



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 7 JUNE 2023**

SUBJECT: COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY UPDATE AND GUIDANCE

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the publication of the Cost of the School Day guidance to all Educational establishments following the collaborative work that was undertaken by the Cost of the School Day Project Workers, with schools across Moray.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) considers and notes the progress to date to reduce the cost of the school day; and**
- ii) notes the Guidance that has been produced as a result of collaborative work with Educational establishments that will be used to support ongoing work in schools to continue to reduce the cost of the school day.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since 2014, Child Poverty Action Group Scotland (CPAG), a registered charity, has worked with schools and local authorities across Scotland in a range of ways including direct work with schools, training, resource development and practice gathering and sharing. The work initially undertaken by CPAG was funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge funded by the Scottish Government and is based on the successful 3 year project delivered in Dundee schools (as they were a Scottish Attainment Challenge Authority).

- 3.2 To expand the Cost of the School Day (CoTSD) project to rural areas in Scotland, the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) submitted a bid to The National Lottery Community Fund. They were successful with their bid and Moray was selected due to work already started. Moray had access to two CoTSD project workers who worked closely with individual schools and officers.
- 3.3 The number of children living in relative poverty in Moray is recorded at 23%. Poverty means, stress, pressure, difficult choices and exclusion from everyday activities for some pupils. This includes being able to access every opportunity on offer at school without causing financial stress for families. The guidance supports schools to remove and reduce costs for families to access education.
- 3.4 In Moray, the appointed CoTSD project workers engaged with all schools through presentations at Head Teacher meetings and other various twilight opportunities. They worked directly with 8 schools (5 primary and 3 secondary) on projects to support each individual school to develop an action plan to reduce the cost of the school day within the context of the school setting and community. These individual projects and the valuable information and data obtained also supported the CoTSD project workers in producing a comprehensive guidance document to support all schools to engage in tackling poverty through reducing the Cost of the School Day.
- 3.5 As part of the Children's Services Plan and to support this work an Education Poverty Steering Group was put in place, which in turn linked with the Fairer Moray Forum and the Fairer Moray Forum Action Group.
- 3.6 In Moray, insight was gathered through the voices and experiences of pupils and families across five primary schools and three secondary schools. Some secondary subjects incurred additional costs to parents including Technical, Home Economics and Art and Design. The Scottish Government provided grant funding to local authorities to support them in reducing these costs to families, whilst schools continued to look for alternative ways to continue reducing the costs after the grant funding ceased. Secondary schools continue to look for innovative ways to reduce these costs, including developing links with local businesses.
- 3.7 During the consultation 1,562 pupils, over 200 parents and over 100 schools staff participated in a variety of questionnaires and workshops. The consultation explored a wide variety of costs including uniform, school trips, access to learning resources and fun events at school.
- 3.8 The data, feedback and information gathered has not only formed the Guidance (**Appendix 1**) but the eight schools participated in local and national online events in October 2022 to share good practice in addressing Cost of the School Day and the positive impact it has had on shaping the individual school Curriculum Rationales.
- 3.9 The final draft of the Cost of the School Day Guidance for schools, written by the CoTSD project workers, was completed in February 2023.

3.10 The next steps are to:-

- Issue an electronic copy of the Guidance to schools by the end of June 2023 to support them as they plan for all learners.
- For schools to use the Guidance to identify ways to continue to reduce the cost of the school day for their context and setting.
- For schools to use the Guidance to support individual families, children and young people who are requiring additional sources of financial support.
- To use the Guidance to support schools as they continue to work on their Rights Respecting School Awards. This will continue to be reviewed and updated and good practice will be shared across Moray.
- Continue to share good practice across schools through online events.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

This report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and the 10 Year Plan and the Poverty Strategy.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill is an Act of the Scottish Parliament to set targets relating to the eradication of child poverty; and to make provision about plans and reports relating to the targets.

The Moray Poverty Action Plan 2018-2021 which incorporates the statutory requirements of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act and the local implementation of *Every Child, Every Chance*.

(c) **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications.

(d) **Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) **Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) **Property**

There are no property issues arising from this report.

(g) **Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on legislation change.

(h) **Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

None arising directly from the report.

(i) **Consultations**

Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Education Resources and Communities and Tracey Sutherland, Committee

Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee scrutinise and note the contents of this report.

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Background Papers:
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