Kirk O’Shotts Primary School and Nursery Class



Poverty Proofing our School and Nursery Policy

March 2021

*“With kind heart and willing hands, we can all achieve our dreams.”*

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 Kirk O’Shotts we believe that tackling disadvantage is at the heart of what we do.

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.

*At Kirk O’Shotts Primary School and Nursery Class we aim to ensure equity, inclusion and to reduce the financial burden on our families.*

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

***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.

1. **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.

1. **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.

What does poverty look like to a child? We asked our children what they thought poverty means and looks like. Here are a collection of their views.

* **What should every child have?**

A good education.

I think everyone should have the right to go to a foodbank.

Food in school is sufficient.

I think children should help each other.

All children felt children in this school do help each other.

* **Does this school meet your needs?**

Our school meets our needs.

Mrs Duffy helps us with plasters and if we are hurt.

If we need to talk to someone we can talk to the teachers and they will help us if we really need it.

We can trust teachers.

It is nice and warm in school. If I am feeling stressed out I can go in the Chill Out room.

* **How would you feel and how would you help if you knew a child was living in poverty?**

Sometimes when we are driving we see homeless people.

Sometimes I just sit on my own outside my house with nothing to do.

I have to pay for my glasses and I think they should be free. Some months are hard.

Be there for them. Talk to them. Tell a teacher if they have no snack.

Sometimes it’s hard because our dads work long hours and have a lot of shifts for extra money but this means they do not have a lot of time with us.



**Section 1**

*Theme 1 – School and Nursery Poverty*

* We aim to start up a Uniform Bank – ‘Pre-Loved Clothing & Footwear’. Items will be collected throughout the months of May and November and be available for collection in June and December of each year. If parents cannot attend in person they can complete an order form/wish list. The items on the wish list will then be put into the child’s school/nursery bag. If items on wish list are not available then a text message will be sent out to the school/nursery community asking parents to donate the specific items.
* An additional uniform bank is located in Room 6. Everyday items are kept here for children to use when they require them – polo shits, trousers, socks, underwear, trainers, wellies etc.
* A member of staff will distribute information regarding clothing grant, FME, referral information and process for NLC Financial Inclusion Team, food banks and charities, etc. at parents’ evenings. This information will also be included in every monthly newsletter.
* A bank of P.E kits will be purchased and located in Rm 6.
* A bank of clothing required for swimming lessons will be purchased and located in Rm 6. Towels and swimming shorts/costumes will be laundered using nursery washing machine. These will be kept as spares if children forget/require a swimming kit.
* Parents are informed that their children do not need to wear a white polo shirt or red jumper with school badge on it. These can be purchased from supermarkets to keep cost down.
* Nursery children are reminded not to wear ‘good clothes’ to nursery as messy and outdoor play are high on our list of daily experiences.
* Emergency ‘Care Kits’ will be kept in school. These will include a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, sponge, underwear and sanitary products. They will be confidentially distributed to families identified by the school as/when required.
* Kirk O’Shotts No Gift Policy – At Christmas we asked for staff not to receive any gifts but for food to be donated in their replacement. This will continue in June and December.

*Theme 2 – Equipment and Resources*

* There will be a bank of clothing in Rm 6 as detailed in Theme 1.
* Stationery packs are supplied for all children to use in school.
* Families are not charged for core curricular activities.
* Applications for bicycles to Criminal Justice are made for low income families.

