

Addressing Poverty Through Charity and Fundraising

Contents

Introduction	2
Questions To Ask Your School	3
Charity Ethos	4
What Citizens Say	4
What Your School Can Do?	4
Barriers	4
Guidance.....	4
Case Study.....	4
Fundraising With Less Affluent Pupils	5
What Citizens Say	5
What Your School Can Do?	5
Barriers	5
Guidance.....	5
Case Study.....	6
Inclusive Community Participation	7
What Citizens Say	7
What Your School Can Do?	7
Barriers	7
Guidance.....	7
Case Study.....	7
Appendix	8
Links Referenced	8
References	8



Introduction

It is important to use charity and fundraising as an opportunity to talk to young people about societal issues. Fundraising can have broader impacts than raising awareness and money for the charity; it can help develop essential transferable skills and build empathy for others (Oxfam, ND).

Children from poorer families often experience shame and anxiety on fundraising days due to barriers to participation (Chartered Institute of Fundraising, ND). Teachers should be aware that pupils may be directly affected by the issues being discussed.

In **61%** of schools, pupils were **worried about selling items for charities** due to financial pressures to buy.

In **53%** of schools, pupils felt **pressure around non-uniform days**.




In **30%** of schools, **the collection of money for charities is identifiable**, and pupils are able to see who does not contribute.

In **23%** of schools, pupils shared there were **no or only few free activities at school**.

Use this document to **consider your approach to charity, fundraising, and community groups with an income inequality lens**.



Questions To Ask Your School

	Question	Page
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do pupils understand what work the chosen charity does and how they help people? Is there an opportunity for pupils to advocate for change, spread awareness, as well as donate? Can pupils be involved in planning charity and fundraising events? 	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are pupils who do not participate in non-uniform days identifiable to other children, either through absence or wearing uniform? Are pupils who cannot donate identifiable to other children by donation collection methods? Are all staff aware of the preferred way of collecting donations and the discretionary approach to those who have not? 	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What activities can pupils who may bring little to no money get involved with? Is there a set price list for charity items, or are pupils encouraged to donate as they can? Are themed non-uniform days accessible to those who may not be able to purchase new items? 	7



Charity Ethos

What Citizens Say



'We know that we can bring the money in whenever we can afford it and if we don't have the money, it's not a problem. It's the thought that counts.' (pupil)

'We learn how they help those people less fortunate.' (pupil)

What Your School Can Do?

Barriers

Some children and their families **cannot afford to donate** to charity.

Some pupils do not understand the **purpose of the fundraising** activity or the charity.

Guidance

- **Raise awareness** for a charity rather than raising money.
- Consider working as a group to **write a letter to your MP** or **Local Councillors** to advocate for change.
- Is **sufficient notice** provided?
- How are the opportunities **spaced throughout the year**? Be mindful of extra pressure around certain times of the year, for example, in the run-up to Christmas.
- Focus on **raising awareness** for charities and the issues they tackle rather than raising money.
- Families and pupils can then be **directed to the relevant charities' donation page** if they wish.
- Organise a **pupil committee** that works with the headteacher and other staff members to help coordinate charity work in the school.

Case Study

Bradford School



A dedicated after-school club raises funds for the school by **making up carrier bags of food, in partnership with local supermarkets and the 'Rethink food' initiative**. They are sold for £1 each and filled with at least 10 items, so families can purchase a large quantity of food for a heavily reduced cost.

'I get a bag most weeks. It's great because it saves you having to buy loads of food at the weekend.' (parent)



Fundraising With Less Affluent Pupils

What Citizens Say



'There's someone in our class who never comes in on non-uniform day.' (pupil)

'I felt sorry for them that didn't have money.' (pupil)

What Your School Can Do?

Barriers

Guidance

Less affluent pupils may **struggle to find suitable clothing** for non-uniform days.

- Make non-uniform **parameters wider**. For example, include yellow, dots, or bright colours on Children in Need days.
- One school have changed non-uniform days to **'dress as you please'**.
- Consider **alternative fundraising activities** for non-uniform days.
- Including bag packs, a stall selling items within the community, or writing letters to local businesses.
- Can you do **other things** rather than dress up for days like world book, like visit your local library.

Identifiable methods of donation collection for those who cannot donate.

- Consider placing the collection bucket somewhere children can **donate without being identified who hasn't**.
- Going around the classroom to each student can highlight those who have not brought any money.

Staff members following up on those who have not donated.

- Could this be an opportunity to carry out a **welfare check**?
- Ensure all staff know **how money is collected** and the need for discretion and empathy for those unable to pay.



Case Study

Bradford Schools



'There is a cup or jar at the front of the classroom that you put your money into it.' (pupil)

Collecting money in a tub in the classroom is best practice for allowing pupils to donate to charity. It lets students donate to charities anonymously, without it being obvious to other pupils and staff who has not.



Inclusive Community Participation

What Citizens Say



'It's normally about 50p for non-uniform day but it doesn't matter if you don't pay it.' (pupil)

The school hosts a book fair each year. 'The books are more expensive than they are on Amazon.' (parent)

What Your School Can Do?

Barriers

Pupils **unable to partake** in charity fundraising stalls.

Limited low-cost/free activities.

Guidance

- Consider discretely identifying children without any money and **allow participation regardless** so nobody misses out.
- Consider **removing a set price list** for charity products and welcoming any donations.
- For occasions like Remembrance Day, can children **make their** poppies as part of their learning?
- Consider having **as many free activities as there are paid** activities.
- Some schools have also given children two **tokens** each to get a go on two of the stalls for free, and then families pay for additional items and games.

Case Study

Bradford School



'I forgot to send money in with the kids a few times and there's never ever been any problem. I can just pay it later or give a little bit more next time.' (parent)

School hosts a summer fair after school for the wider community. Activities like the bouncy castle are free for everyone. Involving the wider community increases awareness for charity and fundraising activities and can raise more donations.



Appendix

Links Referenced

Oxfam: Fundraise at your schools	https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/get-involved/fundraise-at-your-school/
Giving to Charity	https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zgtf46f
Empowering children to make a difference	https://superkind.org/
Contact your MP	https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/contact-your-mp/
Local Councillors Workshop	https://mylivingwell.co.uk/schools/pupil-voice/
Celebrate World Book Day 2025: Exciting and Creative alternatives to dressing up	https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/school-blog/celebrate-world-book-day-2025-exciting-and-creative-alternatives-to-dressing-up-6332
Find your local library	https://www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries/find-your-local-library/find-your-local-library/

References

Watson, C (2022) Five alternative and inclusive school fundraising ideas. Available at: <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/five-alternative-and-inclusive-school-fundraising-ideas> [Accessed 03/02/2025]

Oxfam (ND) Fundraise at your school. Available at: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/get-involved/fundraise-at-your-school/> [Accessed 03/02/2025]

Chartered Institute of Fundraising (ND) How charities can make their school fundraising more inclusive of pupils living in poverty. Available at: <https://ciof.org.uk/events-and-training/resources/how-charities-can-make-their-school-fundraising-more-inclusive>



If you have any feedback on this document or good practice that your school is doing, **we would love to hear from you.**

Please email schools@mylivingwell.co.uk.

