



Newton Farm Primary School

Cost of the School Day Position Statement



At Newton Farm Primary School, we recognise the need to reduce the Cost of the School Day for all our pupils and particularly for our pupils who are already experiencing poverty. We examine the School Day through the following headings; Uniform, Travel, Learning, Friendship, School trips, Eating, Fun, Clubs and Home learning.

Uniform

Our current uniform is navy blue trouser/ skirt/ pinafore with a white shirt/ polo shirt and purple sweatshirt/ cardigan. Families can purchase uniforms from the Scotcrest shop in Hamilton or online. We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/polo shirts, therefore families can purchase their uniform from any high street store also. This session we changed our uniform supplier following feedback from parents where there were concerns about high delivery charges from our previous supplier.

Travel

Most of our children travel to school by car or walking. Transport is provided for children living further away by the Local Authority. We are aware that this could mean many children are not able to attend after school clubs and we therefore ensure that we have lunch time activities as well as after school.

Learning

Children at Newton Farm Primary do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Pens and pencils are provided and young people do not need to bring their own equipment. We currently are developing Maths Sacks to be used at Family Learning Events and will be provided for learners free of charge to borrow. This will continue and plans are being made to include this in other areas of the curriculum. We also provide free of charge learning opportunities during Health Week, World of Work Week and Autism Awareness Week. Our Parent Council provide a scientific calculator for each P7 pupil when leaving for High School.

Friendships

We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence. Next session we intend to teach young people about poverty related issues as part of our Building Friendships Policy. We intend to gather the views of our young people and families on the Cost of the School Day and involve them in decision making around this.

School Trips

Currently our trips are planned each year by School and Curriculum developments throughout the session. The average cost of trips for pupils depends on the distance needed to travel and entry costs. We try to reduce the cost by choosing free venues or those with reasonable entry costs we also subsidise bus costs using school funds. External funding is used where possible and last session our Parent Council paid for transport for our whole school Panto outing and all our ASN swimming lesson costs. We do have a policy for families with more than one child and support them by providing a discounted rate, subsidising this from School Funds.



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Eating at school

Last school year we had 17% of pupils who were in receipt of Free School Meals. We are aware that there may be a stigma associated with a free lunch and we try to reduce this by not using a ticket system for FSM. We are aware that some of our pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals do not take up their entitlement. In order to increase that percentage we intend to audit this next session and potentially contact families to increase their awareness of the process of school dinners.

Fun Events

Newton Farm Primary School recognise that events planned for enjoyment can put added pressure on to families. We intend to look carefully at attendance and participation in these events in order to see if there are any poverty-related patterns that require action. As with school trips, our Fun Events are planned by our annual school calendar. Almost all our fun events are free of charge, Disco's are organised by our Parent Council free of charge with a small fee for tuck (this may be something we can consider for next session) We currently fund raise by organising events which include families from the whole school that may help subsidise a specific class trip e.g. Belfast Trip, Activity Week reducing the cost of the trip per pupil.

School Clubs

At Newton Farm Primary School, we have the following clubs; Football, Athletics, Cheerleading, Hockey, Reading, Multisport, Homework, Cookery, Guitar and Choir. These are all free for every pupil to attend. We have forged great partnerships with SLC Active Schools and Uddingston Hockey Club who provide free of charge clubs also. We apply for grants to provide equipment needed to run specific clubs, e.g. Food for Thought Grant making it free of charge for families to attend.

Home Learning

We try to reduce the cost of learning at home as much as possible by providing children with equipment necessary to complete home learning. We do not have a policy in the school about lending equipment for pupils who may struggle, and next session we will plan to ensure that any homework activity can be completed by *all* pupils no matter their family circumstances. Homework is not linked to our Behaviour Policy.

We are very clear that the Cost of the School Day is an area that requires constant vigilance and will not be 'fixed' by any one action. In our Improvement Plan for 2019/20 we will be focusing on

- Providing free of charge Family Learning Events out with the school day.
- Raising awareness of FME for all families who can access this.
- Launch our Building Friendships Policy in line with the Treat Me Well document. Raising pupil's awareness of poverty related bullying.
- Consider other areas of the curriculum to use learning sacks.
- Gathering the views of our young people and families on the Cost of the School Day and involve them in decision making around this.

This statement will be replaced by June 2020 with a School Policy on Cost of the School Day.