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| Poverty Proofing Policy |  |
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|  | February 2021Orchard Primary School, LCSC & Nursery. Article 24: ALL children have the right to safe water to drink, nutritious food and a clean and safe environment.  Article 27: ALL children have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have their basic needs met. Children should not be disadvantaged so that they can’t do many of the things other children can do.  Article 28: ALL children have the right to a good quality education. |
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**Introduction**

Orchard Primary School is a gold level Rights Respecting school; respecting children’s Rights is at the heart of all that we do. This includes tackling disadvantage to ensure equity for all learners.

One in five (210,000) children across Scotland are 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 don’t have the resources needed for school and can’t easily afford to participate in school activities which cost money. This puts 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 households do not have enough money to buy sufficient food or that they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet.

We recognise that the impact of pandemic will see an increasing number of families finding themselves in situational poverty through loss of income and circumstances at home.

We have utilised our Pupil Equity Fund to facilitate a Principal Teacher of Equity. Within their remit they have made universal offers of support to families, signposted relevant agencies and liaised with families who have approached the school for support whether that be for remote learning, food/fuel provision or learning materials. ADD MORE DETAILS OF WHAT PEF HAS BEEN USED FOR

This policy has been written, after consultation with staff, learners and parents/carers to set out how we aim to tackle poverty across four areas; school poverty, food poverty, maximizing income and fuel/material poverty.

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# School Poverty

**Theme 1: School/Nursery Uniform**

The wearing of school uniform promotes inclusion within Orchard Primary School and reduces the potential for peer pressure or bullying around clothing labels or physical appearance. Our branded uniform is readily available from BE Schoolwear in Wishaw but we acknowledge that this can be costly when clothing is worn out or grown out of. Unbranded school uniform can also be purchased from supermarkets – it is entirely a parent/carer’s choice where they choose to purchase school uniform.

To support with uniform provision, we have a free pre-loved school uniform bank. The last two days of each school session are non-uniform days to allow parents and carers to send in any outgrown garments that could help another family. All donated uniforms are then laundered and sorted into sizes for the next school session. Parents/Carers are issued with a uniform request slip in June which they can return to be issued with uniform for the following school year. A reminder of the uniform bank is issued via Groupcall at the end of each term encouraging parents/carers to get in touch if they would like support with uniform provision.

Clothing grants are also available for families with low income and can be applied for at [www.northlan.gov.uk](http://www.northlan.gov.uk)

Parents will be supported with the completion of applications, if requested.

**Theme 2: Equipment and Resources**

Both the school and local authority can and will support families who require access to a digital device and/or the internet for home learning purposes. Regular communication is sent to parents/carers via our universal platform encouraging them to get in touch with the school if they require support with digital access.

For session 21/22 all learners will be provided with a pencil case and stationery from our Pupil Equity Fund. This should be carried between home and school for learning. Items will be replenished, as required, from a bank of resources in each classroom.

For session 21/22, all children will be provided with a P.E. kit in a drawstring bag from our Pupil Equity Fund.

Both of these actions support equity and again reduce the potential of learners feeling excluded and unhappy because they don’t have the latest, and in some cases expensive, stationery or brand clothing. Some learners may not have these items at all.

**Theme 3: School and Nursery Trips**

School and nursery trips complement and enhance learning experiences and are often the highlight of the year for our learners. However, we acknowledge the worry and impact that costly school trips can have on low income families and endeavor to combat this in the following ways:

* An annual calendar indicating when events such as trips and fundraising will take place is produced and shared with parents at the beginning of each school year. This ensures events which cost are spread out over the school year and families can plan for them.
* When planning trips, consideration is given to affordability
* The cost of trips is always subsidised with funds raised by the parent council
* Parents/Carers are encouraged to contact the school if they are worried about the cost of a trip
* Parents/Carers have adequate notice for payment of trips and families can be supported through payment plans or deferred payments when required.
* A packed lunch is provided for children in receipt of free school meals
* Minimal spending money is recommended and a maximum of £5 is set
* If a trip requires specific equipment or apparatus then support will be provided to purchase this, if required.
* From session 21/22, families with 3 or more children at the school will only cover trip costs for the two eldest children.
* During monitoring of class excursion uptake, If it is felt financial implications are affecting participation, a member of the school leadership team will contact families to take action and support engagement.

