

St Michael's Primary School



Tackling Child Poverty and Promoting Equity Policy

Written: September 2020

Reviewed: August 2026

At St Michael's Primary School, our response to poverty is rooted in our Catholic faith and our belief in the inherent dignity and worth of every person. Inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, we are committed to promoting justice, compassion and equality and to ensuring that every child is able to participate fully in the life and learning of our school.

We recognise that poverty and financial pressures can affect children's wellbeing, learning, attainment, relationships and opportunities to participate. We also recognise that the costs associated with attending school can place additional pressure on families and may unintentionally create barriers for children.

St Michael's Primary School is therefore committed to identifying, reducing and, wherever possible, removing financial barriers to learning and participation.

Our approach is based on dignity, equity, early intervention and partnership. We will listen to children and families, consider the cost implications of decisions made by the school, provide support sensitively and without stigma, and work with North Lanarkshire Council, our parish and partner services to help families access appropriate support.

In doing so, we seek not only to respond to financial hardship when it occurs, but to create an inclusive school culture in which poverty does not prevent any child from learning, achieving, participating, belonging and flourishing.

At all times we use SIMD data to understand the social, economic and cultural context of the local and National community.

Our Policy covers 4 key themes:

1. Reducing the Cost of the School and Nursery Day

We will regularly consider the costs associated with participation in school and nursery life and take action to reduce or remove financial barriers. This includes consideration of uniform and clothing, learning resources, trips, activities, clubs, celebrations, fundraising, digital access and period products. We will seek to ensure that no child is excluded from an educational experience or made to feel different because of their family's financial circumstances.

2. Food Security, Dignity and Access to Nutritious Food

We recognise access to nutritious food as fundamental to children's health, wellbeing and readiness to learn. We will promote access to free school meals and breakfast provision and work to maximise appropriate uptake. Our approach will be consistent with children's rights and will seek to ensure that provision is accessible, inclusive and free from stigma.

3. Maximising Family Income and Financial Wellbeing

We will support children to develop age-appropriate financial knowledge and skills as

part of their learning. We will also work with North Lanarkshire Council services and other appropriate partners to help families access information, advice, financial entitlements and available support.

Staff will be alert to circumstances which may indicate that a child or family is experiencing financial barriers and will respond sensitively, confidentially and without judgement. Wherever appropriate, families will be supported or signposted to services which can provide specialist advice and assistance.

4. Household Costs, Fuel and Material Insecurity

We recognise that difficulties meeting the costs of heating, energy, clothing, digital access and other essential household needs can have a significant impact on children's health, wellbeing, attendance, participation and learning.

Where such barriers become known to us, we will respond sensitively and work with families and appropriate partner services to identify available support.

Equity, Dignity, Rights and Participation

These principles underpin all four areas of our approach.

We will seek to ensure that support is provided in ways which protect dignity and confidentiality and minimise stigma. We will listen to children and families and use their experiences to help us identify barriers within the school day.

Our aim is not simply to respond to financial hardship, but to ensure that our own policies, practices and decisions do not unintentionally create or increase financial barriers.

Through early intervention, partnership working and an ongoing focus on equity, we aim to ensure that every child at St Michael's is able to participate, achieve, belong and flourish.

Support for Families:

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

The following statements have been taken from How Good Is Our School, 4th edition and are relevant to our good practice with regards to tackling child poverty and promoting equity in St Michael's.

- Staff have a shared understanding of what impacts on child poverty and make effective use of current available data on levels of child poverty and can apply this to ensure equity at all times.
- Staff have an appropriate shared understanding of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and use these approaches to meet the needs of families.
- There is evidence that family learning is supporting families to minimise the impact of poverty on learning and achievement.
- All staff engage in regular professional learning to ensure they are fully up-to-date with local, national and, where appropriate, international legislation affecting the rights, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people.

Reducing the Cost of the Nursery and School Day

1. School/Nursery Uniform (Appendix 1)

- Families who qualify are directed towards the clothing grant
- Unclaimed lost property that is in good condition is washed and either given or sold at a reduced price to families in need
- Families can purchase uniform from the Pretty Unique Boutique in Muirhead at reduced prices
- PE kits can be purchased at low prices however, pupils are permitted to wear any appropriate gym clothes assuming there are no football colours.
- Our link with Barnardos helps to support families by providing clothing (uniform and other clothes) to families in need.
- Winter hats, scarfs, gloves and wellies are donated by school staff to those pupils who would benefit from having them.
- At Christmas time, staff support local families through donations to the local food bank.
- Any child in need of a warm, winter coat is provided one by the school, either through donations of good quality, clean items or newly purchased goods.
- Grants are sought to help support families further through supplying appropriate seasonal clothing
- Families have been given the option of grey trousers/skirts for children if they are unable to access our usual brown uniform from local retailers.

2. Equipment and Resources

- All necessary stationery and school equipment is provided by the school

3. School and Nursery Trips

- Any families with more than 2 children have costs subsidised
- Maximum amounts asked for from parents for a single trip is £10. Any further cost is met by the school through fund raising.
- Any families who are particularly struggling have full costs paid at the discretion of the Head Teacher
- Parents are given plenty of time to be able to budget towards payments of trips
- Maximum limits are put on any spending money
- School staff are aware of any families who repeatedly avoid participation in trips to ensure that financial implications are not a factor
- Provision is made for packed lunches to be supplied for any children who are in receipt of a free school meal
- The school makes use of grants from private companies to subsidise trips for families who would benefit

4. Charity, Fundraising Activities, School Shows and Themed Days

- Any charity or fundraising activities are at the discretion of parents - no money is asked for from children or parents and no child would ever be excluded on financial grounds
- Parents are given plenty of notice as to the frequency of planned events
- Any costumes for school shows are provided or sourced for children who need them
- Consideration is given to different ways children can celebrate themed days without the cost of new costumes/clothing as a factor.

