THE COST OF
THE SCHOOL DAY

CALENDAR
2023/24

CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP

ABOUT THIS CALENDAR

Uniforms, trips, school lunches, PE kits, pencils and pens, dress down days and other school costs can be difficult to afford for low-income families. When children and young people can't take part in opportunities because of cost, they miss out and feel excluded, and it is harder for them to learn, achieve and be happy at school.

The Cost of the School Day calendar aims to help schools identify possible cost barriers during the academic year and think about some alternatives to make sure all children and young people can fully participate in education. Throughout the calendar, we've included ideas and good practice examples from schools across the UK who have taken part in the Cost of the School Day project, or put cost reducing measures in place to help children and families.

Importantly, we know that schools can have the most impact by listening to children. To find out more about investigating the school day from the perspective of children and young people, contact Child Poverty Action Group at:
UKCosd@cpag.org.uk (England and Wales)
costoftheschoolday@cpagscotland.org.uk (Scotland)

If you find this calendar useful, you might also benefit from our other free resources. Visit cpag.org.uk/school-resources.

About us

The Cost of the School Day project aims to reduce the financial barriers that prevent pupils from fully participating in the school day. Our approach involves working with whole-school communities (pupils, parents, teachers and staff) to identify and reduce cost barriers faced by pupils from low-income backgrounds. cpag.org.uk/cosd

Child Poverty Action Group works on behalf of the more than one in four children in the UK growing up in poverty. It doesn't have to be like this. We use our understanding of what causes poverty and the impact it has on children's lives to campaign for policies that will prevent and solve poverty – for good. We provide training, advice and information to make sure hard-up families get the financial support they need. We also carry out high-profile legal work to establish and protect families' rights. Registered charity numbers: 294841 and SC039339

With thanks to Children North East, our previous partners on the UK Cost of the School Day project, who supported the development of this resource.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Homework Review	□ Homework that requires a suitable place to work, resources from home or digital access	□ What resources are required for pupils to complete their homework and what support is available for those who may not have these resources at home? □ What alternative homework options are available for students who may not have device or internet access at home? □ Are there opportunities for pupils to complete their homework in school if they face barriers at home?
School Dinners Review	□ Children able to identify those who are eligible for Free School Meals □ Children don't take up their free school meal entitlement □ Children miss out on food because the options available to pupils do not always account for their preferences, dietary requirements or cultures	□ Can students at your school identify which of their peers are in receipt of free school meals? □ What do pupils think of their school lunch experience? □ How do you collect insight on what pupils think of lunchtime at your school? □ Do pupils on free school meals have the same school food options as their peers including at break times? □ Do all pupils take up their free school meal entitlement? □ Do all pupils have access to the same food choices and portion sizes regardless of whether they are on FSM or not?
Celebrations Review	□ Cost of craft projects □ Cost of bringing in specific items from home like food or clothing (e.g. for birthdays)	□ While celebrating different cultural and religious events can be hugely valuable, are you ensuring that this is accessible to all pupils and doesn't place additional financial strain on families? □ Are there ways for your school to celebrate pupils' birthdays at no cost to families?
Period Products Awareness	□ Pupils missing school days due to not being able to afford sanitary products	□ Are free period products available to pupils and in a location where they can access them without needing to ask a member of staff?
Exams	□ Equipment needed for exams including stationery and calculators □ Cost of revision guides and revision materials □ Pupils feeling under pressure in relation to their exams □ Pupils missing breakfast before the tests	□ What do students need for exams and what support is available? □ How is support advertised to students and families? □ How can you check in with pupils during exam season? What will you look out for to identify any pupils who are finding this time more challenging? □ How can your school provide all pupils with something to eat before their exams to make sure those who have missed breakfast are not hungry during the tests?
Music	□ Cost of instrument or vocal tuition □ Instrument to practice at home □ Suitable space to practice	□ What support is available for instrument tuition? □ How is support communicated to students and families? □ When and how can students make use of practice space in school?

