



Affordable Schools

WILTSHIRE

The **Affordable Schools Strategy** recognises that cost of living can affect us all and poverty related pressures will impact on pupil behaviour, attendance, relationships, attainment, health and wellbeing.

By taking time to develop a widely shared understanding of the causes, barriers and challenges faced by pupils and families who are living in poverty, we can make well informed universal, positive changes to school culture, policies and practice that will improve the experience of all, especially the most vulnerable.

The **Affordable Schools Strategy** offers an insight into the world of disadvantaged pupils and practical measures to ensure every child can participate, learn and thrive.

Much more than affordability, the strategy is a hearts and minds approach which puts our most vulnerable pupils at the centre of our decision making and ensures every day we take effective action to meet their needs.

SAME SPACE, DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE

WILTSHIRE AFFORDABLE SCHOOLS STRATEGY



**Kate Wilkins – Disadvantaged
Learners & School Leadership**

Affordable Schools Strategy

The Affordable Schools Strategy primarily aims to support schools enhance vision, culture and leadership by:

- adopting a highly inclusive strategy which ensures all pupils have the opportunity to participate, learn and thrive
- receiving a full range of resources to support delivery including Affordable Schools Strategy and Toolkit, implementation plans, surveys (staff, parent, pupils), whole school training materials, website templates and content, wealth of ideas and support for development areas, resources and signposting
- understanding strategic improvement links to school vision, culture and values, SIAMS, Pupil Premium strategy and statement, key policy links and support, Healthy Schools, health and wellbeing
- being eligible to apply for an incremental Affordable Schools Award (Bronze, Silver and Gold) to evidence successful practice and whole school commitment

Co-produced with Wiltshire schools

School	Number on roll	% FSM	% SEN
Ashton Keynes CE Primary	216	7.9%	16.2%
St Michael's CE Primary	199	9.5%	14.1%
Manor Fields Primary	219	16.4%	25.1%
Greentrees Primary	430	18.4%	15.8%
Pembroke Park Primary	238	30.3%	37.0%
Westbury Infant School	208	30.8%	24.5%
The Stonehenge School	1012	13.5%	23.5%
Kingsbury Green Academy	951	21.3%	26.5%
St Joseph's Catholic School	597	20.8%	26.1%
The John of Gaunt School	1253	20.5%	17.9%
Abbeyfield School	910	18.8%	16.8%

*National average DLs 27.0%, Wiltshire average DLs 17.9%

Aims of the 'Affordable Schools' strategy

Wiltshire **Affordable Schools**

- Develop a widely shared understanding of the causes, barriers and challenges faced by pupils and families who are living in poverty
- Make universal, positive changes to policies and practices that will improve the experience of all, especially the most vulnerable





