

# Lanark Primary School and ELC



## Cost of the School Day Policy



## **Section 1: Overview and Definition**

### **What do we mean by Cost of the School Day?**

'Cost of the School Day' highlights the challenges that families face when it comes to school costs. The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) works on behalf of the more than one in four children in the UK growing up in poverty. They have created a Cost of the School Day Toolkit for Scotland which can be accessed here:

<https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/CoSD/toolkit>

This toolkit provides a range of resources to support schools, local authorities and their partners to identify and address financial barriers to participation and learning.

### **The purpose of the Cost of the School Day Policy?**

At Lanark Primary School and ELC, learning is at the heart of all we do. We strive to provide rich learning experiences that build confidence and self-belief. We foster a 'can do' attitude which enables everyone to reach their full potential. We work in strong partnership with our parents and the wider community to ensure that we feel safe, included and valued within our school community...and beyond. We do not want financial barriers stopping this vision becoming a reality for each one of our learners.

We embed the 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) principles throughout our practice and we aim to use effective approaches to get it right for every family.

## **Section 2: Aims**

### **Our main aims in terms of Cost of the School Day 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.
- 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

## **Section 3: Policy into Practice**

### **Approaches to reducing the Cost of the School Day**

#### **Communication with families**

Through our regular communication channels, including the School App and Monthly newsletters, we share relevant information regarding supports available agencies who may be able to help families struggling with finances e.g. Money Matters. Our newsletters contain a 'standing item' related to Cost of the School Day each month. Information shared includes our Parent Council Hardship Fund, details on our free 'Help Yourself' stands and links to a range of specific offers available within our community.

All messages are checked to ensure they are appropriate and communicated in a non-stigmatising way.

### **The cost of school trips**

Lanark Primary School supports a 'No-Cost' approach to one-day excursions. The residential trip for P7s has a long-term payment plan and parents and carers can access additional funding to either reduce or remove any financial costs. This ensures that all children can take part and that no-one misses out. Children are not permitted to take money on trips so there is no pressure placed upon parents and carers to provide money for Gift Shops.

### **School uniform**

Lanark Primary School adopts a sensitive and inclusive approach to uniform, removing the pressure to buy branded uniform. The school has a Uniform Stand which always contains a range of quality uniform items of varying size. We also adapt our stands to include seasonal clothing like sportswear, Christmas jumpers, dress-up costumes and winter jackets. We also offer a range of good quality footwear.

### **Non-uniform days**

These have been reduced over time and now only include Sports Week where children can come in activity clothes and the last day of the session, so that we can collect good quality uniform. This reduces the pressure to buy 'fashion items' which may have an extensive cost. Children are not asked to come, for example, dressed for World Book Day, as this may prove financially limiting for some families.

### **Period Poverty**

Within the school, there are sanitary products for pupils to access if required to tackle period poverty. We also keep a stock outside the school building for members of the community to easily access. A sanitary 'drawer' is located in a specifically identified individual toilet which is shown to any pupil who requires use of it. Through our school newsletter, we have communicated with families that there are free products in school for any adults to access.

### **Eating at school**

This school year we have 20% of pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals. Due to the introduction of 'ParentPay' we feel there is no stigma associated with a free lunch as all transactions are cashless. The Scottish Government's commitment to providing free school meals (currently all P1-P5) has also had a positive impact on families. As a school, we provide free fruit/snacks for anyone who comes without one. Those children choosing a school meal or packed lunch can sit at the same tables, to avoid any pressure on families in receipt of free school meals to provide packed lunches to those who may ask for one in order to 'sit with friends'

We offer a free Breakfast Club that does not require 'booking', making it easy to access.

Any leftover of milk is given out, with all ELC learners and those in receipt of free school meals automatically being offered milk at no cost.

### **Fun events and Fundraising**

The school has one linked charity, St. Andrew's Hospice, where we arrange in consultation with learners, fundraising that is of a 'donation' nature with no expectation to contribute to take part.

The school arrange several fun events at no cost, including four House Treats a year, Christmas Jumper and Party Days, a Dress Down Day and Outdoor Learning/Eco days.

We work very closely with our Parent Council who always take into consideration of Cost of the School Day when arranging fundraising events. For example, our annual Christmas Gift Sale supports learners to buy gifts for family members, with gifts being provided free of charge for those who need it. All money raised comes back to the school to support other no cost events, including helping to pay for school excursions. The Parent Council also subsidise the visit to the Christmas Pantomime each year.

## **Learning**

Learners at Lanark Primary School do not need to pay for any core learning activity.

Pens and pencils are provided, and learners do not need to bring their own equipment.

Many of our families also benefited from Chromebooks and Wi-Fi provided by the Scottish Government during Covid-19 school closures, with families continuing to benefit from these devices.

## **School Clubs**

At Lanark Primary School we arrange a number of clubs including, netball, football, cross country, tennis, athletics, coding, reading for enjoyment, choir, and dance. All clubs are completely free of charge. Some clubs may require specific equipment, and we support families by having a full school team football, netball, tennis and dance kits, as well as a team jackets. We keep a stock of items such as football trainers, gloves and shin pads for organised Active Schools events. Participatory Budget is often used to ensure pupils have the correct kit/equipment to take part in these kinds of activities, again with no associated costs.

## **Section 4: Conclusion**

We believe that all learners at Lanark Primary School should have the same experiences and school and not miss out due to financial pressures. Our families benefit from the approaches set out above as well as provisions of gifts, hampers, vouchers and learning supplies through our own gathering of items and access to external grants e.g. Cash for Kids.

Our partnerships between home and school are paramount and the relationships we build ensure that we can have open, honest dialogue in order to support all our families here at Lanark Primary School.