**Changes to statutory guidance on school uniform and appearance policies**

**Consultation response form**

Your name: Bleddyn Lake

Organisation (if applicable): Friends of the Earth Cymru

email/telephone number: bleddyn.lake@foe.co.uk

Your address:

Suite 3.01, Floor 3, C12

12 Cathedral Road

Cardiff

CF11 9LJ

Responses should be returned by **28 November 2022** to:

Education Business Planning and Governance Division

The Education Directorate

Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language Group

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to:

email: [schoolfundingmailbox@gov.wales](mailto:schoolfundingmailbox@gov.wales)

**Question 1** – Do you agree that school governing bodies should prioritise affordability when setting their school uniform and appearance policy?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 2** – Do you agree that school governing bodies should ensure easy access and availability of uniform items when setting their school uniform and appearance policy?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 3** – Do you agree that logos should not be required on school uniforms?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 4** – Do you agree that logos should be limited to one outer garment, for example a jumper, cardigan or blazer?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 5** – Do you agree that iron-on or sew-on logo badges should be provided for learners, free of charge?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 6** – Do you agree that logos should not be required on school sportswear and other school equipment?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 7** – Many schools enter into single supplier arrangements with a school uniform supplier. This means that there is no choice about where branded uniform items are bought. Do you agree that schools should avoid single-supplier agreements with suppliers of branded school uniforms?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 8** – Do you agree that schools should be transparent in demonstrating that any benefit of a financial agreement they have with a school uniform supplier is being passed on to the customer?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 9** – Do you agree that if schools enter into an agreement with a school uniform supplier, they should ensure that the costs of using this supplier are similar to the costs of school uniforms available from high street retailers or supermarkets?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments** |

**Question 10** – Do you agree that schools should operate a uniform exchange and/or recycling scheme available to families?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agree |  | Disagree |  | Neither agree nor disagree |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments**  The cost-of-living crisis is affecting us all and school uniforms and school sports kits can be a significant added burden on already stretched family finances. Research from the Children’s Society shows that parents with children in state schools spend on average £315 per year for each primary school child and £337 per year on uniform for each secondary school child.  Friends of the Earth Cymru would therefore like to see a school uniform swap scheme being rolled out to every school in Wales (pre-school, primary and secondary) from now on. These schemes already operate in many schools but often rely too heavily on one or two committed teachers or parents and as such are liable to close if these people become over stretched or move away. In order to make a real difference, these swap schemes should become part of everyday life in every school in Wales from now on. We would also like to see a sports kit swap scheme on similar lines in every school.  We also believe that this would have an even larger impact on people’s view of reuse clothing. If every school in Wales were to adopt a uniform and sports kit swap from now on then all children would go through their school years becoming used to wearing reuse clothes. As all children all around Wales would potentially be involved, this would then help break down some existing stigma around this practice of wearing reuse clothes. This would then hopefully stay with them into adulthood making it more likely they would have a positive view of wearing pre-loved clothes thereby reducing their impact on our planet.  If we do this now then we can start to positively impact behaviour change of each subsequent generation. |

**Question 11** – We would like to know your views on the effects that guidance on school uniform and appearance policies would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

**Supporting comments**

|  |
| --- |
| **No comment** |

**Question 12** – Please also explain how you believe the guidance on school uniform and appearance policies could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

**Supporting comments**

|  |
| --- |
| **No comment** |

**Question 13** – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Friends of the Earth Cymru are part of a sustainable clothing coalition called Sustainable Clothing and Textiles Cymru. We have recently launched a new report looking at what we can do in Wales around the issues of sustainable clothing, fashion and textiles. We make numerous suggestions as to how Welsh Government and others can help support and stimulate change. We attach a copy the report with this consultation response.

In terms of education, we make the following recommendations:

**Recommendations**

Following the examples of small-scale interventions, the following recommendations look at how these could be scaled across the education sector in Wales to support authentic opportunities for students to demonstrate and lead work across the 4 core purposes.

**Explore**

Explore with schools the barriers to a reuse ethos throughout the school setting. Facilitate the development of solutions to overcome these barriers.

**Facilitate Sustainable School Clothing**

Provide a framework for all schools in Wales to develop social enterprise through a Uniform Swap Shop including sportswear.

**Provide financial support**

Allow schools to add the task of running the Swap Shops to be added to job descriptions of the most appropriate staff.

**Minimise school branding**

Encourage minimum items with school branding so they can be circulated through a wider community. Curate a list of suppliers of sustainable climate friendly uniform.

**Address the Knowledge Gap**

Facilitate Continual Professional Development such as attendance on training courses to upskill teachers on topics such as circular economy and fast fashion, including the impact of clothing recycling bags. Curate a list of trusted providers that can support teachers to deepen their knowledge of fast fashion and circular economy. Provide high quality case studies showing where fast fashion and circular economy is infused within the curriculum.

**Communication**

Proactively communicate the fast fashion issues and circular economy directly with schools and teachers. Discourage school use of rags to riches/clothing recycling for cash through education of the impact.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: |  |