



Riverbank Primary School and Nursery Class

R- Respect P-Play S-Safe N-Nurture C-Caring

♥ Many Hearts Make Our Family ♥



Supporting Families- Cost of the School Day Policy Updated May 2024

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child underpins this policy:

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 6: Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Article 19: Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 27: Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

AIM

Schools have a key role to play in tackling poverty and serving all learners equally is not enough – there needs to be a specific focus on those children and young people who are growing up in poverty. Within Riverbank Primary School and Nursery Class we believe that tackling disadvantage is at the heart of what we do.

RATIONALE

More than one in five (210,000) children across Scotland are officially recognised as living in poverty. In North Lanarkshire, it is estimated that 24.9% (17, 922) of children are in poverty. Insufficient household income can mean that some children and young people don't have the resources needed for school and can't easily afford to take part in school activities which cost money. This can put them at risk of missing out on opportunities at school and feeling different, excluded and unhappy.

UNICEF estimates that 19% of British children live in food insecure households. This means that there are times when their household does not have enough money to buy enough food, or they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet.

Education structures, policies and practices affect children and young people from low income households and can present difficulties and financial barriers to participation throughout the school and nursery day. Understanding more about this from children's perspectives can support Education and Families, schools and family learning centres to poverty-proof their policies and practices so that conditions are right for all children and young people to learn and to achieve.

There are various forms of support available to families in our school, details of which are accessible to anyone who may require it.

Our school receives Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to help close the poverty-related attainment gap. The allocation of this funding is based on the number of pupils claiming free meals and clothing grants.

Due to this, we encourage families to claim the benefits available to them as this will ensure that the school receives the correct amount of PEF and that we are able to provide additional support that benefits individual pupils. This can be done via the council website: <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-clothing-grants>

Our parent forum was surveyed, asking how we could best tackle poverty and ensure equity within our school. This policy reflects the needs identified by our staff and families.

This policy details our plan to poverty proof our school and nursery class.

Our policy covers four over-arching themes:

1. School and Family Learning Centre Poverty: this section of the policy focuses on tackling poverty via a review of the 'Cost of the School/ Nursery Day' and the continued focus on tackling period poverty.
2. Food Poverty: this section of the policy links to North Lanarkshire's 'Children's Right to Food Charter' and focuses on our role in the continued development of Club 365 and increasing the uptake of free school meal and breakfast club provision.
3. Maximising Income: this section of our policy focuses on Financial Education for children and their families in partnership with North Lanarkshire's Financial Inclusion Team. It also provides details on how the cluster will work effectively on identifying those children living in poverty and supports which will be provided to their families.
4. Fuel and Material Poverty: this section of our policy focuses on consideration of the impacts of these types of poverty and actions which must be taken.

To make a referral to the Financial Inclusion Team we will follow this process:

Email: FIT@northlan.gov.uk

Alternatively, if a parent or carer wishes to self-refer they can call 01698 332551.

SECTION 1 - SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS POVERTY

SCHOOL/ NURSERY UNIFORM

- School uniform is encouraged in Riverbank Primary School. The uniform gives the school and children an identity as well as reducing competition and stigma created in relation to children wearing branded and designer clothing. A uniform is available for pupils in our nursery class which is optional.
- We have a uniform for PE which will again help to minimise competition amongst pupils over branded clothing and ensure that the clothing is suitable for the activities they will be taking part in. This will comprise of a school polo shirt and navy shorts, leggings or jogging trousers.
- School funds have been used to supply every child with a rain jacket in order to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to take part in outdoor learning. We also supply wellington boots for every child for outdoor learning activities in the nursery class.
- Details for the supplier for our uniforms is available from our school handbook and website.
- We do not insist on families purchasing school branded items and advise that uniform in our school colours can be purchased from other suppliers, including local supermarkets.
- Clothing grants are also available for families with low income and should be applied for as required: <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-clothing-grants>
- A local charity, COOL SCHOOL UNIFORMS, can provide families with free uniforms and operates a self-referral system. Families can contact this group in confidence on 07596265879 or via their Facebook page.
- We are continually building a School Uniform Bank that parents and carers are able to look through and take any items they require. There is also the opportunity for families to donate any preloved items. We have a uniform rail available at the main entrance so that families can help themselves to uniform, winter jackets, Halloween Costumes and Christmas Jumpers during the year.
- Families are asked if they can donate any items of clothing at the end of each year to help ensure that we have a large bank of different sizes for the start of each school year. In addition, any items that are left in lost property for longer than three months will be added to our bank of clothing.
- A child will never be turned away from school due to not wearing a uniform. If a child regularly attends without their uniform, they can be provided with one.
- We have a stock of pre-loved costumes and Christmas jumpers to provided children with these items for dress down days. We maintain relations with local supermarkets for donations of specific clothing such as Halloween/ World book day for dressing up outfits. These activities are optional for parents.

