

Cost of the School Day consultation results:

A Summary.

Introduction:

In September-October 2019 we conducted a consultation of staff, parents and pupils to evaluate the impact of the cost of the school day. We received 42 parental responses, 156 pupil responses (P3 and up) and 14 staff/class teacher responses. We utilised the Cost of the School Day toolkit from the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland to inform our questioning.

Costs at Sunnyside:

When questioned about what activities, events or items cost money, our parents, pupils and staff agreed that there were a number of items that cost money as part of the school day.



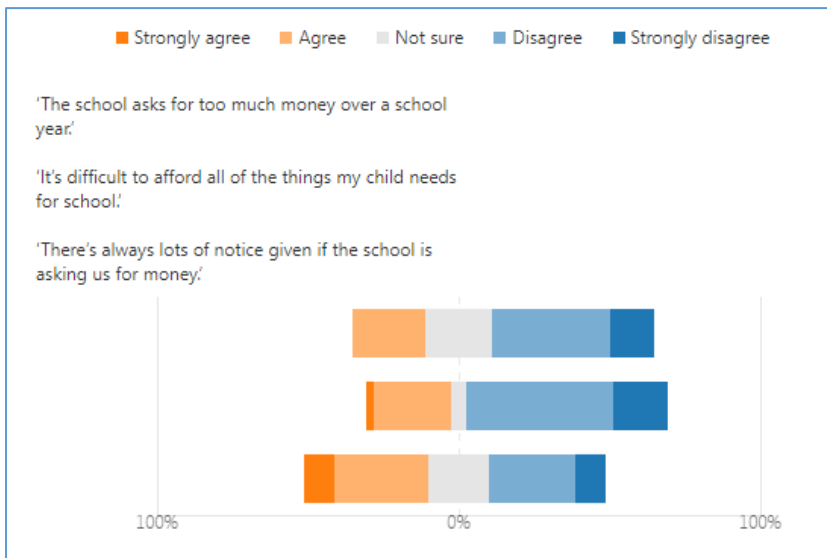
Top 3 challenging costs:

Our pupils stated that the top 3 costs, likely to cause challenges for families, were uniform (128), trips (100) and fun events (56). Teachers stated that they thought the top costs, likely to cause challenge were uniform (13), trips (12) and fun events (8) and our parents stated that uniform (36), lunch (16) and fun events (20) were likely to cause the most challenge.

From these results we can say that uniform and events are universally viewed as a cost challenge by all surveyed. It is interesting to note that whilst staff and pupils viewed trips as a challenge, families did not. Those surveyed stated lunch was more of a barrier.

Supporting families:

Parents/Carer views



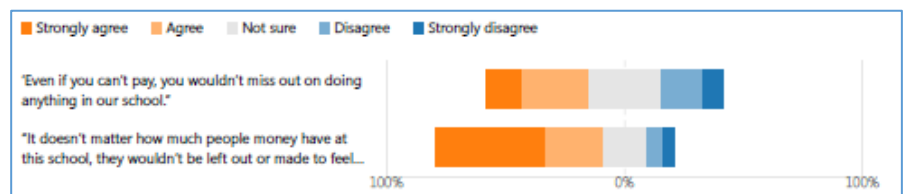
When asked about how much the school asks for, 53.6% of parents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that that school asks for too much. However 24.4% think that the school asks for too much, with 22% of respondents unsure.

When asked if it was difficult to afford all of the things their child needs for school 33% of parents agreed or where not sure. 66% of parents disagreed (14.6% strongly).

When asked if the school provided lots of notice when asking for money 41% agreed that enough notice was given; 38.5% disagreed with 20.5% unsure.

