

Free period products for all schools and colleges

The new scheme is set to give pupils easy access to period products at school or college, helping to break down stigmas and ensure no young person's education is disrupted by their period.

From Monday 20 January, schools and colleges across the country will be able to order a range of period products from supplier phs Group, making period products readily available for all young people when they need them.

Children and Families Minister Michelle Donelan said:

Periods are a normal part of everyday life and we do not want young people missing out on lessons because of them.

We know that it is not easy for everyone to access period products where and when they need them. This scheme will deal with those problems so young people can go about their daily lives without getting caught out if they have come on their period unexpectedly, forgotten to bring products with them or if they can't afford the products they need.

This follows the Government's commitment last year to fully fund period products for all state-funded primary schools, secondary schools and colleges. It also forms part of the Department's ambition to improve provision of products for young people, helping to support campaigns to break the stigma around periods and raise awareness of menstruation.

The scheme also comes just months before health education becomes a compulsory for all state funded primary and secondary schools, under new guidance on relationships, sex and health education from September 2020 – to ensure all young people learn about living healthy lives, including menstrual wellbeing.

The Government also introduced the £15 million annual Tampon Tax Fund to support women's charities – and made a commitment to end period poverty globally by 2030.

Amika George, founder of #FreePeriods, said:

We have been waiting for this day for a long time! As a grassroots, student-led movement, Free Periods has been fighting for every single child in this country to be able to go to school without worrying about their next pad or tampon. For the first time in history, this scheme will ensure that becomes a reality.

We ask that schools have open conversations with students about what they need and start signing up to the scheme – no child must miss out. Free products in schools will ensure that every child can learn and be their very best, without periods holding them back.

David Taylor-Smith, CEO of phs Group, said

We have been busy preparing for the launch of this scheme and we are ready for the first wave of demand. We encourage schools and colleges to look out for their activation email and make their first order so they can start offering free products as soon as possible.

Period products are a necessity, not a luxury, and we believe providing free products for young people will be a catalyst for change in creating period equality. We are proud to be the supplier for such a worthy scheme.

Schools and colleges will receive an activation email from the phs Group on Monday 20 January which will enable them to order products for their organisation from the phs Group portal – a range of products will be available so that schools and colleges can offer choice to young people, including eco-friendly options.