Affordable Schools
WILTSHIRE

Guiding principles

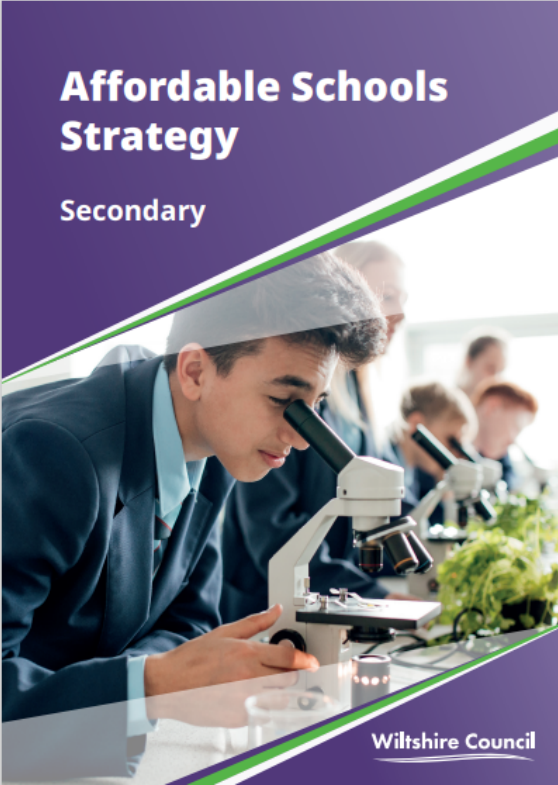
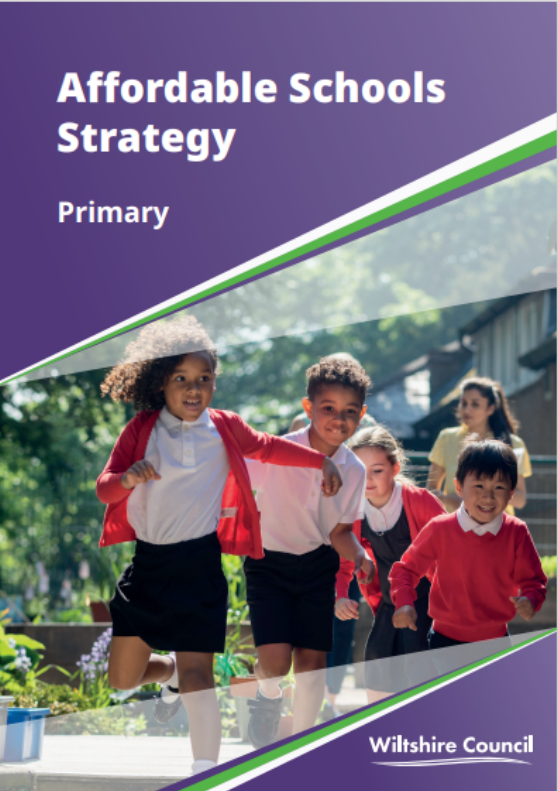
1. An Affordable School is committed to **reducing poverty related stigma** by deliberately making positive changes to every aspect of school policy and practice through the lens of affordability.
2. Any 'affordable' provision is a **universal provision**; we cannot be certain at any one-time which families, or members of the school community, are experiencing financial hardship so our policies and practice should not identify, exclude, treat differently or make assumptions.
3. Being 'affordable' means being creative, and **solutions focused**, to ensure our curriculum offer is always easily accessible to all students, without limiting the quality of education.
4. **Relationships** are key to the success of the Affordable Schools strategy.
5. **Strong leadership and positive action** will make a difference to our school communities.

Affordable Schools Strategy and Toolkit



Affordable Schools

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Affordable Schools - Strategic Leadership

Welcome to our Affordable Schools Resource Page

Our aim is to take action together to implement measures which will help all families with access to learning, and school costs, ensuring that each child can participate, learn and thrive.

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Documents

- Affordable Schools Implementation Plan (docx, 36.46 KB) **🆕 New (08 Sep)**
- Letter to accompany Parent Survey (Affordable Schools) (docx, 29.47 KB) **🆕 New (08 Sep)**
- Affordable School Cost Calculator (xlsx, 1.36 KB) **🆕 New (08 Sep)**
- Website template and information links (docx, 29.97 KB) **🆕 New (08 Sep)**
- Affordable Schools Award and School Application Criteria (docx, 36.66 KB) **🆕 New (08 Sep)**

Documents - Primary specific

- Affordable Schools Pupil Survey (Primary) (docx, 20.90 KB) **🆕 New (07 Sep)**
- Affordable Schools Audit (Primary) (docx, 21.60 KB) **🆕 New (07 Sep)**

Documents - Secondary specific

- Affordable Schools Pupil Surveys (Secondary) (docx, 21.45 KB) **🆕 New (07 Sep)**
- Affordable Schools Audit (Secondary) (docx, 21.66 KB) **🆕 New (07 Sep)**
- Affordable Schools (Secondary Staff Training) (pptx, 10.55 MB) **🆕 New (07 Sep)**

