

Crawford Primary School



Cost of the School Day Policy

Introduction

At Crawford Primary School, we are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where every child can participate fully in school life, regardless of their family's financial situation. We recognize that the costs associated with education, including uniforms, trips, and materials, can be burdensome for families. This policy aims to minimise the financial barriers that may prevent children from engaging in their education and ensure that no child feels excluded due to money concerns.

The purpose of this policy is to create a shared understanding among all stakeholders regarding the cost of the school day. It outlines how we support families, consult with our school community, and address the financial challenges some families face, ensuring that every child can fully participate in school life without stigma or exclusion.

Context

The "Cost of the School Day" initiative highlights the importance of involving children, parents, and staff in identifying school-related expenses that place an additional burden on families. This can sometimes lead to children feeling excluded or stigmatized. The best solutions often come directly from families and children who experience these challenges firsthand. Schools can play a key role in making themselves more inclusive by addressing the financial difficulties some families face (CPAG 2021).

In Scotland, many families are struggling with low incomes, and this problem has become even more pressing in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. With over a quarter of children in Scotland living in families that struggle to make ends meet, schools must take active steps to reduce financial barriers to education. This policy seeks to support children by reducing the extra costs placed on families and by making sure that lack of funds never prevents a child from participating in school life (CPAG 2021).

Policy Aims

At Crawford Primary School, we recognise the importance of reducing the cost of the school day, particularly for families facing financial hardship.

Our school policy aims to:

- Ensure equal access to opportunities at school by removing barriers to participation for low-income families.
- Minimise stigma and exclusion related to income inequality.
- Reduce financial pressures which school costs place on families.
- Help families access financial entitlements and maximise their incomes.
- Use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) effectively to remove financial barriers to learning.

Policy Implementation

Stakeholder Engagement

- We will engage with stakeholders through CPAG surveys to gather opinions on the cost of the school day.
- Annually, stakeholders will participate in the Participatory Budgeting process to prioritise how PEF is spent.

Fundraising and Support

- The Parent Council will fundraise to help cover transport for trips and resources for after-school clubs and learning activities.
- The "Recycle/Reuse" initiative will continue throughout the year, offering families the opportunity to donate or collect school uniforms, Christmas clothes, or Halloween costumes.

School Values and Roles

Our school's vision of being, '**Caring, Conscientious, and Creative – To Be the Best We Can Be'** is at the heart of our Cost of the School Day policy.

To ensure all pupils can be their best, they need to feel secure, supported, and free from the pressures that financial barriers might bring. We create this safe and inclusive environment by making sure all students can participate in school activities and access necessary resources, regardless of their family's financial situation.

Our values—**Respect Ourselves, Respect Others, Respect the Environment**—are essential to this approach. By respecting each student's circumstances, we demonstrate care and conscientiousness in addressing inequalities. This means we take active steps to make sure no child feels excluded or disadvantaged due to costs, for example for trips, uniforms, or supplies.

As part of the Biggar Learning Community and our commitment to **Building Life Chances**, our Cost of the School Day policy ensures that every child can learn and grow in a caring, respectful environment, with equal chances to thrive and succeed.

Evidence of Policy in Action

- Staff will not make assumptions about family financial situations.
- We will work towards an affordable school year, ensuring that no child is excluded from activities due to financial constraints.
- Fundraising will not always involve families contributing money, and expectations around financial contributions will be carefully managed.
- We will offer support for accessing IT equipment and ensure consistent practices around uniforms and resources.
- Staff will remain vigilant about income-based bullying or stigma.
- We will ensure children and families are informed about and can access financial entitlements such as clothing grants and free meals.
- Costs for trips will be kept affordable, and subsidies will be offered where possible.
- Systems will be in place to ensure that families feel comfortable asking for help.
- Regular information about available support will be provided in school newsletters.

Learning Resources and Trips

- All core learning materials are provided free of charge. Children do not need to bring their own equipment, and this is clearly communicated in the School Handbook and parent meetings.
- Where a school trip is planned to enhance learning, we **may** ask for a contribution towards cost, but this is not mandatory, and all children will be able to participate in educational outings.

Healthy Eating and School Meals

- All P1-5 pupils have access to free school meals, and information on eligibility for FSM is available on the school's website.
- Our children can access fresh fruit at break times.
- Stigma related to FSM is minimised by ensuring that no child's participation is publicly identified, including during trips where packed lunches are provided in neutral packaging.
- In line with South Lanarkshire policy a breakfast club is available from 8.15am to 8.45am each morning. Our Breakfast Club provides a selection of cereal, toast, milk, and fresh fruit and is free of charge. It also provides a calm place to chat with staff and classmates.

Clothing and Uniform

- Our current uniform is a blue sweatshirt with/without the school logo, a yellow polo shirt, black/dark grey trousers or skirt. These can be bought through our local school suppliers (School trends, ALJ, Nith Valley) or at any supermarket/clothing shop, where they may be cheaper.
- For P.E we ask that all children wear appropriate clothing (no football shirts) and gym shoes / trainers.
- We have waterproof clothing that we can lend for outdoor learning activities / residential. We also have a stock of wellies/ gloves that we lend to the children when required.
- Donations of wellies/ outdoor clothing that children have outgrown are welcome and would either be put into the "Recycle – Reuse" clothing stock or used in school.
- Parents on certain benefits can access a clothing grant to help with school uniform costs. Information is available on the SLC website to inform parents regarding information about entitlement to clothing grants and how to apply.

School Trips and Travel

- School trips are arranged to enhance students' learning experiences. Costs are kept low through subsidies, and no child will miss a trip due to financial constraints.
- For residential experiences, we give maximum advance notice and put a staged payment plan in place, where necessary. Families who need support are encouraged to speak to the school, we ask for a contribution towards cost, but this is not mandatory, and all children will be able to participate in educational outings.
- For swimming lessons, we apply for grants to help cover costs and may adjust the schedule to reduce expenses.

Fundraising

- Fundraising activities are spread throughout the year to avoid putting too much pressure on families. Participation is not dependent on contributions, and any donations are handled electronically to avoid embarrassment.

Clubs and After-School Activities

- All after-school clubs are free of charge. To accommodate families who live outside the village, we also offer lunchtime clubs to ensure participation without added transportation costs.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

We ask that parents and carers support the policy by:

- Asking for help when needed, knowing that support will be offered confidentially and without judgment.
- Making use of the “Recycle/Reuse” system for school uniforms.
- Informing the school if fundraising events create stress at home, so that support can be offered.
- Recognise that there is no expectation that staff are to be bought gifts at any time of the school year.

Conclusion

Our goal is to ensure that every day at school is a positive experience for all children. We will continue working in partnership with parents and carers to provide financial support, remove barriers, and make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities at school. Together, we can ensure that financial hardship does not limit a child's education or participation in school life.

“Unequal access to learning at school leads to unequal outcomes. Every child deserves to make the most of their school day.” (CPAG 2021)