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

- All children have access to school resources and hardware required to complete work tasks at Breakfast Club, during morning interval and lunch times
- Stationery and all specialist equipment required to participate in the school day is made available by the school. Due to this, there is no need for children to bring their own stationery and equipment to school.

- Stationery, jotters, paper and any other equipment that is required to complete homework will be available in school.
- Digital devices can be requested by families in order to access online learning. A paper-based approach is also available.
- Children are encouraged not to bring toys and other expensive belongs to school as everything they require is provided by the school.
- All pupils are encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle. Those pupils who do not have one will be provided with an alternative.
- All after school and lunchtime clubs are free of charge.
- As a school and nursery we use the class libraries to offer paired reading sessions and book borrowing. We use the infant book bags to supplement reading activities at home.

SCHOOL AND NURSERY TRIPS

- All school trips are non-profitable and carefully planned to keep costs to a minimum.
- Parents and carers are given notice of any upcoming costs in the school session.
- A payment plan is available to families, allowing them to pay instalments over a period of time.
- The school/ Parent Council subsidise trips to reduce the cost per child.
- The amount of spending money that a child is allowed to take on a school trip is limited. On some trips no spending money will be required at all as no visit to the gift shop will be scheduled into the day.
- Leaflets and links are shared with parents to ensure that they are aware about possible financial support available to them- see Appendix 1.
- Children can order a Pack-a-Snack for a trip from the school catering staff. Those children in receipt of a free school lunch will receive this free of charge.
- As a school and nursery, we will always negotiate with families who may be facing financial difficulties and offer a payment plan and discuss the option of reduced costs if necessary.
- Staff will not publicly announce the names of children who have not paid. If necessary the office staff will communicate directly with parents.
- As a school we apply for transport subsidies when available to reduce the cost of school trips.
- We offer discounts to families with 3 or more children- when parents pay they only pay for a maximum of two children.
- As a school and nursery we maximise the Pupil Equity Funds to pay for trips and experiences to enrich the children's learning and experiences.

CHARITY, FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES, SCHOOL SHOWS AND THEMED DAYS

- We keep 'dress down' and themed dress-up days to a bare minimum and are careful when choosing the theme to avoid any additional costs to parents. We would *never* expect a family to buy an outfit especially for a themed day. We would only ever ask for a donation towards these days and no one would be excluded from taking part if they do not have a donation.
- The School Uniform Bank aims to introduce a selection of outfits available that can be used on the themed days for those who may require them.

- When asking for a donation for a particular event or themed day we ask for a family donation to avoid families with more than one child in the school having to contribute more.
- Donations towards a day don't necessarily need to be in the form of money – it could be donating a book, a piece of clothing or even singing a song for the class.
- We aim to spread events throughout the year to avoid asking for money too often.
- The Parent Council is involved in decisions around school photographers. Notice is given before a photographer's visit and there is never any obligation to purchase these.