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

Charity, fundraising activities, school shows and themed days do play a positive role in the life and ethos of our Rights Respecting school. However, we do appreciate that even low cost events such as non-uniform days and fun days can be costly especially for families with more than one child at the school. Cost aside, these events can also have social implications for our learners who feel excluded if they can’t participate. Attendance can also be affected when families choose to keep their children at home to avoid both the social and financial strain of such events. To support our families with such events we:

* Create and share an annual cost calendar for parents with key events with a cost to allow planning for this.
* Make donations optional and one per family. Small blank envelopes are provided to the eldest child in each family ahead of a charity event and are returned blank with or without a donation inside.
* Host an annual free costume swap shop ahead of Halloween
* Consider the number of children per family when there is a cost involved and offer family tickets/costs for events where possible.
* Make all school events voluntary whilst supporting inclusion of any child who wishes to participate. Parents/Carers are encouraged to contact the school with any concerns around participation when notified about the event.
* Purchase every child one book from the annual book fair. The child can choose the book within a set price range.
* Consider carefully which suppliers we use to make opportunities such as purchasing school photographs more accessible to all families.

**Theme 5: Home Learning and After School Clubs**

At Orchard Primary School we strive to offer a range of out of hours learning experiences and clubs for our learners and their families. All of these have no cost involved to ensure equity and inclusion for all learners and families.

Digital devices and internet connectivity is costly. Where there is a support need for this provision to facilitate home learning, the school and local authority have and will continue to support families with this. We do acknowledge that providing a digital device and/or the internet isn’t always a solution as there may be other barriers to a child or indeed a family accessing home learning such as the need to share devices in large families or not having a quiet space to work. Some parents/carers may also require technical support before being able to help younger learners access their online resources.

We have the following in place to support our learners and their families with Home Learning:

* Digital guides and updates
* Workshops for parents and carers (to resume when possible)
* Stationery provision
* Digital provision and support
* A balance of online/offline learning opportunities

**Theme 6: Period Poverty**

Learners can access sanitary products discreetly in all age appropriate bathrooms across the campus. They are encouraged to take products home to use over weekends/holidays if required.

Care packs will be issued to **all** learners in Primary 6 at the beginning of the session with deodorant, shower gel, a toothbrush, toothpaste, brush and sanitary products. Inside the care pack children will have a QR code to scan if they would like to discreetly request more items. The survey link will be checked by a member of the LT daily.

# Food Poverty

All children have the right to safe water to drink and nutritious food to eat. At Orchard Primary School, we have the following in place to respect this right:

* Breakfast club is available every day to mainstream and LCSC learners. It is free to all children in P1-3 and those who are entitled to a free school meal in P4-7.
* Consideration and support is given to the provision of snacks and breakfast for those children who arrive at school hungry.
* Through partnership with local supermarkets, we issue surplus goods weekly to families requesting support.
* Club 365 is promoted via Groupcall and our school Twitter page.
* If a family is experiencing food poverty we will refer them to the Financial Inclusion Team.
* Details of the Financial Inclusion Team are shared via Groupcall for families to self-refer if preferred.
* Packed lunches are provided for children attending trips that are in receipt of free school meals.

# Maximising Income

We support families looking to maximise their income by making a referral to North Lanarkshire’s Financial Inclusion Team who can:

* Maximise income for families
* Carry out a free, confidential benefits check
* Help with claims
* Help with appeals
* Liaise on behalf of parents/carers
* Assist with debt issues
* Assist with Budgeting

Parents/Carers can also self refer by calling 01698 332551.

Through the Financial Inclusion Team’s MACA project, learners in Primary 5, 6 and 7 develop understanding around financial and consumer issues. This complements and enhances financial education delivered through the curriculum at all stages.

The Motherwell and Wishaw Citizen’s Advice Bureau can also provide advice and signpost services. They can be contacted on 01698 265349 or online [www.motherwellwishawcab.org.uk](http://www.motherwellwishawcab.org.uk)

# Fuel and Material Poverty

There are a number of children who are living in homes without access to adequate heating or electricity. Their health and ability to learn will be adversely impacted 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.

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

Orchard Primary School are committed to removing these barriers to learning and social interaction for our learners. We sincerely hope that within our school no family or learner feels excluded and is worrying about the impact of poverty. We are here to help and are working hard within our staff team and school community to raise awareness of the aforementioned issues and provide support.

If you have any concerns whether it be for your own family or someone else, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Head Teacher, Mrs Mackenzie, or Acting Principal Teacher of Equity, Mrs Hume who will be happy to help. Please call the school on 01698 274984.