



HOUSE OF COMMONS

9th March 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about school uniforms.

School uniforms can play a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of a school and setting an appropriate tone. However, I completely understand the concerns about cost and it is essential that uniforms are affordable and that they do not cause unnecessary financial hardship for families. If anyone locally is struggling to afford a uniform, please do call my office on 01509 262723 as one of my caseworkers will be more than happy to raise this with the school in question. There are also three wonderful charities in Loughborough who support the purchase of uniforms: The Clarke and Somerville Foundation; The Loughborough Welfare Trust; and The Dawson and Fowler Foundation. My office can provide you with the contact details for these charities, should you wish to contact them.

I would also like to assure you that the Government is aware of concerns and has said that, whilst it is for the governing bodies of schools to set school uniform policy, the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance makes it clear that considerations should be given to cost and that value for money for parents should be prioritised. Schools are expected to consult with parents and pupils, and take their views into account when setting the school uniform policy.

That said, the Government has been looking for an opportunity to put this guidance on a statutory footing and so has given its full support to the Private Member's Bill. I will also be supporting this.

With regards to branded items, the DfE's guidance states that uniform items should be easily available for parents to purchase and that schools should keep compulsory branded items to a minimum. It also states that schools should avoid single-supplier contracts and that, should they choose to enter into such contracts, they should be subject to a regular competitive tendering process to ensure prices are kept affordable.

I hope that this information is reassuring. If you have any further concerns about this, or any other issues, please do get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jane Hunt'.

Jane Hunt MP