Survey links

- Cost of the School Day - survey for school staff

Navigation

- School Effectiveness resource page

Our Content

- Affordable Schools - Resourcing the school day
- Affordable Schools - Enrichment and Opportunities
- Affordable Schools - Healthy Body Healthy Mind
- Affordable Schools - Securing Positive Partnerships
- Affordable Schools - Research and Evidence

School Effectiveness

Page last updated: 08 Sep 2023

49 | 13 Jul 2023

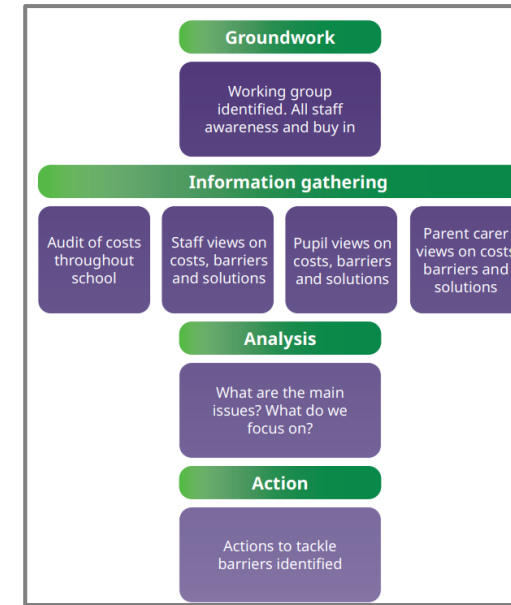
Notes

Customer information

- Affordable schools handbook (secondary), Affordable schools case study template and Secondary training PPT added 19/07/2023

Strategic Leadership

- Affordable Schools Strategy (handbook)
- Affordable Schools Implementation Plan
- Staff, Pupil & Parents Survey
- Letter to accompany survey for parents
- Affordable Schools Audit
- Cost of the school day calculator
- Website template and info link
- Affordable Schools Training
- Affordable Schools Award and Criteria



AFFORDABLE SCHOOLS AUDIT			
	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Section 1: School leaders are visibly committed to making their school 'Affordable'			
There is a clear and highly visible commitment to universal implementation of the Affordable Schools strategy which is embedded within the school vision and is central to school improvement activities			
The school regularly reviews policies and practice, including the PP strategy, through the lens of affordability and, once satisfied this meet the Affordable School aims and guiding principles, includes the statement <i>'This policy has been reviewed through the lens of affordability ensuring that the principles of an Affordable School are active and have a positive impact on reducing poverty related stigma.'</i>			
The school working group effectively use the Affordable Schools Strategy and Toolkit to support implementation and are firmly focused on reducing poverty related stigma and improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged			
Relevant Policies			
Uniform & equipment policy: Required uniform and equipment items are affordable, durable and available from a range of retail outlets. No pupil is punished or made to feel inferior because they cannot afford uniform items or equipment. School adheres to: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-uniform			



Affordable Schools
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Affordable Schools toolkit and resources

1.	Resourcing the School Day - Exploring through a 'cost of living' lens, the demands of the school day and how to bring about positive change to policy and practice
2.	Healthy Body, Healthy Mind - Considering equitable school provision which nurtures children and ensures basic needs are met so they thrive as learners in the classroom.
3.	Enrichment & Opportunities - A broad, rich and equitable offer at the heart of every school community with strategies deliberately designed to ensure access for all.
4.	Securing Positive Partnerships - Strong partnerships & relationships as central to securing whole school community success with strategies to promote engagement and improve outcomes.

