**Bargeddie Primary School**



**Poverty Proofing Policy**

**2023 – 2024**

**UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**Article 1** - Everyone under 18 has all the rights of the Convention

**Article 3** - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

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

**Article 24** - Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 26** - Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

**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.



**Poverty Proofing Policy**

**Background**

The aim of ‘Poverty Proofing the School Day’ is to remove barriers to learning which exist because of the impact of living in poverty.

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 Bargeddie Primary we believe that tackling disadvantage is at the heart of what we do. We will ensure that all families who reach out to us for support and assistance will be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

“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 do not have the resources needed for school and cannot 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.

**More than two thirds of children in poverty live in working households**

UNICEF estimates that 19% of British children live in food insecure households, and this number continues to rise due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the Cost-of-Living Crisis. This means that there are times when their household does not have sufficient funds 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.” ***(Source: NLC Education and Families Guidance Paper on Poverty Proofing Schools and Family Learning Centres)***

This policy details our plan to poverty proof our school.

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| **Rational for Pupil Equity Funding Plan*** **Price Matched Staffing – to reduce class sizes.**
* **Further investment in** **ICT hardware.**
* **Professional Learning to improve elements of Teaching and Learning identified for development** **e.g. Assessment and Moderation, Literacy and Numeracy.**
* **Pupil access to authors/author events.**
* **P7 Strathclyde Park activity week to ensure access for all.**
* **P6 Swimming - 12-week block**

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“Poverty can have a ferocious and long-lasting effect on children’s health, wellbeing and educational attainment. Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing are essential for successful learning. However, food insecurity, housing problems and financial stress and worry all contribute to poorer health outcomes and children from low-income households are more likely to report feeling useless and hopeless about their futures.” **(The Cost of the School Day Toolkit, CPAG)**

**At Bargeddie Primary our policy covers four over-arching themes:**

**1. School Poverty** - focuses on tackling poverty via a review of the ‘Cost of the School Day’ and the continued focus on tackling period poverty.

**2. Food Poverty** - 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 meals and Breakfast Club provision.

**3**. **Maximising Income** - focuses on Financial Education for children and their families in partnership with North Lanarkshire’s Financial Inclusion Team. It also provides details on how our cluster will work effectively to identify those children living in poverty and the supports which can be provided to these families. A cluster statement will follow by the end of this session, once agreed.

**4**. **Fuel and Material Poverty** - 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 (Appendix 1)**

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

**Section 1**

**Theme 1 - School/ Nursery Uniform**

At Bargeddie Primary School we work with parents/carers to promote the wearing of school uniform. We believe this provides pupils with a sense of belonging and prevents pupils from becoming embarrassed or self-conscious about their clothing. We no longer promote ‘Dress Down’ days as a way of fundraising. As detailed within North Lanarkshire’s Clothing and Uniform Policy, pupils are not permitted to wear football colours.

In order to support parents/carers with the cost of school uniform we actively encourage parents/carers to apply for clothing grants. All new P1 pupils are provided with the relevant information to facilitate this. To support our families during changing financial circumstances we also regularly provide information regarding the application for the NLC clothing grant. An electronic link to Clothing Grant application forms is now included in newsletters. Office staff support families who may need assistance completing the forms online.

Alongside NLC funding we also provide parents with the opportunity to access our ‘pre-Loved’ uniform bank. Parents are asked at the end of the year if they have any items that they would like to donate to the ‘pre-Loved,’ store. In addition, any items in lost property for longer than 3 months are added to the stock. This session we will also promote the use of pre-loved Halloween costumes and Christmas jumpers. Although school uniform is encouraged and promoted no child is denied access to learning as a result of their attire.

**Theme 2 - Equipment and Resources**

Within Bargeddie Primary School, pupils have access to all resources required to participate fully in the school day and all areas of the curriculum. In order to promote equality and reduce risk to personal belongings, pupils are encouraged not to bring any unnecessary or expensive items to school.

To further promote equality, we no longer participate in show and tell activities.

Pupils have access to taster sessions to experience activities generally provided beyond the normal school day e.g., Active Schools Taster sessions etc.

**Theme 3 - School Trips**

Where possible, all pupil trips are covered using school funds, PEF (Pupil Equity Funding) or free excursions are accessed. Where it is not possible for Bargeddie Primary School to cover the cost of a trip, parents/carers will be provided with extended time and the opportunity to pay in instalments to reduce the impact of the cost.

On school trips all parents/carers are advised that no spending money is required, and no shop outlets are visited during trips. Pupils in receipt of free school meals are also provided with a school packed lunch.

**Theme 4 - Charity, Fundraising Activities, School Shows and Themed Days**

At Bargeddie Primary no pupils are required to purchase costumes or materials to participate in school shows and themed days. Special consideration is given to reduce the financial impact of themed days e.g., no dressing up on World Book Day etc.