Views of our young people

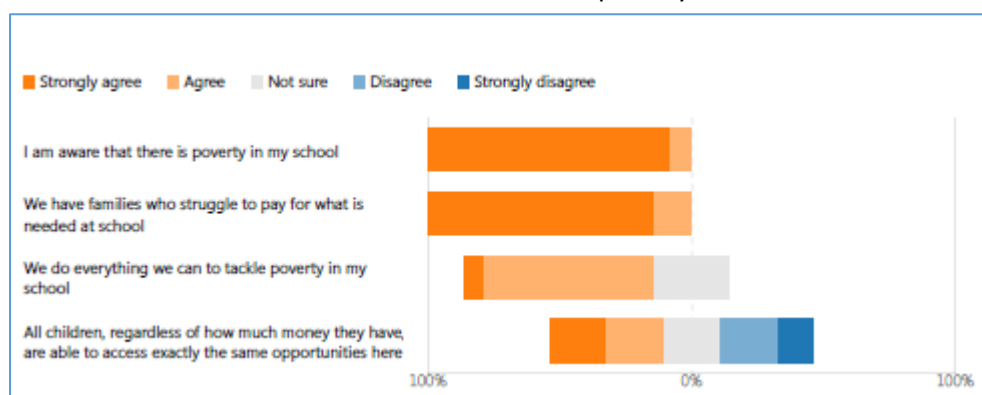
Our pupils were asked different questions, around 2 statements. These results let us know if our pupil approach is appropriate. When asked if children felt they or others might miss out due to cost, 27.5% stated they thought this was the case. When asked if it matters how much money you have at school, 70% of children said it wouldn't make them feel left out or feel bad. 11% of our young people thought that they might be made to feel bad, or feel left out; 17.9% stated they were unsure.



Our teaching team

Our teachers were asked about their views around poverty in the school.

100% of our class teachers are aware that there is poverty within our school. When asked if we had families that experience difficulty affording the costs associated with school 100% of teachers agreed that we have.

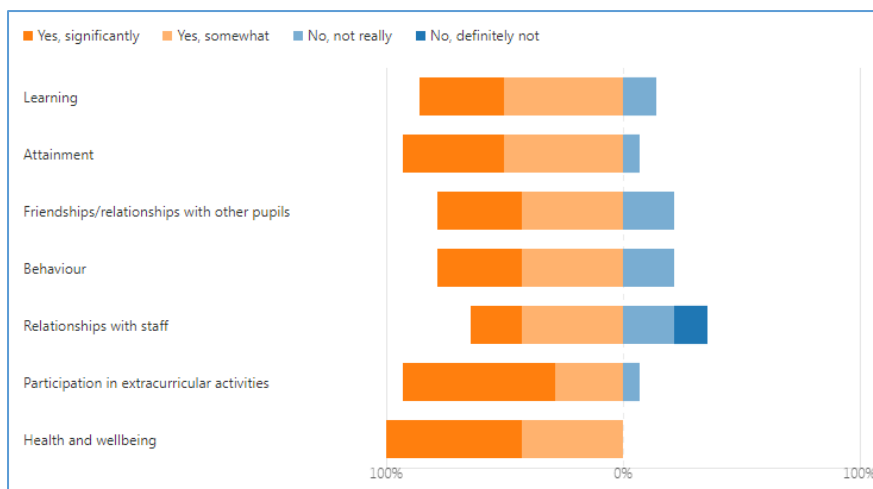


When asked if we do everything we can to tackle poverty in our school 71% of staff stated that we do, with 28.6% unsure.

When asked about the opportunities our children have at school, 42.8% of teachers stated that they did not believe money directly impacted learning experiences, 35% of class practitioners did believe it would impact and 21% stated they were unsure.

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When asked how they might identify children and families that may require support common themes emerged including a lack of uniform, snack, low-nutrition lunches and concern around trips.



When asked if lower family income affects different aspects of the school day our teachers have shown that they feel it can most effect participation in extra-curricular activities and the general Health and Wellbeing of individuals.

Sharing concerns

5. How easy would it be to talk to teachers or other school staff if you were worried about money or couldn't afford to pay for something? Please tick one of the boxes below.

[More Details](#)

Really easy	27
Easy	29
Not sure	34
Difficult	36
Really difficult	30



When pupils were asked if they thought they could share any concerns or worries with adults at the school 36% felt confident, 42% felt this would be difficult and 22% said they weren't sure.

Parents were asked a similar question, asking how confident they would feel talking to staff at school if they had concerns about money; 23.8% stated they would be comfortable doing this, with 41.5% stating they would not feel confident sharing concerns. 34.7% were unsure of how they felt.

