

Bellshill Cluster Poverty Proofing Statement

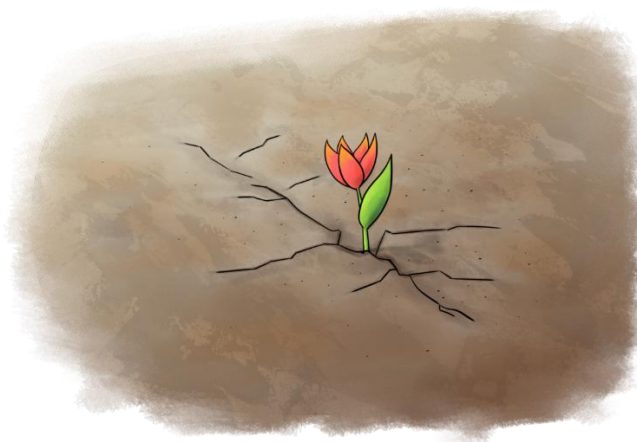


Bellshill Academy Cluster Vision Statement is intended to help build a shared understanding of the impact of poverty and offers guidance to our children and young people, families and all staff in educational establishments

Bellshill Academy Cluster consists of Bellshill Family Learning Centre, Tannochside Primary, Aitkenhead Primary, Noble Primary and Mossend Primary. All staff across the cluster work collaboratively to provide the best opportunities and outcomes for the pupils and their families. Our vision shows that we put our young people and our community at the heart of everything we do. From age 3-18 we aim to ensure that all pupils are achieving their full potential in school and develop the skills to live a happy, healthy and successful life.

By developing this position statement our cluster strives to remove the poverty barriers to education to ensure that all members feel included in our community in order to be successful.

This policy was devised using "The Cost of the School Day Toolkit"



“Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy the essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation – and even discrimination – because of your financial circumstances. The constant stress it causes can lead to problems that deprive people of the chance to play a full part in society.”

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

A message from the children.....

Its better to educate kids on poverty. I think they should do more, like, financial awareness of the areas we're in because these are some of the poorest areas in Dundee. And if you were to take that and teach kids more about that then I think they'd take people having less money less as a joke and take it more seriously. I think in the younger years they think "oh you don't have that, you're not good enough" but that's because of a lack of knowledge.

S5 PUPIL

We
aspire

Pupils need to be more open minded. Maybe if we were taught lessons about people who have less money...You need to be brought up in an environment where you are open to people who are different. If you're talking about these things then you'll be a better adult and then our generation will be better.

P7 PUPIL

LIVE
LEARN
WORK
INVEST
VISIT

Financial Support

North Lanarkshire Council is committed to tackling and reducing poverty.

School leaders can identify families who are living in poverty and refer them to the Financial Inclusion Team on the first instance, provided they have consented to share their information. The Financial Inclusion Team will advise families which options are available to them based on their personal circumstances. Any advice provided by the Financial Inclusion Team is confidential, free and impartial.

The Financial Inclusion Team can offer advice, representation and advocacy in a number of fields including:

- disability living allowance
- attendance allowance
- tax credits
- employment and support allowance
- income support
- jobseeker's allowance
- carer's allowance
- child benefit
- universal credit
- personal independence payment

Contact Details for Financial Support	
Financial Inclusion Team	By telephone on 01698 332551 By email Fit@northlan.gov.uk
Citizens Advice Scotland	By telephone on 01236 754109 By email bureau@Bellshillcab.casonline.org.uk

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 arrear
- Budgeting guidance

In particular times of crisis, schools can make one off referrals to Bellshill Community Foodbank. 451 Main Street, Bellshill

This should be on the basis that families are then referred to the Financial Inclusion Team to work on more long term support.

Centres will also work with agencies around the school to promote their services supporting families living with the effects of poverty for long term support.

School Uniform



COMMUNITIES
TOGETHER

All schools within the cluster encourage young people to wear school uniform and feel proud to be part of the community. It helps promote inclusion and a sense of belonging. All our pupils are supported to make sure they are not in any way prejudiced. Schools actively promote applications for clothing grants and are always there to help and signpost support.

Communities Together was created in response to the needs of Bellshill, Mossend and Thorniewood Areas in North Lanarkshire against the backdrop of Coronavirus. As part of their service they launched a school uniform clothing bank that can help Bellshill families whose children attend Mossend Primary, St Gerard's Primary, Sacred Heart Primary, Noble Primary, Holy Family Primary, Bellshill Academy or Cardinal Newman High School. They operate out of the YMCA in Bellshill Main Street, 9am -6pm Monday to Friday.

Equipment and Resources



All students within the cluster are encouraged to 'be ready' for school, bringing with them their own materials. Nevertheless, young people will not be

expected to have items that bring with them a cost. Pencils, pens and other items are readily available in classrooms for pupils to use. These can be distributed subtly to ensure that children and young people do not

feel discriminated against. Support is given to families and young people who struggle to meet the costs of equipment.

