

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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24 June 2019

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 12 June about PDG-Access and the purchasing of school uniform.

As you note in your letter, introduced in 2018, PDG-Access helps families cover the costs of school uniforms and sports kits, as well as equipment for activities outside of the school, including sports clubs and trips for outdoor learning. It is funding that goes directly to the families who need it most to help with some of the costs of the school day.

For 2019-20 we have more than doubled the funding for PDG-Access to over £5 million.

For this financial year, eligible families of Year 7 pupils will receive £200, instead of the current £125; relieving some of the increased costs associated with starting secondary school. The funding will also allow the inclusion of eligible learners in Year 3 and Year 10, and provide funding for looked after children in every compulsory school year. This means the funding will extend to a much wider cohort of learners, ensuring more parents are able to access the support they need when they need it.

I have also asked local authorities to administer a fund to develop more sustainable long term options. We are extending this beyond the classroom to include groups such as youth clubs to enable them to bid for funding for kit and equipment stores.

As I'm sure you will appreciate though, despite the significant increase in funding we have allocated to PDG-Access this financial year, there is a limit to the amount of support we can provide. It is not possible to offer the grant to young people in every school year; that is why we have focussed the new arrangements on what we believe are likely to be the most expensive school years for uniform purchases.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Welsh Government strongly encourages schools to have a school uniform and appearance policy in place as it has many benefits. The decision on whether to have a school uniform or appearance policy and what the uniform should consist of is a local matter for individual school governing bodies.

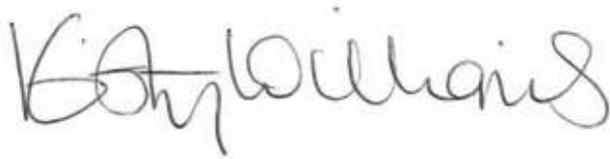
When introducing a new uniform policy or considering changes in school uniform requirements, I expect governing bodies to consider equality issues, the wide availability of uniform garments and cost implications to families and to consult widely with parents, learners and other groups on a new or revised school uniform policy.

Our [guidance](#) states that if there is a change to a school uniform policy, governing bodies should consider introducing a transitional period so that old uniforms can be worn for at least a year before a total changeover to a new uniform and consider if items of the old uniform can be retained in the new policy.

Complaints about school uniform and appearance policies should be dealt with in accordance with the governing body's complaints procedure. All governing bodies are required by law to have a procedure in place for dealing with complaints from parents, learners, members of staff, governors, members of the local community and others in relation to matters for which the governing body has statutory responsibility.

We have recently consulted on new draft statutory guidance. Responses are currently being analysed in advance of the final development and publication of the guidance which will come into effect in September 2019. A summary of the responses can be viewed [here](#)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

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