



Poverty Proofing Policy

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

The purpose of the policy is to help build a shared understanding of the impact poverty can have within our local community. We at Kirkshaws Primary School are committed to ensuring that every child has equal access to all elements of school life, regardless of their financial position.

RATIONALE

More than one in five children across Scotland are officially recognised as living in poverty, in North Lanarkshire this figure is estimated to be 24.9% of children. As a school we continue to look at reducing the cost of the school day in order to ensure that every child has access to the resources and activities that may cost money.

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.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- School uniform is encouraged in Kirkshaws 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 intend to introduce 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 or black 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.
- 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.
- 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.

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

- 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.

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 subsidises 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.
- 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.

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.

HOME LEARNING AND OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS LEARNING

- 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 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.
- Families can access the school library from 8.30am each day if they wish to borrow books.

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.

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.

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.

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