



Cost of the School Day Position Statement Townhill Primary School, South Lanarkshire Council

At Townhill Primary School we strive 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, Clubs and Home learning.

Uniform – our current uniform is

- White Shirt/Polo Shirt
- Navy Sweatshirt
- Navy or Grey Trousers/Navy or Grey Skirt
- Navy Blazer/Fleece Jacket

Families can purchase uniforms from Scotcrest, 41 Quarry Street, Hamilton. We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/polo shirts, therefore, parents are able to choose their preferred and most affordable uniform supplier, including local supermarkets. This session we extended our practice by offering parents the opportunity to browse our new and nearly new Townhill uniforms via our 'Rake and Take' stalls at the front entrance to the school. This includes school jackets and shoes/boots/trainers.

Travel – the majority of our children walk or travel to school by car. A small number of children are dropped off before school and collected again by a range of out of school care providers. We are aware that this could mean some children are not able to attend after school clubs and so we ensure that we have a full programme of extra-curricular activities on offer which take place at both at lunchtime and after school to ensure equity of opportunity.

Learning – children at Townhill Primary School do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Although many of our children prefer to bring their own stationery equipment, all pens and pencils are provided in every class and replaced biannually or more regularly if required.

For children who do not have access at home to ICT equipment to help them complete homework, we make other arrangements for them to use ICT during the school day and complete their tasks. In addition, our 'Stationery Station' at the front entrance has pre made packs full of all/any physical materials that children would need to complete home tasks. We have also started a lunchtime Homework club for children P4-7 and during this time they can access ICT, physical materials and teacher support.

Friendships

We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence. We promote equity through our Health and Wellbeing programme and at Assemblies. This session we are taking a focused approach to teaching young people about poverty related issues as part of our plans to develop our pupils' health and wellbeing. During session 2020-21, we gathered the views of our parents, pupils and partners of how best to spend our Participatory Budget percentage of our Pupil Equity Fund allocation. This equated to £2666 and it was agreed that the money would be spent on Outdoor learning equipment, Extra-Curricular Clubs and a 'Make a difference fund'. This money has helped us to resource equipment and materials, to pay for clubs an

coaches and as an emergency fund to purchase items to ensure all pupils have the same opportunities.

School Trips

Pre covid 19 our class trips were planned each year by class teachers to enhance the taught curriculum. When guidelines and restrictions allow this will start again. We aim to always keep trip costs to a minimum.

Throughout the school year we participate in a wide range of sporting activities promoted by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and our Active Schools Coordinator. We also attend competitions and events in our Learning Community.

We do not charge our P7 pupils for any transition visits to secondary school. We work closely with our families to ensure that poverty is not a barrier to pupils' participation in residential excursions.

During session 2021-2022, we will consult our parents on a strategy to reduce costs for those families who have more than one child attending education, whether this is within early years, our own school or at secondary school.

Eating at school

During session 2021-2022, 10% of pupils were in receipt of Free School Meals. The introduction of ParentPay has helped to reduce any stigma that may be associated with receiving a free lunch. We estimate that most of our P-7 pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement, however, there may be some P1- pupils whose parents have not claimed this entitlement due to meals for these children being free for everyone. Moving forward, we will continue to build on our positive relationships with our families to ensure that all those who should receive a Free School Meal take up their entitlement. From August 2022 all primary school children will have free meals.

Fun Events

Townhill Primary School recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on to families. We intend to look carefully at attendance and participation in these events in order to highlight any poverty-related patterns that require action. Fun Events are carefully planned by staff, in collaboration with our Parent Partnership Group. There is very often no charge to take part in these and, should payment be required, the cost is kept to a minimum (£1-2). No child would be refused the opportunity to participate in any Fun Events, due to lack of payment. We currently fund raise in a variety of ways and benefit from donations from our Parent Partnership Group to subsidise the cost of any Fun Events.

School Clubs

At Townhill Primary School we have a wide range of extra-curricular activities which take place both during lunchtime and after school. There is no charge for any activities which are led by members of our own staff. When specialist coaches are employed, we would normally charge £1 per young person to take part each session and this session our participatory budget is further supporting low and no cost. To ensure that poverty is not a barrier to pupils' participation, where there is a cost, the cost is reduced or waived for our most vulnerable families. No child would be refused the opportunity to participate, due to lack of payment. We currently do not insist on any specialist kit for any of our extra-curricular activities, however, should this change at any time we would do what we

can to help families who may not be able to afford these by subsidising the cost or providing the items.

Home Learning

We try to reduce the cost of learning at home as much as possible. For children who do not have access at home to ICT equipment to help them complete homework, we make other arrangements for them to use ICT in school and complete their tasks at either our P4-5 or P6-7 homework club. In addition, our children can collect a range of stationery and arts and crafts materials if they need them for homework. We ensure that any homework activity can be completed by *all* pupils no matter their family circumstances and should any pupils with a specific learning need or other additional support need require specialist resources these will be provided by the school. Homework is not linked to our Behaviour Policy and strategies, as outlined above, are in place to support pupils who cannot complete this.

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 2021/22 we will be focusing on enhancing our approaches to ensure barriers to participation and engagement in the wider life of the school are reduced for all pupils and:

- Continue with our 'Rake and Take' stalls. Our families will be able to take what they need throughout the session. We will also support in the form of specialised rails at specific times of the year i.e. Christmas jumpers, Halloween costumes.
- Continue to ensure pupils do not pay for any core learning activities or resources.
- Build on our positive relationships with our families to ensure that all those who should receive a Free School Meal take up their entitlement.
- Continue to subsidise school trips, sporting activities, residential excursions and other out of school events.
- Gather the views of our pupils and families on the Cost of the School Day and involve them in decision making, including a strategy to reduce costs for those families who have more than one child attending education, whether this is within early years, our own school or at secondary school.

This statement will be replaced by June 2022 with a School Policy on Cost of the School Day.