

# The Schoolwear Association



## Chairman's Report March 2017

It has been an honour to serve as SA Chairman for a second term. I have been ably supported by my Vice Chair Christine Campbell. I would also like to thank Trudy Bryan, who is PA to the SA Exec. Trudy's appointment was the key to the massive improvement in communication, both internally and externally.

The SA has been working with Linda Painter for some years now and her work, in conjunction with Hopwood PR, has ensured that the SA has not just been super fast responding to the media, but in taking the initiative and getting our own stories out there in a really proactive manner. Long gone are the days of silently putting up with the rubbish spoken and written about School Uniform.

2016 saw The Schoolwear Association (SA) celebrate 10 years since we formed. There have been 4 Chairmen and 5 Vice Chairs in that time, with tremendous support from the SA Executive. What they have all helped to achieve is worthy of great praise and thanks from everyone involved in this market.

Since 2006, where there had been no voice against the damaging media coverage every Back to School, the SA has grown its influence to now be asked for its comment nearly every time a journalist wants to write a story or carry out an interview. Local and national papers, radio and television talk to the SA and a much more balanced argument has been made possible. The SA puts the case for quality uniform and all the various other points, consistently.

The SA meets regularly with the Dept for Education (DfE) and the many other organisations who have an influence on the Uniform market. We have conducted surveys and reported back to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). Sort to cooperate with the National Governors Association (NGA), the National Association of Business Managers (NASBM) and the Independent Schools Bursars Association (ISBA). This work will continue unabated.

There have been many examples of great SA initiatives, but I think one of the best has been the development and distribution of the SA Uniform Guidelines, in conjunction with the more straightforward Tendering advice and template, which were produced in 2016. Well done to everyone who was involved and there were a lot of people behind that project!

It's really important that the SA not only retains Members, but keeps recruiting new ones, to continue the great work done in these first 10 years. We operate in such a demanding market, which efficiently delivers great quality and value for tens of thousands of Schools, millions of parents and youngsters every year and especially at Back to School. It is worth celebrating! Thank you everyone.

David H Burgess SA Chairman