Ideas from other schools

Throughout this calendar you'll find some of the creative and innovative ideas that have worked for other schools. Thank you to all the schools who have allowed us to feature information about their work here. For even more inspiring ideas, further information and Cost of the School Day resources, you can go to the Child Poverty Action Group website at cpag.org.uk

School event	Holiday	Charity	Theme day or week	Cultural or religious event	GB-wide event	Scottish event	Welsh event	English event	Thinking point

AUGUST 2023

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Holiday Provision	☐ Families unaware of what holiday provision is available to them	☐ Are you giving families lots of notice about what holiday provision is available at the school or locally, and promoting this regularly? When planning holiday activities, are you considering how to make them available to as many families as possible, not just those eligible for free school meals?
Return to School (Scotland)	☐ Families unaware of financial entitlements	☐ Are you supporting students and families to access their financial entitlements? This can include: – Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), a weekly payment of £30 to help a student in education beyond 16. mygov.scot/ema – School clothing grant is paid to help with the cost of school clothing and shoes. mygov.scot/clothing-grants – Free school meals. mygov.scot/school-meals
Uniform	☐ Expense of compulsory school uniform ☐ No pre-loved uniform available ☐ Sanctions in place for pupils who do not bring their PE kit to school or do not have the correct uniform	☐ What support can you offer if students do not have their PE kit or uniform? What pre-loved uniform provision is available at your school and how do students and families access it? ☐ Is uniform affordable? How easy is it for families to purchase or order? ☐ For schools in England: are you compliant with the statutory guidance on uniform? Our resource may help: cpag.org.uk/affordable-school-uniforms-guide.
Trips, Events and Clubs Planning	☐ Families not given enough notice when trips, extra-curricular activities and fundraising events are organised ☐ After-school clubs and trips cost money to attend	☐ What do you have planned for the academic year and how much will families be asked to contribute? How can you ensure that families have enough time to pay for school activities and events? ☐ How are you going to communicate with families about school costs and any support that is available?

Ideas from other schools - Planning the cost of the year ahead

A primary school in Rhondda Cynon Taf families are notified in advance of what trips will be running during the year and how much they will cost. The school publishes a calendar of events and regular updates through newsletters. Staff said "If there's an annual trip that we know is going to take place parents are given ample notice (they'd know at the start of term) so that they can plan to pay weekly with plenty of notice. Then closer to the time they'd get reminders with more details about the trip." (Staff member).
For more information take a look at Tackling poverty together: a guide for schools in Wales | CPAG

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 **Summer bank holiday (Scotland)**	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 **Summer bank holiday (England and Wales)**	29	30	31			

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

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SEPTEMBER 2023

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Return to School (England and Wales)	☐ Pupils asked questions such as 'Where did you go on holiday?', 'What did you do during the holiday?' or 'write a diary entry about what you did over the summer'	☐ What questions and activities can you ask to learn more about children that aren't focused on their family and home experiences?
Roald Dahl Day 13 September	☐ Dressing up as Roald Dahl characters ☐ Needing to purchase a book to write a book review ☐ Creating book scenes in boxes	☐ How is Roald Dahl Day celebrated in your school? What resources are required and is there a cost associated? ☐ How can activities and celebrations for Roald Dahl day be linked to and incorporated into your curriculum?
Jeans for Genes Day 18 to 24 September	☐ Monetary donation ☐ Being asked to wear jeans to school	☐ How is attendance on this date? Do all children take part? ☐ In what ways can children who do not have suitable clothing be involved in this day? ☐ Could the focus be on raising awareness of the cause instead of donations?
MacMillan Coffee Morning 29 September	☐ Cakes and bakes brought in from home ☐ Cakes and bakes sold in school	☐ How will you involve all children and families in this event, including those who may not be able to contribute a cake or make a donation?
Options Decisions	☐ Specific subject resource and equipment cost	☐ What information do you give to students and families to help them decide on course options? ☐ When are families made aware of any subject costs or equipment that is needed? ☐ Does your school monitor participation in specific subjects to determine whether costs may be a barrier to certain courses?

