

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-877
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/07570/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

27 November 2019

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

Thank you for your letter of 20 November on behalf of the Petitions Committee to ask what support and encouragement the Welsh Government provides, or is able to provide, to schools and other bodies facilitating or considering the operation of used uniform schemes, such as that operating in Denbighshire.

The Welsh Government has consulted on new statutory guidance which came into force in September 2019. The new guidance has been published and can be accessed at the following link <https://gov.wales/school-uniform-and-appearance-policy-guidance-governing-bodies>.

The guidance provides clear and useful support for governing bodies in making their decisions on school uniform policies in respect of access, affordability and flexibility and; will help to ensure consistency in the approach to school uniform and appearance policies. The guidance also sets out the current position in Wales regarding financial assistance for parents towards the cost of purchasing school uniforms.

I am fully aware the cost of the school day is a really important issue for many families in Wales. We want young people to show up at school ready to learn and reach their best outcomes. Last year I asked Children in Wales to produce a suite of guides for schools covering key aspects in addressing the cost of the school day, including understanding the causes and impact of living in poverty, food and hunger, and school uniforms. There is a chapter on school uniform which includes practical examples that schools can take in regard to school uniform recycling schemes. The guides are available here <https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/780da5bf-2216-476e-bba0-208fa18330e8> and will be rolled out to schools when the project expands in 2020.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We are working in partnership with Children in Wales, the Children's Commissioner and the Child Poverty Action Group to achieve a strategic approach for this work going forward.


For 2019-20 we have more than doubled the funding for PDG-Access to over £5 million. Families whose children are **eligible for free school meals** can apply for this grant for the academic school year commencing September 2019, if they are:

- entering reception class or year 3 in primary school
- entering year 7 or year 10 in secondary school
- aged 4, 7, 11 or 14 in special schools, special needs resource bases or pupil referral units

Funding is also available for looked-after children in every school year. For Year 7 learners the grant is £200, recognising the increased costs associated with starting secondary school. The grant can provide help buying school uniform, equipment, sports kit and kit for activities outside of school. Local authorities are also administering a fund to develop more sustainable long term options. We have extended this beyond the classroom to include groups such as youth clubs, to bid for kit stores. The funding is distributed by local authorities directly to families as eligibility is checked via a national checking system, managed by LAs.

In 2018/19 the grant provided overall funding of £48,703 in Denbighshire. We expect this figure to increase this year given the expansion of the grant and the communications campaign which took place over the summer.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

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