*Theme 3 – School and Nursery Trips*

* Cost Calendar – A calendar of events will be given to all parents at the start of the school year to allow time for financial planning and implications.
* School Pupil Equity Fund is used to either pay for school trips and outings fully or to subsidise cost. This is to ensure affordability for all.
* Parents are given ample time to contribute to the payment of trips. Payment cards and I-Payment accounts are available.
* Parents and carers are informed of how and where to locate local supports. A member of staff will distribute information regarding clothing grant, FME, referral information and process for NLC Financial Inclusion Team, food banks and charities, etc. at parents’ evenings. This information will also be included in every monthly newsletter.
* On school trips spending money is set to an agreed amount. Staff always check all children have spending money/snacks. If a child does not have any spending money or snacks then school provides this through School Fund.
* Cost of trips for families is taken into consideration i.e. £3.00 per person, family of 2 £5.00 and family of 3 £6.00.
* Contact is always made with families that have avoided participation. Offer of help, whether it’s financial, clothing, equipment, is always offered.
* Provision for packed lunches for children who are in receipt of free school meals is always arranged for all outings.
* Toiletries, clothing, snacks etc. are always arranged for children who will be participating in residential trips (Kilbowie) if their families are experiencing financial hardship, attend Christmas parties, sporting outings etc.

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

* Consideration is given to the number of children per family in an establishment. For example, Dress-Down Days are £1 per person or £1 per family. Families can also choose to make a donation. Donation tins are kept in classrooms.
* Cost Calendar – Calendar of events will be given to all parents at the start of the school year to allow time for financial planning and implications. Events are spread across the year to minimise cost to parents and help families budget.
* Children are never excluded from any event. There is never any pressure put on children to dress a certain way.
* Crazy Hair option is made available instead of children dressing up in a costume for Halloween. Bank of dressing up clothes/accessories will be available for all children.
* Best costume is not rewarded.
* Staff provide opportunities for children to make resources/props/accessories to support Roald Dahl Day/World Book Day/Halloween/Christmas Shows/Assemblies.
* Consideration is given to the provision and cost around school photographs. Best price is always sought. Option to buy different packages is always on offer.
* Children are provided with book tokens on World Book Day.
* When events are being planned we take into consideration a number of ways families can contribute to support the school/nursery. For example, families might make monetary contributions, donate food parcels, their time, expertise, talents.
* Cost of items for sale at Christmas Fairs, Malawi Fundraising events etc. are kept low to ensure all children have the means to participate. Staff check to make sure all children have money before events start. If any child does not have money then school provides this.

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*Theme 5 – Home Learning and Out of School Hours Learning*

* All children have access to digital devices to use at home. Laptops have been provided.
* OOSHL clubs are always funded by the school or free. (after school clubs)
* Home Learning tasks are a mixture of off-line and on-line activities.
* Staff are aware of the literacy and numeracy capabilities of parents and these are taken into consideration when home learning tasks are set.

*Theme 6 – Period Poverty*

* Sanitary products are kept in cubicle 1 in the girls toilets in a small toiletry bag. P6&7 girls are informed of this throughout the school year. If younger girls require sanitary products then parents will inform the school. Supply is regularly checked and replenished.
* P6 & 7 girls will be provided with sanitary products before the following holidays – October, Christmas, Easter and Summer.