Ideas from other schools - Learners taking the lead on reducing costs

At Braes High School in Falkirk, young people take the lead and are central to promoting and actioning Cost of the School Day in their setting. Emma Taylor, PT for PEF, supports the young people in the school's Cost of the School Day pupil group, and knows how crucial it is that the voices of young people inform this work: "We are a rights respecting school, anything that we do that is just done to kids, it doesn't work, we need to meet them on their level." Find out more about how Braes High School learners are taking the lead on cost reducing work in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank. If you are based in Scotland and have an equity or Cost of the School Day group in your school who would like to get involved in the Cost of the School Day Voice network, you can find out more at our website: cpag.org.uk/cost-of-the-school-day

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 **Roald Dahl Day**	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 **MacMillan: World's Biggest Coffee Morning**	30	

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

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OCTOBER 2023

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Challenge Poverty Week 2 – 8 October (Scotland) 16 – 22 October (England & Wales)	☐ No specific barriers. For more information: - England and Wales: challengepoverty.co.uk - Scotland: challengepoverty.net - London: londonchallengepovertyweek.org.uk	☐ Could you use this opportunity to tackle attitudes and assumptions about poverty?
Harvest Festival	☐ A requirement to bring in food bank donations ☐ Monetary donations ☐ Pupils being able to identify who has donated and how much	☐ How can you collect donations so that pupils are not able to identify who has and has not made a contribution?
Show Racism the Red Card's Wear Red Day 20 October	☐ Wearing red clothes	☐ How will you ensure that the focus is on anti-racism and the important issues that the charity tackles, rather than on dressing up? ☐ Are there alternatives to wearing red clothes, such as providing red ribbons or badges for all pupils to wear?

Ideas from other schools - Taking the pressure off attending events at school

Halloween can be expensive for families, however Miller Primary School in Glasgow has shown that with a bit of thought and creativity schools can take the pressure off and make sure the children have a great time: "Our Halloween parties are always set during the school day, because we want to take the pressure off parents. We want to make sure that the parents don't feel that they have to go over the top with costumes, that they have to pay a lot of money. When it's run during the day we can make sure that every child has a costume, that they can participate. We can provide the games and the food, and we just feel it's a much calmer experience."

Find out more about Miller Primary School's approach in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank and a short film.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 **Wear Red Day**	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 **Halloween**					

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

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NOVEMBER 2023

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Bonfire Night 5 November	• Entry fee to school bonfire and fireworks display • Additional spending money for drinks, food, glow sticks and sparklers	• What is the total cost for families to attend this event and how can costs be reduced? • Are there any additional costs families will face when they attend e.g. drinks or sparklers? Can any costs be covered by donations rather than an entry fee?
Remembrance Day 11 November	• Merchandise sold at school on behalf of charity e.g. poppies, wrist bands, pin badges	• How will you ensure that all children have the opportunity to take home a piece of merchandise even if they cannot donate?
BBC Children in Need 17 November	• Having to wear something with spots, a Pudsey eye patch or Children in Need accessories • Children in Need merchandise sold at school or bake sales	• Does money need to be collected in school or could online fundraising be utilised? • Could the focus be on raising awareness of the cause instead of donations?
Anti-Bullying Week 13 – 17 November	• Lack of understanding of what bullying is • Bullying based on material possessions • Pupils not knowing what to do if they are being bullied and who they can talk to	• Some schools use anti-bullying week to raise awareness around income-related bullying, and explore the impact that poverty has on children and families. • How do you communicate your bullying policy with pupils and families? How often is it shared?
St Andrew's Day 30 November	• Pupils asked to wear traditional national attire (kilt or something tartan) • Paying money for a non-uniform/dress-up day, or paid entry to school ceilidhs or dances	• Is it necessary to ask pupils to wear traditional attire to celebrate this event? • Could celebrations and ceilidh dances be scheduled during the school day so that all children can take part? • Could dress-up days and after-school events be free or donation-based?
Diwali 12 October	• Children encouraged to dress up in traditional costume for a Diwali party • Diwali-themed homework requiring extra resources	• Could any Diwali activities requiring resources be done at school, with resources provided in class? If you're having a Diwali party, could the focus be on learning dances and stories rather than wearing traditional costumes?