Staff have an awareness of the SIMD profile of the young people and financial constraints which are considered when planning for excursions and events. At expensive times of the year and charity events family donations are accepted to reduce to cost to large families. Within the Bellshill Cluster we can guarantee that no pupils will be excluded from social events as a result of financial constraints.

Students identified as requiring ICT provision at home have been allocated, as per NLC plans with a laptop and internet dongles to support key learning at home.

E mail:

contactus@communitiestogether.scot

<https://www.communitiestogether.scot/>



01698 747483

Excursions

All school / nursery visits are of educational benefit to young people. Excursions are planned in advance and allow for families to spread the costs. Schools are sympathetic to individual circumstances and open up channels for discussion with individual families to target those who require additional support. A named person will be available for each trip to discuss this support.

All planned trips are non-profit. Before excursions take place schools / nurseries will communicate to parents what will happen if money is left over. This is to keep costs as low as possible for all families. Lunches are made available for those with free meal provision. (Excludes trips abroad)

Parental views

Across North Lanarkshire views of parents and carers are sought regarding the cost of the school day via online surveys. The survey is designed to seek views of parents and carers as to how schools take into account the cost demands of the school day. Steps are put in place to reduce costs where possible. Centres should also engage with families who do not respond to digital surveys. This should be done by targeting sample groups of parents across the centres demographic. This survey should be reviewed each year.

Views of Children and Young People

Views of children and young people should also be sought. Centres gather the views of a variety of young people using different means. Schools use class lessons, pupil councils and individual surveys to capture the views of young people and look to action points raised. This practice should be reviewed each year.

Charity, fundraising activities, Shows and Themed days

Bellshill Cluster pride itself on being supportive and understanding of the needs and demands on families during difficult times. As much as possible schools plan events and include them on the school calendar. Schools hold a range of resources to support young people such as Halloween costumes and costumes for world book day. No child will be excluded from events due to cost.

Bellshill Cluster schools have strong links with Community organisations organisation for groups in the community supporting families with a range of issues. VANL signposts families to organisations such as foodbanks, CAB and FIT to name a few.

Staff have and understanding of financial constraints and families can contact the staff in school to discuss concerns. Staff will also contact families and young people that they recognise will have added pressure to their financial situation. Collecting money for charitable events will always be made in a discrete manner.

Period Poverty

To mitigate period poverty all students have access to safe, hygienic sanitary products in school and are available to take home. Students are made aware of product locations and staff who they can speak to confidentially. Discretion and dignity is the priority in planning for these circumstances.

Education and awareness of the hygiene issues surrounding menstruation are crucial and embedded into the curriculum at secondary level through Health and Wellbeing lessons so that students develop a sound knowledge and understanding of how to manage their period safely.

Food Poverty

Breakfast clubs are available in all schools across the Bellshill Cluster. Snacks and breakfast are available to young people to ensure that they do not arrive hungry. Cluster schools and family learning centres also provide snacks to those who arrive at school hungry. Staff are aware of the impact of hunger on a child's learning and have clear referral pathways in place to ensure that schools are 'Getting it Right for Every Child'.

School leaders identify students and families experiencing poverty and support them in a number of ways. The cluster has a directory of supports to identify agencies who can help families facing different circumstances. Schools are aware of the Financial Inclusion Team and share contacts with families.

MOSSEND CREDIT UNION Ltd

12 Pollock Street, Mossend, Bellshill, ML4 1QD

<https://www.mosshillcu.co.uk/>



THE IMPACT OF BRIGHT IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS TO POVERTY PROOF SCHOOLS!

There are many examples across North Lanarkshire as to how best approach poverty proofing the school and allowing children to experience a stigma free learning environment where they can flourish and learn. Here are just some of the examples that have proved good practice and made a difference to children and families. Every school will have their own approach and not all schools have the same capacity to introduce support in all areas.

HELPING WITH P.E

No stigma attached to labels. Increased participation in physical education.

HELPING OUT WITH CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT

Appropriate resources for the school day and no stigma attached to fancy brands.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Access to appropriate personal care items and no child stands out as everyone receives

HELP WITH SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND DRESS UP EVENTS

Families have good quality clothing and footwear at no/little cost. Children have appropriate items for any events. Positive impact on attendance on 'special' days. Reduced stress for children and increased attendance on these days.

HELP WITH SCHOOL TRIPS/EXCURSIONS

Positive impact on attainment as experiences provide contexts to support learning. Shared experiences with friends. Lower absences. No/Less financial burden.

NO GIFT POLICY

No financial burden on families, especially at Christmas. No stress for children who don't have a gift to give

INFORMATION COST CALENDAR AVAILABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

Families can budget in advance and add to their iPay accounts

APPEAL TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY- DONATIONS OF FOOD, CLOTHING, TOYS ETC.

More awareness in the community of needs throughout the year. Families in need are supported.

INCREASED LINKS WITH ORGANISATIONS AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Able to refer families and/or signpost them for support. Families' needs can be met