

# National Parent Forum of Scotland submission of 2 March 2022

## PE1914/D - Ban school uniforms in secondary schools

In terms of reducing the cost of the school day, I fear dispensing with uniforms would have the opposite effect. Uniforms offer opportunities for school communities to help families who are struggling by running uniform exchanges. School uniforms needn't be expensive.

[My school] run a uniform recycling event which is well attended. This is a free event and happens each term.

I worry that low-income families will be frowned upon or bullied [if uniforms were to be removed].

White shirts and black bottoms – easy to recycle and great to get cheap from supermarkets. Moving to branded [options] just opens divides that don't need to be there at school.

Dundee have worked hard at cost of the school day to keep uniforms as cost effective as possible.

I think removing school uniforms would increase the financial burdens for families and there would be a greater visual divide for those living in poverty and those not.

There are as many views on this as there are families. Personal point of view [is that] I would love uniform to be school hoodie (e.g. same colour, same logo), trousers fit for comfort, moving around and being active. Our primary had joggers and a school fleece for a while. I loved it as did [my] family member but some of the parents felt it was too scruffy. Not sure what a modern, active, learning environment has to do with shirt and tie. Children and young people show their income levels by phones, bags, shoes, PE kit, haircuts, jewellery, makeup, number of piercings etc. A halfway house may be a cop-out but I feel the age of school shirt and tie are past.

At my high school the pupils are canvassed and they wanted uniforms back after a year when there was no requirement due to Covid. That really surprised me. My observation during this period was that kids

made sensible choices without uniform. We had absolutely no issues. In many European countries there is no requirement for uniforms and kids get on with their school day fine. Interestingly the reason our school dispensed with uniforms 2020-21 was for hygiene (covid) reasons. I wouldn't be overly sad to see the requirement go.

I definitely don't disagree with the idea of tweaking uniform requirements to enhance comfort. So long as there is still a uniform.

A shirt and tie give an identity to the school.

Uniforms are a great leveller – especially if schools opt for a low maintenance type as opposed to top of the range blazers and emblazoned crests from selected suppliers. The recycling aspect is another positive.

My one observation is that blazers are wholly useless attire for a large chunk of the school year. I wouldn't object to ditching them.

I'm in favour of uniform however I feel that if your child appears neat and tidy wearing something that fits [the] household budget and more importantly fits well in line with the uniform then that is ok. [...] We run successful uniform recycling events and kids have voted for uniforms to be maintained. Blazers only in winter is not practical.

I hope this qualitative feedback is helpful and should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.