Ability to explore affordability practice

- How affordable is your school? How confident are you that children and families feel that they will be met with understanding and empathy if in need of support?
- How effective is your Charging and Remissions policy in acknowledging poverty related stigma and highlighting your commitment to support lower income families?
- How effectively are financial entitlements like Free School Meals and support grants for families on low incomes being promoted to families? Do all families in the school know what is available if it is needed? Are there processes in place to support families to apply for and benefit from extra help?
- How are you communicating with families to find out what resources are needed for children to learn? What processes are in place to provide resources for all children who need them?
- To what extent are school policies and practices designed to reduce financial pressure on families and include children and young people on low incomes? Are there particular practices or policies that could be established or reinstated that have clear benefits for low-income families, for example extended school services such as after school clubs?
- Is there a shared and assumption free culture which understands differing home circumstances and how they may impact on pupils' attitudes and learning




Affordable Schools Bronze Award



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The Affordable Schools Strategy has been fully implemented by following the steps laid out in the 'Implementation Plan' to include:

- Baseline surveys and questionnaires complete (pupils, parents, staff)
- Results from surveys collated to inform plans
- Affordable Schools working group established and active
- Affordable Schools approach visible in PP strategy statement (intent) with an action plan in place for development of one themed area (Resourcing the School Day, Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Enrichment and Opportunities or Securing Positive Partnerships)
- Staff training for Affordable Schools delivered (after survey)
- Affordable Schools parent survey feedback given with prominent and easily accessible 'Affordable Schools' information displayed on the school website
- Regular referral to Affordable Schools Strategy and development in staff meetings and decision making
- A leadership report to Governors evidencing progress and implementation of the Affordable Schools Strategy

Affordable Schools Award and School Application Criteria	
Affordable Schools Award	Key Criteria
 Affordable Schools Network	<p>The Affordable Schools Strategy has been fully implemented by following the steps laid out in the 'Implementation Plan' to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline surveys and questionnaires complete (pupils, parents, staff)• Results from surveys collated to inform plans• Affordable Schools working group established and active• Affordable Schools approach visible in PP strategy statement (intent) with an action plan in place for development of one themed area (Resourcing the School Day, Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Enrichment and Opportunities or Securing Positive Partnerships)• Staff training for Affordable Schools delivered (after survey)• Affordable Schools parent survey feedback given with prominent and easily accessible 'Affordable Schools' information displayed on the school website• Regular referral to Affordable Schools Strategy and development in staff meetings and decision making• A leadership report to Governors evidencing progress and implementation of the Affordable Schools Strategy
 Affordable Schools Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at the Affordable Schools Network• Evidence of strong progress in two themed areas of the Affordable Schools Strategy (Resourcing the School Day, Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Enrichment and Opportunities or Securing Positive Partnerships)• A fully evaluated end of year progress report evidencing impact on school culture, policy, practice and outcomes (especially for disadvantaged)
 Affordable Schools Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear and sustained development of the Affordable Schools Strategy (no less than 2 years) with evidence of strong progress in three or all themes• PP strategy statement contains effective planning and actions which result in high quality, culturally embedded practice• A dynamic and innovative Affordable Schools team consistently strive to improve outcomes for all, especially the most disadvantaged• Sustained, prominent and informative 'Affordable Schools' section on website and in all communication across the school community• Ongoing evidence of leadership reports to evidence progress• Sharing of best practice resources and/or case studies with Affordable Schools Network and Toolkit to support school-to-school improvement• A fully evaluated end of year 2 evidence and impact report on the school's successful delivery of the aims of the Affordable Schools Strategy:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a widely shared understanding of the issues, barriers and challenges faced by pupils and families who are living in poverty• Make universal, positive changes to policies and practices that will improve the experience of all, especially the most vulnerable.

Wiltshire Council

Impact of Affordable Schools

- Overall, 103 Wiltshire schools have been introduced to a comprehensive strategy which enables leaders to strategically create a climate for tackling disadvantage and meet the needs of the school community
- Enabled Hubs and MATs to unite around a strategy which improves outcomes for those experiencing disadvantage
- Participating schools gave a feedback score of 4.89 out of 5.0 for anticipated impact of the training.
- 20 schools signed up to attend the termly 2023/24 network meetings with a feedback score of 5/5.
- Recognises the importance of parent, staff and pupil voice and builds plans around accurately identified needs of the school community (Parent survey feedback – *‘Add more help for people not on qualifying benefits as those people struggle too.’*, *‘Give more notice on upcoming trips. The deposits required have been at short notice.’*). Assessment not assumptions.
- School leader comments: *“The turnaround in culture has been quite remarkable. It feels like you are making no progress but then you look back at where you started and realise how far you have come as a community!”* ; *‘It feels so rewarding to be helping children and families via a strategy rather than firefighting and dealing with the daily needs. Building it into the curriculum and ethos of the school makes us all aware, mindful and ensures it is actioned.’*

