

Statutory School Uniform Guidance Consultation

May 2022

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Introduction

The Scottish Government has committed to introduce statutory guidance in Scotland which aims to address equalities issues around uniform policy and reduce the cost of school uniform, as this can be a significant barrier to participation in learning. This consultation seeks views on:

- what should be included within the scope of the guidance;
- the role that school uniform plays within the ethos, culture and day to day school life;
- the considerations available to schools and education authorities in reducing school uniform costs;
- the draft principles which are intended to be incorporated as part of national school uniform policy.

Who is this consultation for?

This consultation is open to anyone with an interest in school uniform policy, but especially pupils, parents and carers, education authorities and education authority schools, and those who provide school uniform items.

In addition, we have made arrangements to specifically seek the views of children and young people on school uniform policy. These will be taken together with the findings of this consultation to inform future policy and guidance development.

Application of the policy guidance

It is intended that the guidance will directly apply to education authority schools, independent and grant-aided schools. It is intended that schools and education authorities will continue to provide school and authority based policy for school uniforms.

What is not included within the scope of the guidance and this consultation

It is not intended that the school uniform items will be mandated at national levels. Instead it is intended that the national guidance will inform local authorities and schools policies.

It is not intended that there will be a national school uniform policy which is applied in all schools - therefore this is not the subject of this consultation and is not in scope.

It is not intended that school uniform in Scotland will be abolished. Therefore that is not within the scope of the consultation.

Consultation responses

As is set out above this consultation is intended to seek views on aspects of school uniform policy in Scotland. This is stakeholders opportunity to influence the development of national policy and guidance on this matter. Therefore respondents are encouraged to provide detailed and specific comments, including alternative approaches rather than broad general statements.

Further information on responding to the consultation is below.

What should be included in the scope of the guidance?

There are certain matters which are already established as being part of the scope of the guidance. These include: affordability of school uniform; equalities considerations, aligned to protected characteristics; clothing and equipment for PE, physical activity and sport; and the use of exclusion as a compliance measure.

This section provides an opportunity for stakeholders to indicate the issues which they believe should also be included within the scope of the guidance.

Question 1 - what matters related to school uniform would you wish to be included within the guidance? Why?

School uniform in the context of the ethos, culture and day to day school life

It is recognised that school uniform plays an important part in the engagement of pupils with school, in promoting a sense of identity,

belonging and connectedness to school. This section seeks views on the role of school uniform as part of this and the ethos and culture of schools and school life. It is intended to support understanding of why school uniform is important, and to fully understand the specific purpose of for example logoed items as part of this.

Question 2 - what role does school uniform have in the ethos and culture of schools?

Question 3 - Following on from Question 2, are there any particular items of school uniform which are central to that? If so, why?

The considerations that schools and education authorities can make in reducing school uniform costs

One of the main aims of the national guidance is to support the reduction in cost of school uniform for families. We have already increased the level of clothing grant in Scotland in support of this aim. This section seeks views on what policy interventions can or could be made to further this aim.

Question 4 - What can schools do within their policies to support the aim of reducing costs of school uniform? [please give specific examples of approaches which could be considered or have been tried]

Draft principles which are intended to be incorporated as part of national school uniform policy.

The following principles have been developed and would be used to set high level parameters for school uniform policy and inform national guidance.

Principles

That national school uniform policy should:

- Be informed by the views of children and young people
- Apply to education authority, grant-aided and independent schools

- Seeks to reduce the cost of school uniform for families
Supports equity in relation to school uniform
- Promotes equality, including recognising specific matters relating to religion and belief, disability, sex and gender
- Applies to all uniform uses, including PE and senior phase
- Recognises the need for practicality, including in relation to seasonal needs
- Reflects sustainable approaches to school uniform
- Continues the position of no legal requirement upon pupils to wear school uniform
- Considers appropriate response for persistent non-wearing of uniform, recognising ethos and culture of promoting attendance and reducing absence
- Recognises and builds upon current good practice within schools
- Does not introduce unnecessary barriers to school uniform policy and practices.

Question 5 - Are the draft principles appropriate? If you would change any of them please set out what your alternative wording would be. Would you add any principles? Please say what they would be. Are there any which are unnecessary?

Responses

We are inviting responses to the consultation by 14 October 2022. Please respond using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, [Scottish Government - Citizen Space \(consult.gov.scot\)](https://consult.gov.scot). Access and respond online at [School uniforms in Scotland - Scottish Government - Citizen Space \(consult.gov.scot\)](https://consult.gov.scot).

You can save and return to your responses during the consultation period, please ensure that responses are submitted before the closing date of 14 October 2022.

If you are unable to respond using our consultation hub, please complete the Respondent Information Form (available from Supporting Documents) and send with your comments to incluedu@gov.scot or Support and Wellbeing Unit, Scottish Government, Area 2B North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.

Handling your response

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this exercise.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our [privacy policy](#).

Next steps in the process

We would like to thank everyone who provided information for this call for evidence. Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed, and this analysis will inform the development of national policy and inform future guidance.

Respondents who wish to have their responses published will be published here, shortly after the closing date.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this exercise has been conducted, please send them to the contact address above or at incluedu@gov.scot.



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This publication is available at www.gov.scot

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The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80435-403-2 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, May 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1079682 (05/22)

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