



### 2013 OVERVIEW

What did we learn from the 2013 survey?

Costs remain the same but incomes and benefits have decreased

There is a lot of anger that parents are forced to fund the basic running costs of schools



Many parents are going into debt to pay for the cost of school

Parents fear that their children's education is suffering

"It breaks my heart to think that in 20 years' time we will be trying to build a generation's self esteem, because of insane educational costs that have prevented some children reaching their potential now."

Parent's comment

### SCHOOL COSTS IN 2013

	Senior Infant	4th Class	1st Year
Clothing	€55	€120	€275
Footwear	€45	€60	€60
School Books	€80	€120	€275
Classroom resources	€30	€50	€50
Voluntary contribution	€100	€50	€125
<b>Total</b>	<b>€350</b>	<b>€400</b>	<b>€785</b>

### ABOUT THE SURVEY

Barnardos surveyed

**1,104**  
parents

We have tracked school costs for

**8**

years

Each year, the results are sent to



the Minister & Dept of Education

### OUTCOMES

School costs have stayed on the political agenda in 2012 & 2013



Minister encourages the setting up of school book rental schemes



Joint Oireachtas Committee recommends reform

But not enough is being done and Barnardos will continue to work on this issue

### WHAT YOU CAN DO



Talk to your school Board of Management and Parents' Association about reducing book and uniform costs

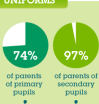


Raise the issue with your local representatives



Support Barnardos' campaigns on this and other issues affecting children: [www.barnardos.ie/campaign](http://www.barnardos.ie/campaign)

### UNIFORMS



"I was shocked by the cost of the badly made school uniform. For the money I spent on the school uniform I could get clothes for my son for 3 years. €50 for a synthetic poorly made sweater is a joke. There must be some clever resolution to this nonsense in the 21st century."

Parent's comment

have to buy uniforms with school crests, greatly adding to the expense

### BOOKS

Books are the single largest cost for parents



There is **no consistency** in cost, with books for a 4th class child costing €70 in some schools and €130 in others



50%

40%

Primary

Secondary

55%

42%

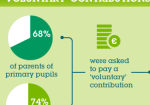
Primary

Secondary

There was a slight increase in the number of parents who had access to a school book rental scheme

Many parents mentioned the **high cost of workbooks**, which cannot be passed down to siblings or resold

### 'VOLUNTARY' CONTRIBUTIONS



were asked to pay a 'voluntary' contribution

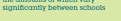
€50

€100

€150

the amounts of which vary significantly between schools

Many schools pursue these payments:



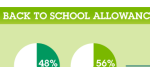
41% of primary & 53% of secondary schools sent reminders directly to parents

32% of primary & 23% of secondary schools sent reminders via children

"Voluntary contributions which are needed to pay basic school running costs such as heating and toilet roll are a disgrace. Why are the government not providing the basic funding to run a school with my hard earned tax money, which has increased substantially over the past couple of years?"

Parent's comment

### BACK TO SCHOOL ALLOWANCE



applied for the Back to School Clothing & Footwear Allowance (BSCFA)



**6,000**

families are applying for the BSCFA every week

The BSCFA has reduced greatly over recent years



"Going into 1st Year is astronomically expensive. This was the case for me last year costs amounted to €1200. As I am a lone parent, the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance does not come close to covering costs meaning people are forced to borrow money."

Parent's comment

### AFTERSCHOOL & TRANSPORT



Services are ad-hoc and unregulated

Quality varies significantly in terms of staff training and facilities

The cost of afterschool care on top of school costs places a huge strain on many household budgets



"I am a single Mum of two young children getting crucified by high tax, high childcare and after-school care and back to school costs. I would like to see school facilities made available to childcare providers for after school. After all tax payers fund these buildings and they could be used to provide a safe and convenient service for working parents. I don't expect the teachers to provide afterschool and I am happy to pay, but some joined up thinking would be nice!"

Parent's comment

**Transport costs**

disproportionately affect rural families

€100 for 1 child



€220 per family



Primary

€150 for 1 child



€650 per family



Secondary

### BARNARDOS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5 year plan for free school books
- Digital device strategy for schools
- Value for money uniform policies in schools
- Govt. to tackle additional costs
- Govt. to invest in after-school services
- Raise BSCFA rate, make more families eligible

For Barnardos' recommendations, complete results of the survey and more comments from parents, visit:

[www.barnardos.ie/schoolcosts2013](http://www.barnardos.ie/schoolcosts2013)