

Cumbernauld Primary School

Cost of the School Day Policy



This policy is written following consultation with pupils, parents and staff. It details our plans to poverty-proof our school.

North Lanarkshire Context

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 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.

Introduction

Recent Scottish Government policy and investment has focused on closing the poverty-related attainment gap between children from high and low income households in order to reduce current inequalities in educational outcomes. Integral to this agenda must be an understanding of how education and school structures, policies and practices affect children and young people from low-income households and where difficulties and financial barriers to participation exist throughout the school day. Understanding more about this from children's perspectives can support schools to poverty-proof their policies and practices so that conditions are right for all children and young people to learn and to achieve.

For further information on **Child Poverty Action Group** please click the link below:

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/costoftheschoolday>

Our Vision

In our school we aim to provide a secure, stimulating, environment where, each child feels included and their individual abilities, skills and talents are fully developed.

At Cumbernauld Primary we aim to employ a range of simple and practical measures which can help to minimise costs, reduce stigma and ensure that children and young people have equal access to opportunities at school.

Rationale

In Cumbernauld Primary, we strive to ensure that every child should have equity of opportunity to all educational experiences.

Aims

- To ensure all children and young people have access to meaningful learning experiences, which enable them to develop an understanding of the different types of poverty, and how they affect learning and daily lives.
- To enable children and young people to make meaningful changes, and to be empowered which benefit learners and families.
- To support children, young people and families to access supports and financial advice.
- To offer a collective and ongoing commitment to equity by listening to and acting upon what children and parents say.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to provide equal opportunities for all pupils irrespective of ability, gender and cultural background. We strive to enable each child to maximise his/her potential.

Pupil Equity Funding

Pupil Equity Funding is allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. This funding is spent at the discretion of the head teacher working in partnership with the local authority and other stakeholders. Our school consults with stakeholders via dialogue with the Parent Council and through school questionnaires and/or surveys to all members of the Parent Forum.

Planning for Learning

Teachers plan for 3 teaching terms each session and use Curriculum for Excellence outcomes as a guide to ensure that children access a broad and stimulating curriculum. Within Health and Wellbeing planners, teachers use a variety of strategies to stimulate discussion and develop understanding of poverty in Scotland. Teachers meet termly with SMT to discuss plans, evaluate pupil progress, and set targets.

Learning and Teaching Strategies

As an understanding of poverty and its affects are progressively developed across children's learning, there are carefully planned opportunities to experience breadth, depth and challenge through a variety of approaches, including:

- active learning;
- investigative, collaborative and independent approaches to learning;
- linking tasks across the curriculum (including well planned interdisciplinary learning) using relevant and exciting contexts to engage and motivate children.
- problem-solving approaches;
- encouraging children to explain their thinking;
- effective use of technology to support learning.

Our policy covers four over-arching themes:

1. School Poverty: this section of the policy 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: 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.

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 Poverty

1.1 School Uniform

School uniform is a practical way to mitigate against the effects of poverty. North Lanarkshire Council believes that uniform promotes unity and pride within schools. The wearing of uniform reduces the potential for bullying and prevents individuals from becoming self-conscious or embarrassed about their clothing. Therefore branded items are discouraged.

Our practice:

Our school uniform consists of:

- Grey trousers/grey skirt
- Grey cardigan or V-neck pullover
- White shirt and school tie
- Black blazer and school badge (**optional**)
- Red waterproof fleece lined jackets (**optional**)

Scotcrest supplies our school uniform. The supplier can be contacted directly at

www.scotcrestschoools.co.uk or (t)-01236 768686

Airdrie Branch- Opening hours are **Monday-Friday** 9am-5pm and **Saturday** 10am-3pm

- We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/polo shirts, therefore, parents are able to choose their preferred and most affordable uniform supplier, including local supermarkets.
- The school encourages parents and carers to apply for all appropriate benefits. We direct parents to North Lanarkshire's website for further details on how to apply for clothing grants. <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-clothing-grants/clothing-grants>
- Families are encouraged to hand in uniform items that no longer fit for re-cycling.
- We work in partnership with Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Care (registered charity with the aim of helping children and families in our communities). The School Uniform Bank, provides school uniform free of charge to those families most in need in the area, through a system of referrals. Packs provided to children and young people consist of new and pre-loved items. Contact- (w)- www.cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk or (e) hello@cumbernauldkilsythcare.org.uk
- Our Parent Council is supportive of our work and assists the school to share this information with our wider parent forum.

1.2 Equipment and Resources

Consideration should be given to the fact that many family budgets do not extend to the purchase of stationery items for school. This can extend to internet access, electronic devices and ink.

Our practice:

- Many of our children like to bring their own stationery equipment to school- the school provides all of this for everyone.
- In addition, our children are able to borrow a range of stationery, arts and craft materials if they need them for home learning.
- There is no charge for any after school clubs offered by our own staff.
- In line with council policy, the school has issued a number of laptop devices to families in need of them.
- Parents who require home learning packs or resources for their child/ren can make arrangements with the school to collect them.

1.3 School Trips

The cost associated with educational excursions can cause anxiety for families.