Impact of Affordable Schools

- National recognition being described by Marc Rowland (foremost national expert on the effective use of Pupil Premium and improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners, author, Government Advisor, EEF) saying, '*The Affordable Schools programme provides a rigorous, well-planned framework and implementation resources to ensure schools are equitable. The team that has developed the programme are values led, rooted in the realities of school life. It is a brilliant programme that helps pupils and practitioners to thrive together.*'
- Contributed to One Cornwall Attendance Conference (October 2023) to share the principles and activities of the Affordable Schools Strategy at the launch of their attendance project.
- Widely shared across our own service areas, such as with Education & Skills, Public Health. Healthy Schools, Education Welfare Service, Governor Services
- Meaningfully connected with organisations such as the team at the Devizes District Foodbank (with their Affordable Uniform Pledge) and Hampshire County Council who are keen to learn from our Affordable Schools approach.

How does this strategy link to reducing food bank need?

- In 2016-17, Devizes and District Foodbank supported 445 children as part of households receiving emergency food parcels. In 2023-24, this number was 1181, which was the highest number of children supported compared to previous years.
- The Community Organising Team spoke to many families needing to use a food bank due to insufficient income, and one of the factors affecting finances was the cost of school uniform.
- A group of parents and guardians came together and used tactics such as an Affordable Uniform Pledge, setting up pre-loved uniform swaps, and engaging with schools and the council.
- Change was won at a local school around uniform affordability, and we were delighted to see the launch of this strategy last year!
- Other challenges families face are around affording school trips and equipment, accessibility of free school meals, and feeling understood and supported if they are struggling to make ends meet.

Mum tells of struggle to afford school uniform in Devizes

15th June 2023

EDUCATION LOCAL GOVERNMENT



By Jude Holden
Local Democracy Reporter
X@JudeHoldenNews

Share    5 Comments

Families in a Wiltshire town struggling to find the money to pay for school uniform are being offered help.

“I think schools should join the Affordable Schools Strategy because...

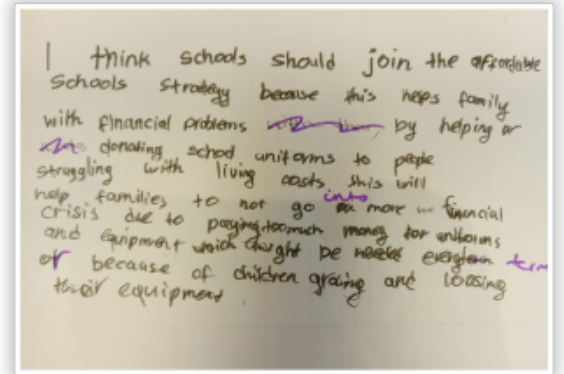
It would be helpful for schools who have children with parents that don't have that much money to support their children who are hungry. Schools should join the food bank to help them support families that are struggling with living costs.

Affordable benefits for everyone!”

[It] provides a better future for the pupils.”

This helps families with financial problems by helping or donating school uniform to people struggling with living costs. This will help families to not go into more financial crisis due to paying too much for uniform and equipment which would be needed every term because of children growing and losing their equipment.”

