



## Cost of the School Day Position Statement

### Coalburn Primary School, South Lanarkshire Council

At Coalburn Primary, 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, Friendship, School Trips, Eating, Fun and School Clubs and Home Learning.

#### Uniform

Our school uniform consists of a burgundy school sweatshirt, burgundy or yellow polo shirts and grey or black trousers / skirt. In addition, there is an opportunity to purchase a tartan pinafore / skirt. Families can purchase branded uniforms from ALJ Workwear in Lanark. We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/polo shirts, parents are welcome to purchase suitable options at supermarkets or other retailers. Soft shoes (i.e. Plimsolls) should be supplied and left in school for use every day. We ask that sturdier gym shoes be supplied, where possible, on gym days to support the delivery of high quality physical education. We have a selection of pre-owned uniforms available for anyone who requires it. Anyone wishing to access this should contact the school office or Head Teacher. Periodically, we send a Google form listing available items for parents to request. We welcome donations of outgrown uniforms to our existing selection on offer.

#### Travel

The majority of our children travel to school by foot. Transport is provided for the minority of children living on the outskirts of our village by the Local Authority. We are aware that this could mean some children are not able to attend after school clubs and we therefore ensure that we have alternative activities and clubs running at different times, during the school day, throughout the course of the year.

#### Learning

Children at Coalburn 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 children are welcome to, should they wish. We currently have a procedure for our pupils to borrow equipment if they need it for homework (e.g. a calculator or craft equipment). Children who do not have access to a computer or the internet at home will also be allowed time in school to complete a homework task. We want to ensure that all of our children can complete homework tasks no matter what their family circumstances are. We have good links with the 'One Stop Shop' which provides computer and internet access in the village out with school times.

#### Friendships

We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence. We teach young people about poverty related issues throughout our school curriculum. Each new session we gather the views of our young people and families on the Cost of the School Day and involve them in decision making around this.

#### School Trips

Currently our trips are planned each year in relation to the teaching and learning in the school. Some trips do not have a cost whilst others do. We try to reduce the cost by subsidising buses from our school funds. The Parent Council does a fantastic job of fundraising to help support us with reducing costs. We try to support families with the payment of excursions by giving as much notice as possible

and where the payment is larger there is always an option to pay it up. We discretely offer support to any individual family who requires it.

### **Period Poverty**

Within the school, there are sanitary products for pupils, staff and visitors to access to tackle period poverty. Upper school girls have access to these products in their toilet block. Staff regularly check the supply and top up as necessary. There are also baskets of products in staff toilets for staff/visitors.

### **Eating at school**

All children within P1-5 currently receive free school meals. This school year we have 30 % 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. ParentPay has reduced the stigma of who does and does not pay for school lunches, as there is no cash collected in the school. We estimate that approximately 90 % of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement.

### **Fun Events**

Coalburn Primary recognises that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on families. We look carefully at attendance and participation in these events in order 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 that families who are struggling financially know to speak with the Head Teacher and an arrangement will be put in place. We currently fundraise through sponsored events, Parent Council events, School Shows etc. and understand that not all families are able to contribute; we also deal with this in a discrete manner.

### **School Clubs**

At Coalburn Primary, we have many after school clubs such as Gymnastics, Judo, Dance, Athletics, Karate, Netball and Football. Thanks to the Parent Council's fundraising, we will not be charging for these during this session. Some clubs may require specific equipment e.g. badminton racquet, football boots, and we do what we can to help families who may not be able to afford these.

### **Home Learning**

We try to reduce the cost of learning at home as much as possible by providing resources as necessary for pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. We do not have a policy in the school about lending equipment for pupils who may struggle, and we ensure that any homework activity can be completed by *all* pupils no matter their family circumstances. We work hard with our parents to realise the benefit of homework to their children's learning and attainment.

### **Next Steps**

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 2023/24 we will be focusing on

- Increasing awareness of the pre-owned uniform items available
- Increasing links with the 'One Stop Shop'
- Being mindful of costs for school trips
- Considering costs associated with subject areas

***This statement will be replaced by June 2024 with a School Policy on Cost of the School Day.***