

## **Cost of the School Day Position Statement**

### **Douglas Primary School and ELC, South Lanarkshire Council**

At Douglas Primary School and ELC 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 grey/black trousers/skirts/tartan pinafores, red sweatshirts and yellow 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' bank 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 live within walking distance of the school and either walk or come by car. Pupils from Glespin are entitled to transport this is provided for the majority by the Local Authority. We are aware that this could mean that some children are not able to attend after school clubs and we therefore will ensure this coming session 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 Douglas Primary School & ELC 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). We also allow access to our computers for children who may have difficulty accessing the internet at home. Our aim is to ensure that all learners can complete activities no matter their family circumstances.

#### **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 through our curriculum within such areas as Financial Education, Health and Wellbeing and Global Citizenship work.

#### **School Trips**

Currently our trips are planned each year in relation to learning opportunities and relevant points of interest. Some of our outings do have a cost involved while others do not. We try to reduce the cost of outings through the valuable support of our Parent Council and by using school funds. We also aim to give families as much notice as possible if there is a cost involved. Such outings as our Residential experiences can be paid in instalments over a longer period of time. We often support families who have more than one child attending any outing or whom we know may be experiencing difficulties.

#### **Eating at school**

Last school year we had 26% of pupils 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. By using ParentPay for parents to pay for lunches this removes any stigma previously associated with children not paying for their lunch with cash. We remind P1-3 parents regularly about their entitlement to Free School Meals. We estimate that approximately 75% of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement. Free School Meal entitlement is now allocated automatically if a family has qualifying benefits.

### **Fun Events**

At Douglas Primary & ELC we recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on to 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 families know that those experiencing financial difficulties can speak confidentially to the school and there will be an arrangement put in place to support them and their children discretely. When undertaking school or Parent Council fund raising events we recognise that not all families are able to contribute and also deal with this in a discrete manner. Our Parent Council actively help us to support families who may be experiencing financial difficulties through their contributions. To participate in some of our events we simply ask for a donation and not a fixed amount.

### **School Clubs**

At Douglas Primary and ELC we have many clubs including; Kick Start Breakfast club, dance, netball, football, multi-sports, running etc. We do not charge for any school clubs that run before, during or after school. All equipment required to take part in the clubs is provided by the school the children only have to provide the clothing they wish to wear. We use School Funds in order to pay for our pupils to attend events related to the school clubs such as football and netball tournaments or the local athletics tournaments.

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;

- Providing advance notice for parents of activities and events that have a cost involved.
- Clearly communicating that non-branded school uniform is totally acceptable at Douglas PS & ELC.
- Encouraging learners to keep expensive equipment such as pencil cases and pens/pencils in their bags or at home as school has all the equipment they should need.
- Launching our Clothing Bank to of pre-used uniform and pre-used footwear that is still of a good quality.
- Monitoring club participation and offer regular lunch time clubs to pupils who may have issues with transport at the end of the school day.
- Continuing to ensure that we as a school and our Parent Council are alert to our concerns around The Cost of the School Day when planning events and activities.
- Raise awareness of local charity organisations e.g. Clydesdale Foodbank/Money Matters

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 Douglas Primary School and ELC.**