

## **DRAFT: Cost of the school day from a young person's perspective**

### **Purpose**

To develop a practical way to ensure that no activity in schools identify, excludes, treats differently or makes assumptions about those children whose household income or resources are lower than others.

### **Background**

The current political discourse has hardened attitudes towards people living in poverty. There is a strong stigma attached to living in poverty and poor children can be marginalised or even bullied at school. Unintentional discrimination carried out through the school day can mean that children living in poverty are marked out as being different from their peers. This proposal is about challenging some of these unintended practices and behaviours.

This proposal has been developed by the Poverty Leadership Panel's Child Poverty Sub Group. It forms part of the Panel's Action Plan. For more information about the Poverty Leadership Panel, see [here](#).

The approach of 'poverty proofing' the school day has been piloted by the [North East Child Poverty Commission](#) in England. The schools' resource can be found [here](#).

### **Aims**

The aim is to develop in partnership with children, young people, teachers and schools a means to '*poverty proof*' the school day. Young people will highlight behaviours and practices they believe negatively impact on their school day.

The main aim is to reduce the stigma and discrimination children and young people experiencing poverty can face in schools, and by doing so to remove barriers to learning.

Working with teachers and young people, we will develop an action plan individually tailored to each school.

The outcomes will be policy and practice changes within individual schools, where relevant. Through sharing the practice wider across the city, we also seek to have wider policy implications.

The work will be developed from the lived experiences of children and young people and fed back directly to the schools themselves.

### **Activity**

The work will entail carrying out an audit of school policies and practice, asking questions of staff, children and young people and gathering data to establish a picture of how the school impacts on children and young people experiencing poverty.

Information such as the cost of school uniforms; assumptions and the reality about access to the Internet at home; how homework is set; assumptions about opportunities to widen life experiences such as holidays will be gathered and discussed with participants in the project. The delivery of free school meals will also be an important aspect of this work.

Wider issues would also be considered such as the impact of children coming to school having missed breakfast; the knock on effect of practices such as non-

uniform day and charity collections and the number of children who do and don't attend school trips or take part in extra-curricular activities.

A series of recommendations will be presented to the schools for action, individually tailored to each school. The outcomes will be changes to the practices of the school, leading to the reduced stigmatisation of pupils from poorer backgrounds, as well as raising awareness about the ways in which poverty impacts on pupils' lives.

In keeping with the participatory approach to the project, monitoring and evaluation will take place throughout the process. Feedback will be sought from participating schools, from teaching staff, children and young people.

The process itself will include documentation and recording of the actions taken in response to the recommendations and the impact this has had within each school, from the perspective of teaching staff, children and young people and parents.

### **Partners**

Education Services, CHP, GCPH, CPAG, Financial Services, GCVS.

### **Time table**

We will pilot this in 4-5 schools during a 12 month period and then seek to roll it out across the city. The schools will be both primary and secondary schools and will be chosen to represent a mixture of poverty levels.

The following is an example timetable for implementation in 2014-15.

#### **1. Research & Planning**

*January to May*

- Sharing information with partners; inviting additional partners, eg, Cordia.
- Developing indicators of success.
- Recruiting schools interested in taking part in the pilot.
- Recruiting young people with lived experience of poverty.

#### **2. Development**

*August –December*

- Work with children, young people and pilot schools to devise and develop the activities.
- Exploring key questions to be asked and evidence to be sought to establish an accurate picture of the impact of the school day.

*January-February*

- Carry out the audit, make recommendations and develop the school-specific action plan.
- Share findings with key partners.
- Evaluate the work in schools.

*March*

- Make final alterations to the process based on evaluation and feedback.

#### **3. Dissemination**

*April - June*

- Design and production of guidance for other schools.
- Incorporation of identified actions into city's school improvement plans.