HOMEWORK AND OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS

- Our school provides a wide range of after school and lunchtime clubs. A number of our clubs also invite parents or carers to take part alongside their child. There is no cost required to attend any of these clubs.
- The school provides any resources and equipment required to take part in the clubs. There are PE kits available in the School Uniform Bank for those who require it.
- Home learning tasks can be accessed both online and in a paper based format. Laptops and internet access can be requested from North Lanarkshire Council for those families who do not have a digital device at home. Time can also be given in school and/ or at Breakfast Club for children to complete tasks, if this is required.
- There is no requirement to print anything at home. If a worksheet is provided online it will be able to be completed on the child's device or will be made simple enough that it can be completed on plain paper instead. Paper copies of worksheets are also available for collection from the school building.
- Homework and Home Learning Grids offer children choice with appropriate challenge so that they can produce their work in a variety of ways depending on time, resources and lifestyle.
- Staff are aware that some parents may require support with literacy and maths themselves. Grids are written in child friendly language and are explained to children. If paper based, grids can be printed on coloured paper to assist parents' needs, if requested. Videos have also been created that show parents step by step how to complete particular tasks.
- We offer musical instructions during lunchtime hours and supply instruments to support children's development.

PERIOD POVERTY

- Sanitary products are available in school for visitors, staff and pupils. These can be accessed in a sensitive and dignified manner.
- Sanitary products are also available in the community from NLC sports centres, libraries, etc.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- A bank of hygiene products is available and can be accessed, if required, by pupils and their families.

SECTION 2 FOOD POVERTY

FOOD POVERTY

- Parents are encouraged to apply for Free School Meals, if eligible, and are reminded to do this each year as this will also give them access to the Breakfast Club and Club 365 benefits.
- All staff are aware of the steps to take if a child comes to school hungry. Snacks are available and toast can be provided in the dinner hall in the morning.
- All staff and families should be aware of the council's food poverty referral gateway. This aims to mitigate the need for foodbank use by ensuring access to advice services and claims to crisis grants.
- Families on low incomes who are in crisis can apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund: <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/scottish-welfare-fund>
- With their permission, families can be referred to the Financial Inclusion Team. If a parent or carer wishes to self-refer they can call 01698 332551.
- Health and Wellbeing lessons in school are sensitive to the varying circumstances in which families are living and teaches the importance of a healthy lifestyle, poverty related hunger and the impact this has on young people in a sensitive manner. All staff should continually consider the indicators in line with GIRFEC in order to help ensure any issues such as food poverty is identified and dealt with at the earliest point.
- As part of nurturing our parents we organise informal cooking classes accompanied by nutritional information. We work alongside CLD to deliver these classes.

Breakfast Club

- Free breakfast club provision for P1-5 children and those children in receipt of free school meals
- Running our Breakfast Club to ensure that it is free for all who wish to attend using school funds for those children who are unable to afford the cost of £1 per day.
- Providing breakfast at our Nurture Group each morning and for children who arrive late at school.

Lunch/ Snack

- Ensuring parents/carers are aware of the eligibility of free-school meal provision, currently universal offer of P1-5
- Providing packed lunches for trips/outings for those children eligible for FSM.
- Providing snacks for any children who come to school without one.
- Ensuring any left-over food at lunch is not wasted but distributed to children in need through a non-discriminatory way.

SECTION 3 - MAXIMISING INCOME IN RIVERBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

We offer Financial Education and advice for children, young people and their families in the following ways: Insert text. Detail could include the MACA Project.

For families living in poverty, we will offer support in partnership with the Financial Inclusion Team, Employability Resources, CLD and, where appropriate, Health and Social Work for advice and support.

SECTION 4 - FUEL AND MATERIAL POVERTY

- As part of the nurture provision for our parents arrange awareness raising information sessions to ensure parents are informed about all financial assistance available
- We offer Informal drop-in sessions for support in completion of necessary forms for free meals and clothing grants accompanied by a cup of tea.

HOW WE RAISE AWARENESS OF THE HIDDEN COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

We will use the Cost of the School Day Toolkit at:

- Pupil Council Meetings
- Staff checklist Training during August in-service days
- Parent Council Meetings
- Pupil Council Meetings

GIFTS

- We do not encourage end of term gifts for staff. If pupils wish to express their thanks, we would welcome a homemade card or picture made by a child.

Appendix 1 NLC Financial Support Information for Parents and Carers
A copy is available on our school website:

[Financial-Support.pdf \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](https://glowscotland.org.uk)

Policy Created	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewed and Changes Made	Signature
May 2024	May 2025		
		Date:	
	May 2026		
		Date:	
	May 2026		
		Date:	
	May 2027		
		Date:	
	May 2028		
		Date:	