Ideas from other schools - Flexible, discreet and non stigmatising fundraising

The Parent Council for St Paul's High School in Glasgow were aware that fundraising can be difficult in secondary schools. So to provide a flexible and discreet way of letting those who could contribute do so, the Parent Council set up a Go Fund Me page. One parent said: "This was a great because the fundraising link allows me to contribute how much I can afford, rather than being told how much to pay. It also gives me the anonymity to not donate, if I don't feel I can afford to this time, without feeling it will be noticed." Read more about this approach in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5 **Bonfire Night**
6	7	8	9	10	11 **Royal British Legion: Remembrance Day**	12 **Diwali**
13 **Anti-Bullying Week (Odd Socks Day)**	14	15	16	17 **BBC Children in Need**	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 **St Andrew's Day**			

School event	Holiday	Charity	Theme day or week	Cultural or religious event	GB-wide event	Scottish event	Welsh event	English event	Thinking point

DECEMBER 2023

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Gift Giving	☐ Pupils and staff exchanging Christmas gifts	☐ If children and families wish to show their appreciation to school staff, how can this be facilitated without gift giving?
School Photographs: Individual and sibling photographs for Christmas	☐ Photographs are taken of every pupil, even if families have no intention of purchasing them ☐ Pupils can identify who has and has not purchased photographs because of the way they are given out in class	☐ How can you ensure that attention is not drawn to children and families who do not purchase school photographs? ☐ Are there resources in school that could be used to ensure that all children have a school photograph?
Christmas Fayre	☐ Entry fee ☐ Expense of stalls, games or grotto ☐ Food and refreshment costs	☐ What costs are associated with attending the fayre and are there any free activities? ☐ Do you know which families miss out on these events and the reasons why?
Christmas Jumper Day 7 December	☐ Being required to wear a Christmas jumper ☐ Monetary donation	☐ Might children in your school feel pressured, isolated or stigmatised if they don't have an appropriate jumper and are there alternative ways of marking this day? ☐ How will you ensure that children know about the work Save the Children does?
Christmas Performance	☐ Families asked to provide costumes and props ☐ Tickets for sale for the event ☐ Hidden cost of refreshments	☐ What are the total costs for families related to the school performance including costumes and props? How can these costs be reduced or subsidised so that all families are able to attend? ☐ Can any costs be covered by donations rather than having an entry fee?
Christmas Parties	☐ Children asked to contribute food and drink to share ☐ Party clothes worn in school	☐ What can be utilised in school for Christmas parties rather than asking children to bring in items from home? ☐ Can the school catering team support the provision of party food? ☐ In a busy month, with lots of additional costs, how much notice are families given?

Ideas from other schools – Making Christmas more inclusive

Aware that families face a lot of costs around Christmas, and may have been struggling following the Covid-19 pandemic, Pollokshields Primary School in Glasgow decided to send a letter out to parents and carers asking them to consider not sending gifts to staff, saying that " If you do wish to thank teachers and staff for their hard work undertaken this year, we will still welcome cards, tweets and emails. These small words of kindness have a huge impact and are greatly appreciated."

See the full letter in the Cost of the School Day report 'The Cost of Having Fun at School'.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 **Christmas Jumper Day**	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 **Christmas Day**	26 **Boxing Day**	27	28	29	30	31

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

JANUARY 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
End of Christmas holidays and return to school	☐ Pupils asked questions about their home experiences, including what they got for Christmas and what they did	☐ Can you ask children questions that aren't focused on presents and their home experiences during the holidays?
UCAS	☐ Cost of submitting application	☐ Have you identified which students may find the application charge more difficult? ☐ Are students given enough notice about the application cost?

Ideas from other schools – Study cafes

With a wide range of needs to support, staff at Wallace High School in Stirling provide both universal and targeted approaches to supported study. Head Teacher Scott Pennock explains: "We do a study café in Fallin, one in Cornton and one in Raploch (areas within the school's catchment, with a number of families living on lower incomes). We also have one in school as a general catch-all for everyone, so that way everyone's included, but I've got more targeting in certain areas. All parents can say their child is offered that support, it has just been arranged in a way so that children get the more targeted support that they might need and every other child is getting the universal support too. We know that we need to target more effectively, otherwise there's the risk that some won't attend and will miss out."