**Section 2**

*Food Poverty*

* Breakfast Club is available daily for all children. It is free for all P1-3 children and those in receipt of free school meals. Our breakfast club supervisor makes the service very inviting – cartoons are shown on the t.v and colouring in books are available. It’s a very relaxed and calm environment. A great way to start the school day! Breakfast Club is promoted in every monthly newsletter.
* If children who usually attend breakfast club are late then breakfast is still offered to them, whether it’s from the school canteen or made in Rm 6. Snacks are available throughout the morning and afternoon for nursery children in the playroom.
* Children who travel to school by taxi arrive at 8.40 am. If later and breakfast is required then provisions will be put in place (as above).
* Club 365 is widely promoted throughout the school community. Transport needs to be provided by NLC to ensure children can utilise service.
* All staff are aware of the supports in place if a child/family is identified as experiencing food poverty. Staff are also aware of how to spot the signs of food poverty. Staff would speak to HT, PT and Classroom Assistant. Provisions would then be made for family i.e. Food parcel prepared, referral to local charity/foodbank/NLC Financial Inclusion Team. Delivery would be subtle and confidential. Staff would collect food parcels and deliver to family if transport was an issue.
* When planning excursions and trips, packed lunches/snacks are always provided for children in receipt of free school meals. Staff ensure **all** children have adequate food/snack before leaving school building.
* During lockdown staff supported families to ensure free school meal vouchers were received and cashed.
* Children are taught what poverty related hunger looks like in a sensitive manner.
* The monthly newsletter will have a dedicated section listing all agencies available to families if support is required.
* The Financial Inclusion Team help North Lanarkshire residents with money advice and welfare benefits. The team includes a combination of debt advisers and welfare rights staff. Services include: rent/mortgage arrears, council tax arrears, payday loans, personal loans, store/credit cards, gas/electricity arrears. If families are worried about debt or experiencing financial difficulties, debt advisers can provide free, impartial and confidential advice. They will review your finances, prioritise your debts and complete a financial statement which includes details of your income and expenditure. Depending on your personal circumstances, we will advise you on what options are available to you and find the best solution possible. Your options may include:informal payment plan, Debt Arrangement Scheme (DAS) Protected Trust Deed, bankruptcy, full and final settlement or write offs. Other options may be available depending on your circumstances. They can also offer advice on budgeting and help you take the first steps in taking control of your finances by giving you advice on how to reduce outgoings and maximise your income. By doing this you may be in a better position in avoiding debt, reduce the risk of unexpected costs or you could even have some money left to save.

**NLC’s Financial Inclusion Team (FIT Team)** **fit@northlan.gov.uk** **01698 332551.**



* NLC’s Food Poverty Referral Gateway – Food Bank Referral

Airdrie Food Bank - https://airdrie.foodbank.org.uk/get-help

If you need help from a foodbank there are a few simple steps to follow.

#### **The most important step is to get a foodbank voucher.**

In order to provide the most appropriate help for the circumstances of your situation the food banks work with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis. Agencies food banks work with include: Citizens Advice, housing support officers, children’s centres, health visitors, social services and some local charities.

#### **1. Get in touch with THE FOODBank.**

If you [call or email](https://airdrie.foodbank.org.uk/contact-us/)  the foodbank they can talk through your situation and put you in touch with a relevant local agency.

#### **2. Arrange a visit to the referral agency.**

They will discuss your situation and supply you with a [foodbank voucher](https://airdrie.foodbank.org.uk/foodbank-vouchers/) where appropriate.

#### **3. Bring  your foodbank voucher to your nearest foodbank centre.**

**Airdrie Foodbank addresses**

Calderbank Calderbank Parish Church of Scotland, Main Street, Calderbank, ML6 9SG

##  01236 793423 Opening times: Monday 11 am – 1 pm.

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Airdrie St Edward’s RC Church Hall, Lady Anne Crescent, Airdrie, ML6 9PZ 01236 793423 Opening times: Wednesday 11 am – 1.30 pm.

Airdrie Baptist Airdrie Baptist Church Hall, Graham Street, Airdrie, ML6 6DE 01236 793423 Opening times: Friday 11 am – 1.30 pm.

**Shotts Foodbank address**

Paul’s Parcels Shotts - paulsparcels@yahoo.com Call the organiser: 07922 426 585 or [view the website: paulsparcels.co.uk](https://paulsparcels.co.uk/)

When you arrive, you’ll be welcomed with a warm drink and trained volunteers will chat with you about your situation. They’ll also discuss any dietary needs you may have and exchange your foodbank voucher for a [parcel](https://airdrie.foodbank.org.uk/whats-in-a-food-parcel/) of three days of emergency food. They’ll also help to support you in any other ways that they can. Most of the foodbank centres offer a cafe style environment and their aim is to provide non-judgemental support at the point of crisis.

If you have any further questions visit their [FAQ’s](https://airdrie.foodbank.org.uk/faq/) page or feel free to give them a call.

# Scottish Welfare Fund Scottish Welfare Fund

#  Crisis, Community Care and Self-isolation Grants

The Scottish Welfare Fund helps people and families on low incomes who are in crisis or need help to set up or remain in the community.

