

Cost of the School Day Position Statement

Braehead Primary School, South Lanarkshire Council

At Braehead Primary School we recognise the need to reduce the Cost of the School Day for all our pupils and particularly for our pupils who are already experiencing poverty. We examine the School Day through the following headings; Uniform, Travel, Learning, School trips, Eating, Fun and School Clubs.

Uniform

Our current uniform is navy trousers/skirts/tartan pinafores, burgundy sweatshirts and white shirts or navy poloshirts. Families can purchase uniforms from ALJ Workwear in Lanark. We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/poloshirts. Next session we intend to update our practice by having a 'previously owned' stall for parents to select items of uniform which have been previously owned for reuse. This will allow families to pick up some items free of charge which may help with uniform.

Travel

The majority of our children travel to school by school bus or by car for those pupils who are currently placing requests to Braehead Primary. Transport is provided for the majority by the Local Authority. We are aware that this could mean children are not able to attend after school clubs and we therefore want to ensure that we have lunch time activities as well as after school clubs to alleviate the pressure of children being collected from school at 4pm.

Learning

Children at Braehead Primary School do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Pens and pencils are provided and young people do not need to bring their own equipment although we are aware that many children like to do this. We currently have a procedure for young people to borrow equipment if they need it for homework (e.g a calculator or craft equipment).

School Trips

Currently our trips are planned each year in relation to learning opportunities and relevant points of interest. The average cost of trips for pupils is £8 for the end of term outing, other outings throughout the session cost less. We try to reduce the cost by subsidising the transport costs and we are very fortunate to have benefitted from funded transport to and from our pantomime.

Eating at school

Last school year we had 2% of pupils who were in receipt of Free School Meals. We are aware that there may be a stigma associated with a free lunch and we try to reduce this by never discussing who has a free school meal, instead we always inform the children that their parents have prepaid to avoid any unnecessary anxiety around this. We estimate that approximately 100% of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement. We intend to provide new P1 parents with the necessary information at the transition events to ensure they take up any entitlement for Free School Meals. Reminders will also be provided in newsletters throughout June to all current families of the school to ensure they take up any entitlement.

Fun Events

Braehead Primary School recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on to families. Our attendance figures do not suggest pupil absence during fun events however we will remain vigilant to see if there are any poverty-related patterns that require action. When young people cannot afford to take part in any activity we ensure they can still experience it by ensuring families know that those experiencing financial difficulties can speak confidentially to the school and there will be an arrangement in place to support them and their children discretely. We currently fundraise by carrying out dress down days, movie nights, sponsored events etc and understand that not all families are able to contribute so we also participate in bag packing where available and regularly seek grants and external funding to alleviate the pressure of additional costs on families.

School Clubs

At Braehead Primary we have the following clubs; dance, tennis, rugby, multi-sports etc. We do not charge for pupils to take part. Some clubs may require specific equipment e.g badminton racquet, football boots, and we do what we can to ensure the necessary equipment is available for all children in the school.

We are very clear that the Cost of the School Day is an area that requires constant vigilance and will not be 'fixed' by any one action. In our Improvement Plan for 2019/20 we will be focusing on

- Planning events for the year to provide advance notice for parents.
- Raise awareness of local charity organisations e.g. Clydesdale Foodbank, Baby Bank who may be able to help.
- Gather the views of parents with regards to what/when we ask for money to gain a confidential understanding of the views of the parent forum which, in turn will inform our future practice.
- Offering regular lunch time clubs to all pupils to alleviate issues with transport at the end of an after school club.

This statement will be replaced by June 2020 with a School Policy on Cost of the School Day.

This statement was created in collaboration between all primary establishments within Lanark Learning Community, but reflects the current practice at Braehead Primary School.