Read about more inclusive approaches to learning in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
1 **Bank holiday (New Years Day)**	2 **Bank holiday (Scotland)**	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 **Burns Night**	26	27	28
29	30	31				

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

FEBRUARY 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
LGBTQ+ History Month	☐ Merchandise available to be purchased	☐ How will you mark this awareness month in school and ensure that all students are able to participate? ☐ What resources do you have in school that students can use to make their own items to show their support (e.g. rainbow badges)?
World Cancer Day 4 February	☐ Cakes and bakes being brought in from home ☐ Cakes and bakes being sold in school	☐ Could the focus of this day and activities in school be centred on awareness raising rather than fundraising? ☐ Could families be directed to online donation points rather than bringing money in to school?
Dydd Miwsig Cymru (Welsh Language Music Day) 10 February	☐ Home learning that requires online access can be difficult for pupils who don't have suitable devices or connectivity	☐ What offline activities can you do in school for this date that all children can take part in?
Post-16 Applications	☐ Cost of transport for college or sixth form interviews ☐ Internet access to complete online applications	☐ What is the process for students applying to post-16 providers and are there any costs? ☐ How does your school support students to complete post-16 applications?

Ideas from other schools - Boosting free school meal uptake and improving food provision

Schools can face challenges when it comes to encouraging school meal uptake and ensuring that children and young people use their free meal allowance. Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit (SPIRU) research Tackling Food Insecurity in Scottish Schools highlights approaches which have demonstrable positive impact on raising uptake of free (and paid) school meals. You'll find a summary of their findings, with lots of great ideas to try, in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4 **World Cancer Day**
5	6	7	8	9	10 **Chinese New Year** **Dydd Miwsig Cymru (Welsh Language Music Day)**	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

MARCH 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
St. David's Day 1 March	☐ Cost of purchasing national dress or rugby shirts ☐ Making Welsh food at home and bringing it to school	☐ Could the focus be on raising awareness of the special day and what it means to be Welsh, rather than on dressing up? ☐ What resources can you provide so all pupils in school can take part in activities?
World Book Day 7 March	☐ Children asked to dress up in themed costumes ☐ Bringing in books from home	☐ In a busy month with lots of charity days, which will be fundraising days and which will be awareness-raising days? ☐ How can you mark this date without asking children to bring in things from home? ☐ What activities can you organise that will be a part of the school day for all children?
Red Nose Day 15 March	☐ Monetary donation ☐ Red noses and other merchandise sold in schools ☐ Non-uniform day or fundraising events	☐ How will donations be discreetly collected so that attention is not drawn to any pupils who do not make a contribution? ☐ What activities for this date can you organise that all children can take part in?
Ramadan Around 10 March to 9 April	☐ Fasting students not getting their free school meal entitlement	☐ Are you ensuring eligible pupils still get their free school meal entitlement in a way that fits in with their religious practices? ☐ Do you know how much unspent free school meal money there is and how it is used?
Easter Events	☐ Easter egg hunts and Easter Fayres with entry fee ☐ Easter parade with homemade bonnets and baskets ☐ Easter egg decorating, Easter scene creating or colouring competitions	☐ Could your school make sure Easter activities are accessible to all students by providing the resources they will need to take part? ☐ How can you involve families in Easter activities?

Ideas from other schools – Encouraging packed-lunch take-up on school trips

When pupils from a primary school in Rhondda Cynon Taf go on school trips the catering staff prepare packed lunches which are available for any pupil, including those on free school meals. This approach means that no child goes hungry and those eligible for free school means aren't identifiable to their peers. School staff said "I don't know who has FSM and on school trips I'll always do a general pack with things in, in case people have forgotten lunch. So, there's no stigma attached to that; and the teachers will eat it, even if the kids don't!"

