idea, introduced by Mike Amesbury MP, of statutory guidance limiting the number of more expensive branded items required for a school uniform. (<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/uniform-bill-mp-wants-restriction-on-branded-items/>).

I believe that following lockdown, this problem will be much more significant for families this September. Now, more than ever, the cost of a school uniform could cause serious hardship.

So, I am writing to ask that you urgently consider relaxing school uniform policies. In particular I would like to suggest allowing pupils to wear items available on the high street that are easy care and cheaper to buy – especially in the short term and in recognition of the exceptional times we are in.

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk
Printed on recycled, chlorine-free paper

As we are all aware, research shows that the gap between pupils living in disadvantage and their peers has widened during the pandemic. We are all keen to support schools in addressing this. Our education team has been talking with Children North East, who later in the year will offer online workshops to support senior leaders in best practice.

In the meantime, I would ask you and your governors to consider these proposals regarding uniform as just the first measures. They would provide immediate and tangible support to parents and pupils with their return to school.

I would be delighted if you could let me know your thoughts on this and how you decide to proceed. Of course, if you have any practical suggestions that would help with the roll out of this measure please let us know. It would be great to share them with other schools.

I would also be more than happy to join you one morning at a Secondary Headteacher meeting to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Knight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kate Knight
Labour Councillor, Moulsecomb & Bevendean

4. School Uniform pledge from Headteachers



10th July 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Our pledge to you

At the forefront of our planning for the return of pupils to Secondary Schools across the city in September, is a determination to support families that might be experiencing financial difficulties made worse by the Covid-19 crisis.

During the lockdown some of us relaxed our uniform policies. However, the guidance issued by the Government to schools on July 2nd now encourages us to return to our usual uniform policies. This is because the Government recognises that uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. We believe that school uniform is a social leveller that benefits all pupils.

Although all of us are set on complying with Government guidance, we also recognise that there is a need to support the families of some of our children who at the moment are unable to afford new school uniform.

Each of us leads a different school serving a different local community. So, we do things differently. Supporting struggling families with the cost of school uniform is one such thing. However, this does not prevent us from offering the following collective pledge.

If you are struggling with the cost of school uniform we will help.

Please contact the school that your child attends directly.

John McKee
Patcham High

Ashley Harrold
BlatchingtonMill

Kate Williams
Longhill

Gareth Hughes
Vardean

Claire Jarman
CNCS

Matt Hillier
Dorothy Stringer

Sarah Price
King's School

Mark Poston
PACA

Bob Speight
BACA

Jim Roberts
Hove Park

5. School Uniform Support Flyer



Are you or your family struggling to afford school uniforms? The following schools and services may be able to help..

School	Contact Name	Email address	Telephone
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Information around specific contacts have been removed as this information dates back to 2017 and may be out of date.

You can either contact the relevant schools listed above, or here are some other suggestions:

SMARTER UNIFORMS, BRIGHTON

Tucked away behind the ethical trading shop 'FAIR' on Queen's Road, 'Smarter Uniforms' can swap outgrown uniforms for vouchers and are able to provide discounted uniforms where needed- for more info, contact: bhsmarteruniforms@gmail.com

COATS FOR KIDS, SUSSEX

Project Partner of One Church and Chomp, this organisation receives and gives out school uniforms. For more info, please contact: bhcoatsforkids@gmail.com

If you are aware of any other organisations in Brighton that can help struggling families with school uniforms, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us an email at:



Appendix 6

Smarter Uniforms

HOW IT WORKS



Shop now and save!

Smarter Uniforms provides good quality and affordable second hand school uniforms for families across Brighton & Hove. Buy branded items from partner schools as well as a large range of unbranded clothes such as trousers, summer dresses and white shirts and more.

Shop online or get in touch with any questions.

[SHOP NOW](#)



Donate unwanted uniform

Donate clean outgrown uniforms at your child's school if they are a partner school. If not, please drop-off clean uniforms at the main shop on Queens Road or at The Green Centre on their days visiting the Open Market. Check out all locations.

Want to save even more money whilst tackling textile waste? Use the Smarter Uniforms loyalty card at the main shop. One stamp per item, 12 stamps for £3 off the next purchase. Bargain.

[LOCATIONS](#)



Get involved

Partnerships are at the heart of the Smarter Uniforms initiative. As a volunteer-led community organisation, partnerships help with essential cogs in the wheel - such as shop premises, storage, transport, communications, events and funding.

Lots of individuals and organisations make Smarter Uniforms happen. Check out our current partners and get involved today!

[GET INVOLVED](#)



What do we do?

Smarter Uniforms collects unwanted school uniforms and resells them to families at low cost. This means that good quality, clean uniforms are enjoyed for longer, benefiting families and our precious environment.

Students and parents can donate clean uniforms at collection boxes in eight schools across Brighton & Hove, or at the main shop at 21 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XA.

Smarter Uniforms sorts through and repairs donations, creating a high quality bank of branded and unbranded items for boys and girls, from primary and secondary schools. Good quality uniforms are sold on at low prices, saving around one third of the cost of buying brand new. Parents and carers that use Smarter Uniforms save on average £100 per child per year, with items starting from just £0.50.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Background Documents:

None