5. Homework and Out of School Hours Learning

- Homework is provided by a variety of means - paper and digital (Digital equipment is supplied where necessary)
- Support is offered to families who find completion of homework challenging
- A wide range of after school clubs are offered to all with a small weekly donation - this is not mandatory and those who do not pay are not challenged
- School staff support any families/parents who require support in accessing digital resources/homework
- Not all out of school learning requires digital devices

6. Period Poverty

- Free sanitary products are available in upper school classes
- Required sanitary products are provided in a sensitive and dignified way

- Girls can visit toilets other than their usual P7 toilet if necessary
- Consideration has been made to allow girls to take sanitary products home for use during weekends and holidays
- Parents/Carers are given the opportunity to contact the school discreetly for access to sanitary products.

2. Food Security, Dignity and Access to Nutritious Food

- Any families who require support with school meals are directed towards the free meal allowance with NLC
- Breakfast club - any families with more than 2 children have subsidised costs for breakfast (P1-5 and those in receipt of free school meals have breakfast provided free of charge)
- Breakfast and snacks are provided for any children who arrive at school hungry or don't have a snack
- Families are referred to the Financial Inclusion Team where necessary
- Our Barnardo's support worker works with families who need supported financially and can assist with Food Bank access
- Packed lunches are provided to those in receipt of free school meals for any trips or excursions
- During particular times of hardship, families are supported by Barnardos and the community with the donation of food parcels.
- At Christmas, we work closely with local food banks and charities to supply Christmas food parcels to vulnerable families.

3. Maximising Family Income and Financial Wellbeing

In St Michael's Primary & Nursery Class, we offer Financial Education and advice for children, young people and their families in the following ways:

- Visiting specialists from banks etc to provide advice
- Developing the Young Workforce guidance and lessons

For families living in poverty, we will offer support in partnership with:

- The Financial Inclusion Team
- Employability Resources
- CLD
- Health and Social Work for advice and support (where appropriate)

4. Household Costs, Fuel and Material Insecurity

Where a family may be experiencing fuel or material insecurity, the school may, with the family's knowledge and agreement, make an appropriate referral to Barnardo's or another relevant support service.

Our Barnardo's Family Support Worker can assist families to identify appropriate services, grants and financial entitlements and, where required, support parents and carers with applications or attendance at relevant meetings.

At Christmas time we supply a range of Christmas presents to families experiencing financial pressures in association with Kid's Out Charity, Dunelm Stores, Cash for Kids, The Coffee House and St Maurice's High School.

Uniforms are donated or issued at reduced prices to families who need them.

The school will maintain effective partnership working with support agencies, while ensuring that information is shared appropriately and in accordance with our responsibilities for confidentiality and data protection.

Our approach will be based on dignity rather than stigma. We recognise that financial circumstances can change quickly and that families experiencing hardship may not always be identifiable. We will therefore seek, wherever possible, to make information and opportunities for support available to all families.

Our aim is that no child should experience exclusion, embarrassment or reduced educational opportunity because of their family's financial circumstances.



School Uniform Info

Appendix 1



Dear Parent/Carer,

At St. Michael's we are extremely proud of our traditional school uniform that is part of the history and uniqueness of our school. Our children always look incredibly smart. Research has shown that a smart and high standard of school uniform goes hand in hand with high standards of attainment and behaviour.

We do acknowledge however, that it can be costly and brown items of uniform can be difficult to purchase. In addressing this I hope that you find the information on this newsletter helpful when thinking about purchasing or obtaining uniform moving forward.

Our school uniform

- white shirt (no polo-shirts)
- brown skirt, pinafore, trousers or shorts*
- brown cardigan/jumper
- brown school fleece
- green gingham dress with green or brown cardigan
- school tie
- P.E. kit - plain green shorts and t-shirt
- Outdoor Learning Kit - Green PE top and black jogging bottoms/leggings with school fleece.

*In the event you are unable to access brown skirts, trousers or shorts, then grey may be worn as an alternative.

Our official school uniform supplier is logoxpres and you can order all items online at

<https://www.logoxpres-schoolwear.co.uk/shop/>

Brown uniform is also available online at:-

MIYO Schoolwear <https://www.miyoschoolwear.com/>

ASDA <https://direct.asda.com/george/school/>

Customique Boutique

<https://www.customique.co.uk/pages/school-uniforms>

BARU

<http://www.kitmykid.co.uk/St-Michaels-Moodiesburn/>

AMAZON

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Boys-School-Uniforms-Brown/>

Be Schoolwear <https://www.border-embroideries.co.uk/>

School Uniform 247 <https://www.schooluniform247.co.uk/>

Preloved Uniform Items

We gratefully accept uniform donations throughout the school year. Lots of families have benefitted from this service. Should you have uniform in good condition that you wish to donate please hand this into the school office or give it to Mrs Di Mascio or Mrs Belam at the school gate.

If you would benefit from this service please email myself at nldimascion@northlan.org.uk or Mrs McMillan nlmcmillanr@northlan.org.uk or on 01236794822, with what you need and we will do our best to meet your needs. This service can be used as often as necessary.

Helpful tips

- ✓ School logo/badge isn't necessary on all items.
- ✓ Look at what the internet has to offer. There are many online shops which sell brown items.
- ✓ Look out for special offers from BeSchoolwear and MIYO
- ✓ Why not 'Go Gingham' in the warmer months? Green gingham dresses are a great cost saving alternative to full uniform.
- ✓ Alter school trousers into shorts for the better weather months.