

United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child

- **Article 3** - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
- **Article 6** - Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.
- **Article 24** - Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
- **Article 26** - Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.
- **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.



Alloway Primary School

Poverty Proofing Policy

Aims

The main aims of this policy are to:

- Provide information on how we relieve the pressures families may face due to the Cost of the School Day.
- Ensure that there are no barriers to learning caused by financial issues and that every child has equal access to opportunities at school.
- Demonstrate the approaches taken to minimise poverty stigma
- Promote the assistance we can provide to families to help them access financial support beyond the school day.
- Demonstrate that the Pupil Equity Fund is used to ensure that no child is excluded due to financial barriers.

Background

The aim of 'Poverty Proofing the School Day' is to remove barriers to learning which exist because of the impact of living in poverty.

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 Alloway Primary we believe that tackling disadvantage is at the heart of what we do. We will ensure that all families who reach out to us for support and assistance will be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. We also recognise that our school data makes it hard for us to identify who may require support so try to find ways to make support available to all who need it.

UNICEF estimates that 19% of British children live in food insecure households. This means that there are times when their household does not have sufficient funds to buy enough food, or they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet. Our school profile is mainly in decile 9 and 10 however we realise that this is not a reliable measure.

This policy details our plan to poverty proof our school.

"Poverty can have a ferocious and long-lasting effect on children's health, wellbeing and educational attainment. Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing are essential for successful learning. However, food insecurity, housing problems and financial stress and worry all contribute to poorer health outcomes and children from low-income households are more likely to report feeling useless and hopeless about their futures." **(The Cost of the School Day Toolkit, CPAG)**

How Do We Reduce the 'Cost of the School Day'?

Throughout the session we consider any costs that we ask parents for. We have identified aspects of the school day that do have financial implications for families and take steps to plan and reduce these. Any contributions for educational outings are costed to ensure best value for money. When appropriate we also survey parents to capture their views before booking. We work with other agencies and charities to access funds and resources where appropriate for families. We have set up a clothing exchange in our local library which is attached to our building. We ensure that uniform is free for families should they require it. We plan any charity contributions/fun days in school to ensure that children do not need to pay to access these. We limit the amount of charity work that the school contributes too. We know that parents sometimes want to give gifts to teachers but we do not expect or encourage this. This has been communicated through our Parent Council.

What Actions Do We Take To Reduce Stigma?

The positive mental health and wellbeing of every individual is important and we want to ensure that everyone is confident and has high self-esteem. Confidence and self-esteem can be adversely impacted by the stigma of not having the same possessions or opportunities as others. Our school uniform clothing exchange is located in school library so to avoid any embarrassment. Families can access this in their own time without anyone in the school knowing.

There are times when children may not want to attend school or participate in activities as they feel the clothing or possessions they have are not as good as those of their peers. Any non-uniform days include a wide range of options to allow children to participate. Our Parent Council have set up a Halloween costume, Christmas Jumper and party clothes exchange, also in our school library. We always have clothes available for children when they need them. We provide personalised support to families.

How do we support families?

Working in partnership	<p>We aim to work in partnership with our families and we ensure that they know they are able to contact us confidentially if they require any support. We are continually establishing links with local community groups, charities, organisations and businesses who can support families in need.</p> <p>We have good links with 'The Night Before Christmas' campaign and 'Kindness & Co'.</p> <p>We have strong links with Social Work to support individual families.</p>
Food	<p>We encourage parents to apply for free school meals and support with this process.</p> <p>Free School meals are offered from EYC-P5.</p> <p>We provide breakfast when we are aware that children require this.</p> <p>Snacks are provided too when required.</p> <p>We worked in partnership with the local library to make food packages available.</p> <p>We provide food packages to targeted families as required.</p>
Clothing	<p>We ensure that parents are aware of school clothing grants and the application procedures. We support parents to complete these if required.</p> <p>We provide a school uniform exchanges in our local library that parents can access when required. We provide new clothes to parents that require these.</p> <p>Any items that are not required are stored. We ask parents to donate Christmas jumpers, Christmas party clothes, Hallowe'en costumes and dressing up clothes so that we can make these available when we have celebrations.</p>
After school activities	<p>We ensure that all our extra curricular activities are free to all families. These are run by Active School or volunteers.</p>

How Do We Communicate With Families?

We aim to ensure that every family is aware of the actions and procedures we have in place to reduce the Cost of the School Day, the supports that are available within education and from other organisations. We communicate information in the following ways:

- Emails
- School website/blog and Twitter
- Newsletters
- School handbook
- Parent Council
- Local Community Groups

How Does Our Parent Council Support These Initiatives?

The Parent Council shares information on behalf of the Parent Forum with the Head Teacher, including views regarding issues that may have financial implications for families. This enables the Head Teacher to reflect on practice and make any necessary changes to provision in the school. The Parent Council uses their communication platforms to share information about initiatives. They aim to provide events for children with minimum costs attached. They contribute towards the funding of events so that no child misses out.

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