



Cumbernauld Academy

Poverty Proofing Policy

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. More than one in five (210,000) children across Scotland are officially recognised as living in poverty. In the absence of significant policy change, the Scottish government forecasts that this figure will reach 38% by 2030/31.

Cumbernauld Academy are committed to ensuring all pupils are achieving their full potential and are provided with opportunities for success regardless of their financial background. We understand the challenges that may affect our pupils from low-income households and strive to address inequity whilst ensuring dignity. We aim to tackle any barriers to learning or participating in extracurricular activities associated with child poverty and are fully committed to poverty proofing our school.

This policy was developed using “The cost of the School Day Toolkit” and was informed by pupils, parents, and staff in conjunction with Cumbernauld Academy’s Pupil Parliament.

Our policy covers four over-arching themes: -

1. School Poverty: The Cost of the School Day
2. Food Poverty
3. Maximising Income
4. Fuel and Material Poverty.

The following sections outline our plan to poverty proof our school.

Section 1 – School Poverty: Cost of the School Day

“Education is free, but a lot of school things are not.”

Member of the Children’s Parliament, age 11, Children’s Parliament [*The Weight on our Shoulders*](#) report

Uniform

Cumbernauld Academy uniform consists of the school blazer, school tie, a plain collared shirt, plain black trousers or skirt and plain black shoes. We believe wearing a school uniform promotes equity and helps unite our learners as members of our school community. Uniform items are widely available from local supermarkets and the school’s uniform supplier. As a welcome to our community new pupils are gifted a Cumbernauld Academy tie on their first day. Each day all

children are welcomed into school irrespective of attire, the Pupil Support and PE departments offer a laundered bank of items for emergencies, and a referral system is in place to Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Uniform Bank. Clothing grant payments of £110 per child are available for eligible families – information on eligibility and how to apply can be found on North Lanarkshire Council’s website www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

A PE kit is essential to participate fully in lessons, this consists of plain black t-shirt and shorts or ¾ length leggings. Branded items are actively discouraged, and a Cumbernauld Academy sports t-shirt is available to purchase but not compulsory.

Equipment and resources

All students are encouraged to ‘be ready’ for school by bringing their own materials however pens, pencils, calculators and other items are readily available in classrooms for students to use without stigma when required. Support is given to families and young people who struggle to meet the cost of essential items, this includes but is not exclusive to, ICT provision at home, school bags and stationery.

Core materials for lessons such as jotters and textbooks are provided, and Cumbernauld Academy subscribes to study materials such as “Scholar” and “The Day”, in addition faculties have individual arrangements in place to allow school resources to be borrowed if required for a homework task.

School Trips

When planning school trips consideration is given to the wider school calendar with expensive trips planned two years in advance. School trips are often subsidised, extensive research is conducted to ensure value for money and payment plans are established to make expenses more manageable. Pupil support also play an active role in approaching and reassuring families that may have financial barriers. Concessions can be made for families with more than one child and packed lunches are available for those entitled to free school meals.

Fundraising Activities, School shows and Theme days

Fundraising activities in Cumbernauld Academy are donation only and aim to be inclusive to all. Staff and the Pupil Parliament understand financial restraints may be a barrier to participation and seek innovative ways to overcome this. Shared awareness is essential to reduce stigma when organising school events and staff remain sensitive to the concerns pupils may have when asked to take part.

Homework and out of school hours learning

Staff in Cumbernauld Academy are committed to raising the attainment of all learners and individual faculties offer supported study sessions and Easter School. Individual transport provision can be made for pupils who may otherwise be unable to attend. Pupils can access the school library at intervals and lunch times to access computers and printers to aid homework tasks if necessary.

Period Poverty

Cumbernauld Academy is committed to tackling period poverty and pupils are active in actioning change. Currently all pupils have access to safe, hygienic sanitary products in school which are available to take home. Dignity is essential and the Pupil Parliament are developing a procedure to ensure that all pupils feel confident in accessing this provision.

Section 2 - Food poverty

UNICEF estimates that 19% of British children live in food insecure households. This means that there are times when there is insufficient money to buy necessary food. It can also mean they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet.

Parents are reminded to apply for free school meal entitlement and a card system is in place to ensure confidentiality. Information on this can be found at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk and help on how to apply is available from staff if required. There is a breakfast club available for identified pupils every morning and is subsidised by the school fund.

Staff are aware of the impact hunger has on learning and there is a clear referral system for support within the school. We also work with learners and families to ensure that they have access to food and develop the skills to cook nutritious meals. This is something that is reflected in the Home Economics curriculum where pupils learn about “Food for Health” and learn practical cooking skills in a supported environment.

Section 3- Maximising income

If pupil support teachers identify families in need they can refer to the North Lanarkshire Financial Inclusion Team (FIT). The agency can offer advice, representation and advocacy in a number of fields including:

- Tax Credits
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Jobseekers Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Child Benefit
- Universal Credit
- Personal Independence Payment

The Financial Inclusion Team also offer debt and money advice.

- Rent/Mortgage arrears
- Council Tax arrears
- Pay Day loans
- Personal loans

- Store/Credit Cards
- Gas/Electricity arrears
- Budgeting Guidance

Section 4 – Fuel and Material Poverty

Cumbernauld Academy works in collaboration with partnership agencies to ensure that pupils are safe, nurtured and achieving. Our Home Partnership Learning Officer provides support to pupils out with the school setting and can help identify need for support. The school has a bank of material items such as laptops and iPads that can be loaned to pupils to support engagement with school activities, these are accessed through Pupil Support.

Referrals, by staff or families can be made to the FIT team for support.

Organisation	Contact Details
Financial Inclusion Team (FIT)	By telephone: 01698 332551 By email: FIT@northlan.gov.uk Website: Money advice North Lanarkshire Council
Citizens Advice Scotland	By telephone: 01236 723201 By email: bureau@cumbernauldcab.casonline.org.uk Website: www.cas.org.uk
Cumbernauld & Kilsyth School Uniform Bank	By telephone: By email: hello@cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk Website: www.cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk
Cumbernauld & Kilsyth Baby Bank	By telephone: By email: hello@cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk Website: www.cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk
Cumbernauld Together	By telephone: By email: cumbernauldtogether@gmail.com Website: www.cumbernauldtogether.org