For more ideas about food at school, take a look at Improving secondary school food provision: barriers and solutions | CPAG

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1 **St. David's Day**	2	3
4	5	6	7 **World Book Day**	8	9	10 **Start of Ramadan** **Mother's Day**
11	12	13	14	15 **Red Nose Day**	16	17 **Epilepsy Awareness Day**
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 **Good Friday bank holiday**	30	31 **Easter Sunday**

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

APRIL 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Work Experience	☐ Cost of transport ☐ Cost of uniform, clothing or equipment ☐ Missing out on free school meals when out of school	☐ How will free schools meals be provided to students while they are on work experience placements? ☐ What do students need for work experience and how much will this cost? ☐ What expectations do you as a school have for employers covering costs associated with their work placement?
Enterprise Projects	☐ Pupils making money by selling items or providing a service to other pupils and their parents	☐ Are there ways of involving the wider community in the enterprise project rather than it taking place exclusively in school? ☐ Who else within your local community would be interested in purchasing products made by your students?
Eid al-Fitr Around 9/10 April	☐ Children asked to bring in food and drinks to share with their friends for a Eid party ☐ Parents bringing in home-cooked dishes for a Eid party	☐ Eid al-Fitr, the biggest Muslim festival of the year, marks the end of the month of Ramadan, and one of the ways it is celebrated is by spending time together and sharing food. Are you ensuring your communications with children and parents about Eid state that any such contributions are entirely voluntary? ☐ If food is being shared at school, can all donations be dropped off at a central location so pupils cannot identify who has and who has not contributed?

Ideas from other schools - Pre loved prom initiative

Auchenharvie Academy in North Ayrshire developed an initiative to remove costs associated with attending their prom for their senior pupils. The school collected a large number of donated new and pre-loved prom dresses, suits, shoes, accessories and organised special events to showcase these to senior pupils. Local beauticians offered free hair and make-up on the day of prom to complete the experience for pupils, with some giving up a day's work to support the initiative. Allison Hopton, PT Family Learning, said that: "We've turned prom almost on its head and now it's gone from being a really expensive occasion, to costing nothing at all for pupils! I have to say that's just down to how amazing the communities have been. People have just been so glad to help and offer support. Especially people who are saying 'I'll give up a day's work and I'll come in and offer my services for free.' That's amazing!"

Read more about this initiative and other ways to remove costs from celebrations in the Cost of the School Day Ideas Bank.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 **Easter Monday bank holiday (England and Wales)**	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 **Eid al Fitr (or 10th April)**	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

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MAY 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Children's Book Week 2-8 May	☐ Books and bookmarks for sale in school ☐ Book fairs visited by classes during the school day	☐ Are there any national or local partners you can work with to provide families with free or reduced price books? ☐ Might parents and children feel under pressure to attend and purchase something from the book fair? How can this pressure be reduced?
Diwrnod Seren a Sbarc (Seren and Sbarc Day)	☐ Non-uniform day ☐ Dressing up as superheroes ☐ Dressing in traditional Welsh colours	☐ In what ways can you raise awareness of the Siarter Iaith (Welsh Charter) and promote a strong Welsh ethos without a cost for families? ☐ Are there school arts and crafts resources you can use to ensure that all children are able to take part in the occasion, rather than focusing on dressing up?
Urdd Eisteddfod 27 May -1 June	☐ Performance outfit ☐ Accommodation	☐ Have you communicated to families what support may be available from school, including for travel? ☐ Does your school monitor the attendance at this performance to determine to what extent costs may be a barrier? ☐ Can pupils get involved in prop design and construction in school?

Ideas from other schools – A primary school's support with home learning resources

Awel Y Mor, a primary school in Neath Port Talbot, provides all pupils with a filled pencil case at the start of the school year so all pupils had their own set of resources. Staff said: "They have their own pencil cases with stationery in every year, school gives it to them. Some boys and girls like to buy their own, but some don't, so we've stopped them bringing them in, everyone has the same thing"

For more on reducing the Cost of the School Day in Wales, look at: Reducing the cost of the school day in Wales | Lleihau cost y diwrnod ysgol yng Nghymru | CPAG

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 **Early May bank holiday**	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 **Spring bank holiday Urdd Eisteddfod Performances**	28	29	30	31		

