



Adding up

A Citizens Advice campaign on education costs

10 top tips that schools can adopt to help parents.

1 Make sure uniform is available from a range of outlets rather than one sole supplier

6 Give parents a schedule of trips for the school year in September so they can budget accordingly.

2 Offer sew-on or iron-on badges that can be put on plain clothing.

7 Indicate which trips are essential for school work and which are for fun.

3 Where possible choose a set of colours that can be carried over from one school to the next.

8 Make sure letters don't imply that "voluntary" contributions are obligatory if trips are to go ahead.

4 Encourage second-hand uniform sales or swap schemes where pupils can exchange an outgrown item for one that fits.

9 Promote saving and financial planning either by establishing links with a credit union or setting up a savings scheme into which parents can make regular payments.

5 Set up a fund for families in need. Schools have sourced funds from local trusts and businesses.

10 Allocate a governor to maintain a check on the affordability of parental expenditure.