School assemblies for parents are also provided at no cost.

Fundraising activities are kept to a minimum and mainly focus on community projects such as Coatbridge Foodbank, St Andrews Hospice etc. Where charity donations are requested, participation and the amount donated is left to the discretion of parents/carers.

All parents/carers have received annual communication to remind families that no gifts should be bought for school staff. Members of staff will not accept gifts from families at any point throughout the school year. Any gifts that are delivered to school, are donated to charity/fundraising events, to avoid upset to the pupil.

**Theme 5 - Homework and Out of School Hours Learning**

After school hours learning opportunities are provided free of charge to all pupils to ensure access for all. Where after school clubs participate in offsite activities the cost of transportation is covered by school funds.

Pupils are offered resources to complete homework projects where additional costs may arise.

Homework is varied between ICT and written tasks to ensure everyone can access the tasks.

As part of the NLC and government blended learning initiative, families who do not have access to ICT, or to the internet, have been identified and arrangements have been made to provide these facilities.

Links with local community facilities are shared with the community e.g., Safety Zone, Active Schools and Police Scotland etc.

**Theme 6- Period Poverty**

At Bargeddie Primary, to ensure no member of the school community is impacted by period poverty, free sanitary resources are available for use in both staff and pupil toilet areas.

**Section 2**

**Food Poverty**

In line with Scottish Government policy, free school meals are available to all pupils in P1-P5. Breakfast club is also available free for all P1-P5 pupils and P6&7 pupils who have free school meal entitlement.

In order to support parents/carers with the cost of school meals we actively encourage parents/carers to apply for free school meal entitlement. All new P1 pupils are provided with the relevant information to facilitate this. To support our families during changing financial circumstances we also regularly provide information regarding the application for the NLC free school meal entitlement. An electronic link to ‘Free School Meal’ application forms is included in our monthly newsletters. Office staff will support anyone who may need assistance completing the forms.

Should a child not have a lunch, then the school will always provide one. If a child regularly does not have lunch provided or money to pay for a lunch, we contact the family to discuss and provide support as appropriate.

Packed lunches are provided for children entitled to free school meals in the event of a school trip. We provide cups and/or bottles of water for those children who may not be able to bring a water bottle from home.

No tuck shop is available at events such as the Hallowe’en disco. A drink and small treat are provided free of charge.

We actively promote Club 365 provision through school social media and flyers prior to school holidays.

UNCRC articles are highlighted and explored within Health and Wellbeing lessons to develop an understanding of poverty related hunger and the impact on young people.

**Section 3**

**Maximising Income**

To facilitate maximising income in Bargeddie Primary we offer financial education and advice to children, young people and their families in the following ways: Provide pupils with money advice/ consumer advice information sessions (MACA), financial education units of work and through appropriate ‘Developing the Young Workforce’ opportunities.

For families living in poverty, we offer support by working in partnership with the Financial Inclusion Team, CLD and, where appropriate, Health and Social Work. We highlight and promote available funding opportunities to our community.

**Section 4**

**Fuel and Material Poverty**

Living without access to adequate heating or electricity can adversely impact on health and the ability to learn.

Where families are identified as living without access to adequate heating or electricity, we offer support in partnership with the Financial Inclusion Team, Employability Resources, CLD and, where appropriate, Health and Social Work.

**Views of School Community**

Pupils, parents and staff members have been surveyed via confidential Microsoft Office forms. Bargeddie Primary Parent and Pupil Councils, class lessons, surveys and questionnaires will be used to gather the views of the pupils and action points addressed. This practice will be reviewed annually.

Further support and guidance are available within – ‘Towards a fairer North Lanarkshire – Tackling Poverty Strategy, 2020 – 2023.’

Written: February 2021

Reviewed: September 2021

Reviewed: September 2022

Reviwed: October 2023

Review Date: September 2024

**Appendix 1**

**Financial Inclusion Team**

The Financial Inclusion Team can offer advice, representation and advocacy in a number of fields to families as well as professionals supporting families including maximising benefits as well as debt and money advice.

* Disability driving allowance
* Attendance allowance
* Tax credits
* Employment and support allowance
* Income support
* Jobseeker's 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

School staff/other professionals such as CLD, health visitor etc. Can make a request to the Financial Inclusion Team by email: FIT@northlan.gov.uk or if a parent or carer wishes to self-refer, they can call 01698 332551.

The Coatbridge Citizen Advice Bureau can also provide advice and help signpost services.

**Coatbridge Citizen Advice Bureau**

Unit 10, Fountain Business Centre, Ellis Street, Coatbridge, ML5 3AA

Tel: 01236 421447

<https://www.cas.org.uk/bureaux/coatbridge-citizens-advice-bureau>