

COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

WORKING GROUP

A Cost of the School Day working group can support, guide and monitor your school's efforts to reduce costs and remove barriers to participation in education for children from low income families.

An effective working group will help to share tasks and plan reasonable timescales for embedding Cost of the School Day measures within school life. Regular meetings will maintain momentum and allow the opportunity to reflect on your progress and success.

You can start your work to address costs by highlighting the current good practice in your school. This will set the tone and inspire your working group to continue to promote and encourage good practice and support you on your journey to implement effective and lasting change.

WHAT CAN YOUR WORKING GROUP ACHIEVE?

- Raise awareness throughout the school about the impact of poverty on learning and participation.
- Address stigma often related to poverty and financial worries.
- Guide consultation with the school community, using the [Cost of the School Day Toolkit](#).
- Highlight existing good practice.
- Develop action plans to address challenges identified.
- Support and monitor action plan implementation by highlighting successes and impact.
- Develop a whole school Cost of the School Day policy.

"It does take time to change attitudes so this needs to be on the agenda and spoken about constantly...it's not a fad."

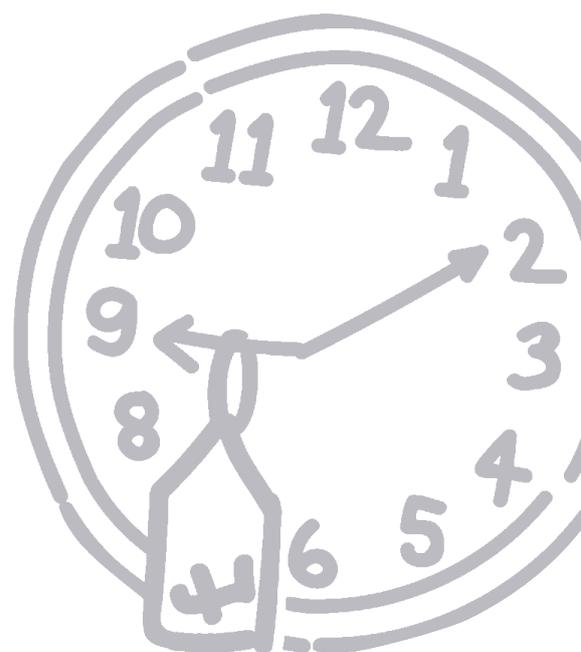
(Secondary school teacher)

MEMBERSHIP

Your working group should consist of senior management and a range of staff in key roles across the school committed to making school inclusive for all children and young people. Your group can also include parents, children and young people. Some schools have their own pupil anti-poverty group or a similar equalities group that you could collaborate with. A working group can exist as a stand-alone team or work as part of a wider improvement group already active in the school.

"It's been important for us to have a real mix of people so that there's the senior leadership there driving it but also people from different departments and with different roles. Having ownership across the school makes getting things right and getting things done so much easier."

(Secondary school PT)



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MAKING AN IMPACT

- Agreeing some simple actions which can be implemented straight away can be really effective. These quick-wins should be easy to implement, inexpensive and bring about immediate change for children and their families. For example, some schools have moved to donation only contributions for entry to school events and activities. This can have an immediate impact in promoting inclusivity, participation and reducing poverty stigma.
- Some actions will involve a longer term approach, so setting reasonable time scales for achieving this change in your action plan is a good idea. For example, some schools have reviewed their policies and processes around Primary 7 school trips by reviewing their initial trip letters, including information for financial support, planning fundraisers and PEF to ensure cost is not a barrier for pupils to attend.
- Many schools are facing the same types of challenges – it can be useful to link in with and learn from good practice in other school communities which can be adapted or replicated. [Here are some examples of work taking place across Scotland.](#)
- Regularly review your action plan, update and amend it appropriately to reflect your school's current position to ensure that Cost of the School Day is embedded throughout school life.
- Continue to consult and involve pupils and families about the changes and initiatives you are embedding within the school day. Consider ways to share updates and get feedback on your progress from the school community.
- It's helpful to be aware of community initiatives and groups, and where appropriate link up with them to enhance the work you are doing.
- Celebrate and share your success with your school and wider community. If possible you could share and promote good practice with neighbouring schools. Your success will support others along their Cost of the School Day journey.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Embedding Cost of the School Day will support your school to create a lasting change in culture.

- Reduced financial pressure on families.
- All pupils are able to participate in all aspects of the school day.
- The voices and experiences of children and young people in your school will be central to informing and driving change.
- Greater awareness amongst staff and the school community about the pressures and stigma of poverty.
- Families will feel better supported and confident approaching the school for further guidance and advice.
- Your school has a clear and strategic approach to tackling financial barriers as a key part of closing the poverty related attainment gap.

"We will continue to create an action plan to target the Cost of the School Day and ensure it remains at the forefront of our (and our wider community's) minds. This is something that will continue in our school as it is now embedded in our culture."

(Primary School PT working group lead)

MORE INFORMATION:

CPAG in Scotland's [Cost of the School Day website](#) offers resources and guidance to support your working group.

You can contact the team on costoftheschoolday@cpagscotland.org.uk for more information and advice.

You can also find us on Twitter [@CPAGScotland](https://twitter.com/CPAGScotland) and sign up for our Cost of the School Day e-bulletins [here](#).

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