I was told I wasn't eligible for any support, and I had to take out a benefit advance on my universal credit to get my kids school uniform, which I'm now paying back. – **Quote from parent experiencing hardship at start of local campaign**



Affordable Schools Impact

- Strong contribution to inclusion agenda embedded during training, projects and CPD opportunities (e.g. DL network – primary/secondary/Governor, Improving School Attendance Programme (ISAP), Improving Pupil Premium Outcomes Programme etc)
- The comprehensive toolkit has provided schools with high quality materials to use which support busy school leaders with effective implementation, *'The power point and video on Right Choice were used for staff training. It was incredibly useful as it highlighted that everyone could be in the position of needing financial or mental assistance'*
- Levels of engagement vary from school to school but, where the strategy is being effectively implemented, there is notable impact on outcomes such as attendance, parental engagement, inclusion (see case studies)
- Participating schools are eligible to apply for an Affordable Schools Award (Bronze, Silver and Gold) which has been open for the first round of school applications and hosted on the same platform as Wiltshire Healthy Schools Award and Young Carers Award. 8 schools have successfully applied and achieved the award (1 Gold, 2 Silver and 5 Bronze).

Affordable Schools Award



Schools	Affordable Schools Award
Ashton Keynes CE Primary School	Gold
Winterslow Primary	Silver
Wootton Bassett Infants	Silver
The Stonehenge	Bronze
John of Gaunt	Bronze
Harnham Infants School	Bronze
Sarum St Pauls Primary	Bronze
St Mary's Purton	Bronze



Affordable Schools
WILTSHIRE

Primary School Impact

Oct 2022

Whole school attendance 92.4%
FSM6 attendance 88.9%
Persistent absence 27.2%

Year 6 20% combined (July 2022)
Year 6 progress bottom 10% nationally
EYFS 44% GLD (July 2022)

55% parents would recommend the school

July 2023

Whole school attendance 94.3%
Ever6 attendance 92.3%
Persistent absence 14.4%

Year 6 48% combined (July 2023)
Year 6 progress much improved
EYFS 69% GLD (July 2023)

88% parents would recommend the school

Primary School Impact

2023/24							
End goal / Success criteria							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whole school community commitment to affordable schools' strategy, evidence of impact; leaders are visibly committed to making their school 'affordable' 2. Established parent to school link to share concerns about affordability 3. Cost calculator shared with parents to outline cost of the school year 4. School uniform expectations reviewed in-line with affordable schools; affordable uniform accessible for all; revamp of 'sustainability shop' 5. Regular information shared with community about support and local offers to help cost of living 6. School providing snacks and breakfast for those who do not arrive 'school ready' therefore hunger is not a barrier to school 							
	End goal / success criteria	Actions	Responsible person (<i>inc. Governor</i>)	Resources / CPD	Monitoring / milestones – where we expect to be, who will monitor, how and when		
					End AUTUMN	End SPRING	End SUMMER
Vision, Strategy and Implementation	Whole school community commitment to affordable schools' strategy, evidence of impact; leaders are visibly committed to making their school 'affordable'; achieve bronze award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the whole school community to the principles of affordable schooling • Establish affordable schools working party • Complete staff, parent and pupil surveys • Update AS audit regularly throughout year to monitor impact • Publish information on website and via newsletters • Ensure SENCo, Family Link Partner and church are always enlisted to support participation when possible barriers to participation are identified • Weave AS strategy actions into PP strategy and raise awareness with PP governor for monitoring • AS strategy built into Headteacher's appraisal targets 		PP conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable schools lead identified and attended conference • Baseline audit completed and informs action plan • Training for staff given and raise profile of affordable school's strategy across whole school community • Undertaking of surveys for parents, staff and children, results to feed into action plan • AS strategy built within PP Strategy • Working party held to review data and discuss action plan • Action plan written • PP governor has undertaken monitoring of AS strategy, evidence can be demonstrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term 3 audit completed with evidence of progress from baseline • Spring term affordable schools meeting held to review actions, evidence of impact • PP governor has undertaken monitoring of AS strategy, evidence can be demonstrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of year audit completed, evidence of further progress • Summer term affordable schools meeting held to review actions, evidence of impact • Evidence submitted to bronze award • PP governor has undertaken monitoring of AS strategy, evidence can be demonstrated