You can apply for a:

1. [Crisis Grant](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/scottish-welfare-fund/crisis-grants) - to help you cope with unexpected expenses and disasters; for example, a fire or flood, or if any money has been lost or stolen.
2. [Community Care Grant](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/scottish-welfare-fund/community-care-grants) - to help vulnerable people set up home, when moving from an 'unsettled way of life' or continue to live independently within their community. They can also help families who are facing exceptional pressures.
3. [Self-Isolation Grant COVID-19](https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/scottish-welfare-fund/self-isolation-grant-covid-19) - the purpose of the grant is to assist workers aged 16 and over, who experience a reduction in earnings during a period of isolation and who are in receipt of a low income benefit, or earn the Real Living Wage or less, to self-isolate and prevent the spread of COVID-19. This grant should support people to be able to afford to comply with the Test & Protect or approved equivalent service's requirement for them to isolate. You may be eligible for a £500 payment if you meet ALL of the qualifying criteria.

Please call 0300 555 0405 or email swf@northlan.gov.uk for Crisis or Community Care Grants or for Self-Isolation Support Grants email selfisolationsupportgrant@northlan.gov.uk and the team will contact you.

If awarded a community care grant, please speak to their supplier and follow social distancing advice and instructions prior to delivery of goods.

## Do you need further help with money problems?

##  You can also get general advice for any money problems:

* [Money Talk Team](https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/who-are-money-talk-team) - get help to make sure you're claiming everything you're entitled to and advice to help you make the most of your money
* [Scotland's Financial Health Service](http://www.scotlandsfinancialhealthservice.gov.uk/) - find information and advice on debt, managing money, housing, homelessness and ethical lending
* [National Debtline](https://www.nationaldebtline.org/S/Pages/default.aspx) - get free, confidential and independent debt advice on 0808 808 4000
* [Citizens Advice Scotland](https://www.cas.org.uk/) - visit your nearest bureau to speak to somebody face-to-face, or call 0800 028 1456
* [Shelter Scotland](http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/) - call the free helpline for housing advice on 0808 800 4444
* Shotts Getting Better Together on 01501 825800
* Paul’s Parcels Shotts - paulsparcels@yahoo.com Call the organiser: 07922 426 585 or [view the website: paulsparcels.co.uk](https://paulsparcels.co.uk/)
* Spirit Aid Charity – contact school for further information
* Brendan O’Hare and Friends Charity – contact school for further information

Here at Kirk O’Shotts we realise the lack of transport can be a concern for many. Some local charities will deliver food parcels but if you find yourself in the position of having no funds to allow you to get to a food bank or an appointment please inform the service you have an appointment with of this concern or telephone the school/nursery. We will do all we can to help our Kirk O’Shotts family.



**Section 3**

*Maximising Income*

At Kirk O’Shotts Primary School we offer Financial Education and advice for children, young people and their families:

The MACA Project for P4-7 (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.

The cluster (primary school and nurseries in Shotts/Salsburgh/Harthill and Allanton) will work effectively on identifying those children living in poverty and supports which will be provided to their families. Regular monthly discussions will take place between HTs/HOCs to identify local supports and share effective practice.

**Section 4**

*Fuel and Material Poverty*

As a staff we pride ourselves on knowing our children and families well, having an open-door policy and always making families feel at ease and supported. If families are identified to us as experiencing fuel or material poverty we will support them through the referral process and direct them to services/agencies listed within this policy.

**Section 5**

*Pupil Equity Fund (PEF)*

Part of the PEF awarded to our establishment will be used to source/pay for:

* Fund part of School trips/transport
* Emergency Care Kits
* Spare underwear
* P5 swimming lessons
* Swimming kits

Parental Views:

If you know of any other charity, organisation or have any other ideas to add in any section of our policy please write them below and return to school/nursery. You could also email ht@kirkoshotts.n-lanark.sch.uk with your suggestions.

Thank you

Mrs Kerr

Head Teacher



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 **Bill**