Our practice:

- We work closely with our families to ensure that poverty is not a barrier to participation in any school trips or outings.
- Parents and carers should have at least 6-8 weeks' notice for class trips and requirements for this to allow time to meet this payment – no more than 2 per session.
- Class teachers will aim to bring learning experiences to school where possible.
- Class teachers will aim to use the immediate area / community or council resources to access learning experiences.
- Special clothing required for trips – teachers will consider the best option for this so as not to incur additional costs for parents.
- The school and Parent Council will work in partnership to access funds/grants where possible to reduce the cost of trips.
- In addition, we participate in a wide range of sporting activities promoted by North Lanarkshire Council and our Active Schools Coordinator. We aim to subsidise or meet all transport costs associated with participation in these events.
- Fundraising activities are used to reduce transport costs associated with school trips.
- We do not charge our P7 pupils for any transition visits to secondary school.
- If a parent/carer is concerned about the cost of any activity we ask for the parent to discuss the concern with the Head Teacher (Ed Clinton) or our Depute Head Teacher (Jenny Hart).

We are here to support you, and assure you of a listening ear and confidentiality. We can be contacted directly on 01236 632110 to arrange a mutually suitable time to discuss in person or over the phone.

1.4 Charity, Fundraising Activities, School Shows and Themed Days

Charity, fundraising activities and themed days can play a positive role in the life and ethos of a school. However, it should not be assumed that all children can afford to make even small donations. Many families simply do not have any additional funds to spare.

Our practice:

- We recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on some of our families. The school will continue to look carefully at attendance and participation in these events in order to see if there are any poverty-related patterns that require further action.
- No child would be refused the opportunity to participate in any events, due to lack of payment.
- The school organises four house events per year. We normally ask for a donation of £1 to support our school fund.
- Occasionally the school holds various 'Dress Up/Dress Down days to support charities or our school fund. Again, we normally ask for a donation of £1 to support these events.
- The school covers the cost of Christmas parties and activities for all children- we allow pupils to wear a Christmas jumper (if they choose to do so). We ask for a donation towards our school fund or charity. (£1)
- The Parent Council is planning ways to reuse and recycle items to reduce costs to families.
- We host an annual joint campus 'Christmas performance' for all P1-P3 pupils. Costs associated with this are costumes and tickets which are limited to two per family.
- We host an annual joint campus 'Daffodil Tea' this is usually for P1, P4 and P5 pupils. The cost associated with this event is tickets. Again, we limit this to two per family. We normally ask for donations of pre-packed cakes and biscuits.
- Occasionally we collect non-perishable items to donate to local foodbanks for distribution in our community.
- Our Parent Council organises two major fundraising events each session- a joint Christmas Fair with our campus partner and a summer fun day.
- Our Parent Council holds an annual 'Halloween Disco' in the evening and tickets have remained at £1 for a number of years. The Parent Council are planning ways to reuse and recycle costumes to reduce ongoing costs to families.
- Our Parent Council organises a 'Summer Disco' annually during the final term of the school year. Again, over the years tickets have remained at the cost of £1.

- The Parent Council is committed to the school's 'RESPECT' programme and provides annual donation of money to our school fund. This enables the school to provide rewards in line with the views of our children.
- Our Parent Council has continued to support the school with ongoing transport costs- e.g. providing funding for our all P5 pupils to receive swimming lessons at the Tryst.

1.5 Period Poverty

Period poverty refers to a lack of access to sanitary protection due to financial constraints and is the reality affecting girls and young women across the country. Improving menstrual health management (MHM, also known as 'period poverty') can substantially improve girls' education, health and wellbeing.

Our practice:

- The school provides a range of sanitary protection products.

Section 2 - Food Poverty

There has been a huge rise in the amount of young people who are affected by hunger in their daily lives. Their ability to learn can be seriously impacted upon and their health and wellbeing undermined.

Our practice:

- All P1-P3 school meals are free, including- our breakfast service.
- We encourage and direct parents to North Lanarkshire's website to apply for free school meals. We remind parents/ carers to do this on an annual basis and offer support to complete the form if a parent/carers is having difficulty with this. (fsm@northlan.gov.uk)
- Around, **12%** of pupils are entitled to free school meals. We estimate that most of our P4-7 pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement, however, there may be some P1-3 pupils whose parents have not claimed this entitlement due to meals for these children being free for everyone. Moving forward, we will continue to build on our positive relationships with our families to ensure that all those who should receive a Free School Meal take up their entitlement. This also affects Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) from the Scottish Government.
- Where appropriate, we work with other agencies to support our families.

Section 3- Maximising Income

In Cumbernauld Primary School, we offer Financial Education and advice for children, young people and their families in the following ways:

- The MACA project (money advice/consumer advice) is a project run by the debt advice team within North Lanarkshire. The aim of this project is to empower young people with the knowledge, understanding, ability and confidence required to make informed decisions on financial and consumer issues. It will also enable them to develop the skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional and social well-being for now and in the future.

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

There are a number of young people who are living in homes without access to adequate heating or electricity. Their health and ability to learn will be adversely impacted upon by such an environment.

Many children often do not have access to basic necessities such as clothing, bedding towels, toiletries and toothbrushes.

Children may also be denied age appropriate stimulus and toys due to poverty, thus impacting on their development and learning.

Children are not afforded opportunities to participate in their communities, or develop socially, as parents have no means to finance activities or to pay for transportation to free activities within their area.

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.

School Contact Information

Ed Clinton, Head Teacher or Jenny Hart, Depute Head Teacher can be contacted via the school phone on 01236 632110 or via email at enquiries@cumbernauld-pri.sch.uk to support families whenever necessary.

We are very clear that the Cost of the School Day is an area that requires continuous monitoring and will not be 'fixed' by any one action. We will continue to use a range of approaches to ensure barriers to participation and engagement in the wider life of the school are reduced for all pupils.

Cost of the School Day Policy: March 2021

Review: March 2022