Primary School Impact

<p><i>Develop a widely shared understanding of the causes, barriers and challenges faced by pupils and families who are living in poverty</i></p>	<p><i>Make universal, positive changes to policies and practices that will improve the experience of all, especially the most vulnerable</i></p>	<p><i>An Affordable School is committed to reducing poverty related stigma</i></p>
<p>‘Removing the logo would help – we could buy uniform from anywhere.’ ‘Trainers would make much more sense – school shoes get wrecked on the playground.’ ‘Black trainers look just like school shoes anyway.’ ‘Why insist on a Greentrees PE shirt when they wear a tracksuit over the top?’ Trainers are fine for indoors and outdoors – school shoes aren’t.’ ‘The P.E. t-shirts are a waste of time – you can’t see them anyway!’</p>	<p>Remove the requirement of an embroidered logo on uniform items Allow black trainers to be worn Remove the requirement for school P.E. kit – any t-shirt and shorts are fine. Clear communication before the end of term 6</p>	<p>High quality, used items Well presented Widely promoted Reminders given to vulnerable families</p> <p><i>Best of Intentions: Always give detailed consideration to potential consequences of decisions you make</i></p>

Secondary School Impact

Aim: To ensure that every child in school has access to enrichment activities, regardless of their financial situation.

Enrichment and opportunities		
Reducing poverty related stigma	Universal provision	Solutions focused so that all our curriculum is accessible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half price to FSM and 17% places reserved for them • Removed brown paper bags • Pre-ordering of FSM trip lunches • Lunches collected by students • Commitment to 25% reduction for residential and foreign trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed 'first come, first served' • 'Expression of interest' introduced • All families have access to 'affordable schools' e-mail address • Working with outside providers • Communication to all students and parents about after school provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear procedures for trip, and calendar planning • Collaboration with finance and admin teams • Transparency with parents about the support available • A pastoral manager especially for the disadvantaged

IMPACT

- More diverse range of students experiencing school trips; students are aware of opportunities and ask for help to access them
- Parents know what opportunities are available throughout the year and can plan accordingly, including ownership over how they pay.
- Staff feel more confident/have clarity about how to run an inclusive trip and admin/finance teams know how to support the school's vision and staff with their activities positively.
- A general sense of fairness.
- Staff now have an understanding of why time limits and calendar requests are in place.
- More opportunities provided in school time.

Secondary School Impact

Action: Making uniform more affordable for all

1. We changed our policy. We allowed parents to purchase non branded uniform with the only compulsory item of a school jumper
2. We were sensible about what we allowed students to have. Black shoes/trainers – case by case
3. We started to look at how we could make as much uniform as possible, FREE!
4. We appealed for used uniform and once prepped recycled it.
5. We have helped 157 families to date and the number keeps growing.
6. We now have a yearly trip calendar. This now gives parents plenty of time to cost and budget for trips.
7. We increased our school contribution
8. We ensured that trips were not bunched together
9. We offer payment plans for all

Step	Time frame	Staff
1. SLT buy in and understanding of the 'Affordable Schools agenda'.	T1 Sept – Oct 23	
2. Establish a working group. This needs to include a governor.	T2 Nov 23	
3. Add Affordable Schools plans to school improvement plan and PP strategy.	T2 Nov 23	
4. Send out staff survey and evaluate the results Appendix 2	T2 Nov -Dec 23	
5. Send out school survey and evaluate the results Appendix 3	T2 Nov -Dec 23	
6. Organise pupil voice Appendix 1	T2 Nov -Dec 23	
7. Adjust whole school plans to reflect the findings of the surveys. Select a priority based on outcome for year 1.	T3 Jan – Feb 24	
8. Write to parents re the information gathered and plans moving forward.	T4 April - May	
9. Deliver staff training based on outcomes and strategy	T4/5 May	
10. Evaluate success and submit an application for 'Affordable Schools Year 1 Bronze Award.'	July 2024	

Exploring the 'cost of living' demands of the school day and evaluating what we could do to support this.

Step 1: Evaluating what was needed