Our actions

Parents were asked if they thought we currently did enough to help with the cost of the school day; 29.3% of parents thought we did and 17% stated that they did not (53.7% stated they were unsure). When asked if parents knew how to apply for funding for school meals, uniform and best start grants 61% of parents felt they had enough information, 12.2% felt this was not clear and 26.8% were unsure.

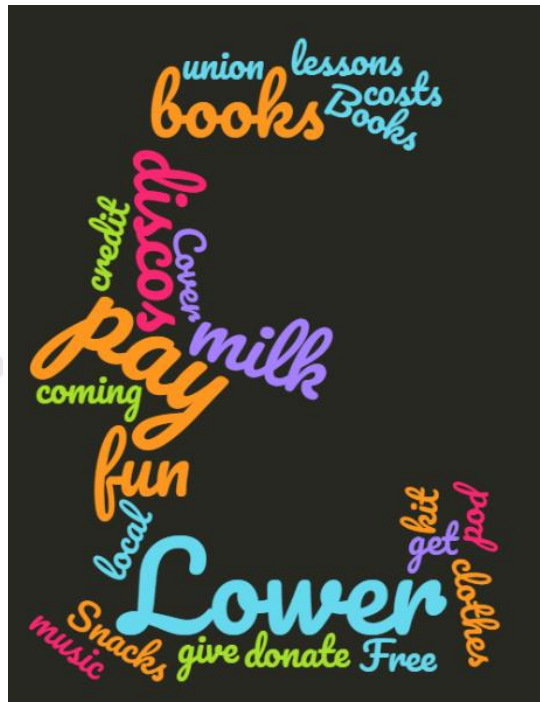
Pupils were also asked if they knew about funding towards uniform and lunches with 61% and 67.5% respectively knowing this was available.

When asked about what else we could or should be doing parents/carers, pupils and teachers had a variety of ideas as shown in the following word clouds (larger words – more common suggestion):

Common suggestions were around ideas of payment by instalments, budgeting advice for parents and children, book swaps, lowering costs for breakfast clubs, seeking grants for families, providing free snacks, creating PE kits, using ParentPay and a uniform bank.



Parent's suggestions



Pupil's suggestions

Other comments

We received additional comments about the use of ParentPay, especially in regards to the residential trip in P7. This is being explored as a payment option. There were some other comments regarding the balance of cost cutting measures and the impact this may be having on the enjoyment of learning at Sunnyside. We aim to address these concerns in our actions.

Our Actions

Looking at the results from the consultation it is clear that we need to do more to effectively reduce the financial concerns around the cost of the school day. We have already begun to take action and aim to continue this through the following actions:

Existing processes

- Continuing support for pupils requiring uniform through informal discussion and in school provision.
- Continuing support for those pupils without snack through our Nurture base.
- Family learning including promoting healthy eating and cooking skills.
- Share information through social media platforms, the website and letters in a timely manner.
- Promote grants including school meals, uniform and Best Start School age grants.
- Ensure children experience a wide range of learning and activities as part of the curriculum, i.e. Story tellers, Scottish Opera, Outdoor learning.
- Provide free extra-curricular activities as part of Supper Club.
- Ensure that trips have an educational and enjoyment value.
- Discretionary funding for trips.
- Provision of a low cost stationary store to supplement school provided equipment.
- Discretionary funding for uniform.

Considerations moving forward

- Work on the ethos around parent and pupil engagement with regards to the cost of the school day, building trusting relationships with families.
- Develop the implementation of ParentPay or similar instalment payment programs for trips.
- Provide a uniform exchange scheme for parents/carers and children to access when needed.
- Seek further funding opportunities to supplement existing programmes.
- Further develop family links to local organisations that may be able to provide support around the cost of the school day.
- Ensure that extra-curricular activities and events are monitored to lessen the impact of cost on families.

Concerns and actions not decided at school level:

- Government Grant allowances and weightings.
- School meal costs.
- Breakfast club costs.
- Music tuition fees.
- Trip expenses (transport and access charges).
- Activ Clacks clubs and programs.

When considering factors currently outside our control we shall continue to share your concerns with agencies, and seek support to assist where possible.