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

JUNE 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
Bike Week Usually in June	☐ Children needing bikes of their own to take part	☐ Which local organisations can support with ensuring all children can take part?
End of year class	☐ Cost of purchasing photographs	☐ How can you ensure that attention is not drawn to children and families who do not purchase school photographs? Can the photos be distributed out of school hours to avoid pupils knowing who has and who has not purchased a photo? ☐ Are there resources in school which could be used to ensure that all children have a school photograph?
Summer Fayre	☐ Entry fee ☐ Expense of stalls / games ☐ Food and refreshment costs	☐ What costs are associated with attending the school fayre? ☐ Could you include some free activities?
P7 Transition Trip	☐ Cost of going on the trip ☐ Cost of outdoor clothing ☐ Expectation to have spending money	☐ Have families been given as much notice as possible with the option to pay in instalments? ☐ What is the total cost for a child to attend including clothing and spending money? How can this cost be reduced? ☐ How can the school help families who don't have appropriate outdoor clothing?
End of year (Scotland)	☐ See July for end of year barriers	☐ See July for things to consider at the end of the year.
Eid al-Adha Around 17 June	☐ Children asked to bring in food and drinks to share with their friends for an Eid celebration ☐ Parents bringing in home cooked dishes for a Eid party	☐ Do your communications with children and parents about Eid celebrations state that any contributions such as food and sweets are entirely voluntary?

Ideas from other schools – A primary school's alternative end of year residential visit

Cherry Orchard Primary School in Greenwich, London thought creatively about how to ensure that pupils did not miss out on the fun of a residential visit during the pandemic. Their alternative, of a camping trip within the school grounds provided an affordable, inclusive, and enjoyable experience for all pupils. 'It was one of the best days of my life… we just did so much fun stuff, we played, we drank hot chocolate… we watched a movie.' (Year 6 pupil)

For more ideas on how to mark the end of the school year take a look at The Cost of Having Fun at School | CPAG

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 **Father's Day**
17 **Eid al-Adha**	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point

cpag.org.uk/cosd

JULY 2024

Event	Barriers highlighted by pupils and families	Things to consider
End of year celebrations	☐ Children asked to contribute food and drink to share ☐ Party clothes worn in school ☐ Cost of ticket (e.g. prom tickets) ☐ Cost of outfits, photographs, transport	☐ What can school provide for this event so that pupils do not need to bring in things from home? ☐ How can you mark and celebrate the end of year in a way that is inclusive of all students? ☐ Have you asked students what they would like from their end of year celebration, taking into account those who don't have much money?
Sports Day	☐ Buying team / house t-shirts ☐ Wearing team / house colours	☐ What resources do you have available in school that could be used to demarcate different houses or teams?
Leavers' Performance	☐ Cost of costumes and props ☐ Cost of tickets ☐ Cost of refreshments	☐ What is the current cost for a family to attend this event and how could these costs be reduced? Could donations be adopted rather than a fixed ticket price?
School Leavers	☐ Items available to purchase (leavers' hoodies, year books, photographs)	☐ What mementoes can you as a school provide for all children? ☐ Could the children make their own mementoes or mementoes for each other?
Gift Giving	☐ Pupils and staff exchanging end of year gifts	☐ If children and families wish to show their appreciation to school staff, how can this be facilitated without gift giving? How can you model to children and families different ways to show appreciation and say thank you?

Ideas from other schools – A primary school's approach to planning the year ahead

Alderwood Primary School in London has taken a very deliberate and thoughtful approach to reducing the cost burden for families. Staff have tracked all events across the year to see where they can identify and remove hidden costs (eg, replacing dress-up days with alternative free activities). The school has provided information about all costs to families in the form of a calendar. Families have a clear point of contact if they need to talk about anything. Headteacher Katie Cutajar, says that 'We know that our families find it really helpful when they are able to plan for upcoming events and activities. It's a really straightforward thing for us as a school to do but makes it easier for everyone to be able to participate.' For more ideas on supporting families with school costs take a look at: Supporting families in times of financial hardship: a guide for schools | CPAG

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

School event | Holiday | Charity | Theme day or week | Cultural or religious event | GB-wide event | Scottish event | Welsh event | English event | Thinking point