



LOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY POLICY



Reducing the Cost of the School Day and tackling Child Poverty is a top priority within South Lanarkshire Council. The importance of this is highlighted in the Education Resources plan and Local Child Poverty Action Plan. Across Scotland almost 1 in 4 children and young people are living in poverty, most of whom are in a family with at least one working parent. We understand that living in poverty is hard and can affect all aspects of a child or young person's wellbeing, achievement and attainment. While our school cannot change the financial situation anyone finds themselves in, we can ensure that what happens in our school doesn't negatively affect the pockets of our families.

The Child Poverty Action Group commissioned and produced **The Cost of the School Day Toolkit** to assist schools and Parent Councils with ideas to alleviate some of these concerns. While it is clear that issues surrounding child poverty are societal, not just related to school, we also have our own part to play in working to alleviate some of the issues faced by families who are confronted with the daily dilemmas of providing support for their child's school experience. *"Children who are unable to participate in the same activities as their peers will very often not feel included and this can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing. The key is finding possible solutions to ensure all children have the same opportunities."* (CPAG, 2018)

At Loch Primary School we pride ourselves as having a nurturing, happy, welcoming, inclusive, achieving and respectful school ethos and we always aim to ensure that all children, parents/carers, families, staff and visitors to our school feel welcomed and supported. Our school vision is '**TEAM LOCH - Together Everyone Achieves More; Learning Opportunities Create Happiness**' and we promote the message that 'we are all in this together' so that all stakeholders feel a part of our school. We recognise the need to reduce the 'Cost of the School Day' for all of our pupils and this is always at the forefront of our planning to ensure that money plays no part in how our children achieve and experience their education. We want all of our children to have the same opportunities and expectations in life. No child/young person will miss out on any aspect of their school life because of a lack of money. We will continue to look for ways to reduce costs as much as possible for families, including:

- Reducing the cost of events, such as class outings and clubs, by using our Pupil Equity Funding.
- Providing services to support positive home-school links including working with Supporting Families and our allocated Barnardo's Family Support Worker.
- Encouraging as much parental engagement as possible, promoting strong home-school links.
- Working with families to help raise attainment for all pupils.

At our we ensure all our staff are Poverty Aware. All staff receive an annual update on Cost of the School Day each August. At the start of each year our school will issue a School Events Planner to our parents/carers so that they can see immediately when there will be events which may have a cost. This will allow families to budget if they are able, or to contact the school if they require assistance. **If any parent/carer requires help in paying for anything in school, they should contact Miss Simpson (HT) who is our Cost of the School Day Lead.** Any requests will be supported with complete confidentiality and compassion. If any family is struggling we would always encourage them to speak to us so that we can try and point them in the right direction for the most appropriate help. If your family is under stress this will be affecting how your child is managing at school so it is important that we can work together.

We examine the school day through the following headings; Getting Dressed, Travelling, Learning, Friendships, School Excursions, Fun Events, Eating, School Clubs and Home Learning. Detailed on the next page are our aims to reduce the 'Cost of the School Day' for families.

Getting Dressed

Our current uniform is a white shirt, tie, navy sweatshirt/cardigan, navy trousers/skirt/pinafore and gold polo shirt. We do not insist on badged sweatshirts/polo shirts and uniform items can be purchased from local shops including supermarkets. Parents/carers on certain benefits can access a clothing grant to help with school uniform costs. There is information about entitlement to clothing grants and how to apply on the SLC website (https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200259/education_benefits/159/school_clothing_grants_and_free_school_meals). We have a school uniform box of preloved items that can be shared with families if they wish. Donations of school uniform items are greatly appreciated. School uniform is also available for families at the local foodbank at St. Anthony's Church. Families who require support are encouraged to contact the school and we will do our best to help.

Travelling

The majority of our children travel to school by car or by foot. Due to the location of Loch PS and the use of the same entrance/exit as our neighbouring establishment St. Anthony's PS, we actively encourage walking, cycling or 'parking and striding' to school to minimise congestion. This also promotes healthy living. Children and families are encouraged to apply for the Under 22 free bus travel - <https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/nec/>

School Excursions

Each class aims to have at least one school trip a year. We aim to reduce the cost by funding one school trip for each class per year using our Pupil Equity Funding. For residential trips, we will aim to give as much financial support and notice as possible to allow for payment plans to be established. We are aware that there can be 'hidden costs' to trips and we will work hard to avoid these wherever possible. Trips during the school day will normally involve children wearing their school uniform so no additional items are required. Families are encouraged to contact the school if support is required. No child will ever miss out on a school event due to financial restraints.

Friendships

As a nurturing school, all of our children are included and our 'Vision, Values and Aims' promotes the very positive message of 'TEAM LOCH' where we all must work together to ensure everyone feels happy, healthy and nurtured within our school. We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence. Pupils will be encouraged to share any concerns during our daily nurture and Health and Wellbeing activities. We teach young people about poverty related issues as part of our HWB programme. By providing pupils with free after school clubs, this allows our children to develop positive friendships with other children who attend.

THE COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Home Learning

Homework is encouraged on a daily basis as this helps children to build on their learning at home. We aim to ensure that home learning activities do not have any financial implications for families. Families who require support with materials/equipment are encouraged to contact the school to discuss help available. Children are provided with support materials and are allowed to borrow equipment if they need it for homework (e.g. paper or pencils). If research is involved in a task, the Class Teachers can provide printed copies of research materials where required. Family learning opportunities are also planned to support families and attendance is encouraged.

Learning

Children at Loch PS do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Stationery is provided and children do not need to bring their own equipment. Children have access to all required resources and equipment when at school.

Eating

All pupils from Primary 1- Primary 5 are entitled to a free school meal. Information on how to apply for Free School Meals is available on the SLC website (https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200259/education_benefits/159/school_clothing_grants_and_free_school_meals). We are aware that families can struggle who may not qualify for free school meals and we encourage families to speak to us if they are struggling to provide a lunch. We will never see a child go hungry. Within our school we also have a free breakfast club which is offered to all Primary 1 - Primary 7 pupils. Parents/carers are asked to complete a breakfast club request form prior to their child attending. Loch PS also supports the local foodbank at St. Anthony's Church and families are able to seek support without a referral.

School Clubs

At Loch PS we offer a wide range of clubs such as Bikeability, dance, Bridgeton Burns Competition preparation and multi-sports. All of these clubs are free of charge for everyone to attend. All equipment required for the clubs is provided by the school. Specialised after school clubs are also funded using our Pupil Equity Funding, meaning these too are also free for all children to attend.

Fun Events

At Loch PS we recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on to families. A School Events Planner is shared with all families at the beginning of each school year which details key events throughout the year. This ensures that we are not asking too much of parents/carers at the one time. For events such as Halloween Discos and Christmas Jumper Days, we will offer support and clothing to families where possible. We will actively encourage the recycling of these items where possible.