



Statement of action to address the cost of the St Mary's School School Day

Updated: *November 2023*

At St Mary's Polbeth Primary School, positive relationships with our children and families are at the heart of everything we do. We are aware of the effects of poverty and their impact on our school community and pupils.

With regards to the items below, we have measures in place that help our families with school costs, to make sure that all our children can participate and learn. All members of staff are committed to helping reduce the cost of the school day in order to narrow the poverty related attainment gap.



Uniform:

Our school uniform can be either a plain white shirt and school tie or an embroidered white polo shirt and blue sweatshirt, worn with grey trousers or skirts. Non-embroidered items in these colours are acceptable. Any shorts/ jogging trousers and tops are suitable kit for P.E. (no football colours). We request nearly new, outgrown uniform and P.E. clothing and run Uniform Swap Shops. We also have a 'help yourself' stock of uniform items for parents or pupils to use as we recycle lost property wherever possible. A community member offers the service to sew school badges onto any supermarket purchased jumpers at a cost of £2 per item. Our Family Link Worker (FLW) supports families to complete Local Authority School Clothing Grant application forms. She has bought clothing and arranged distribution from local school uniform banks. Application forms are available at various school community events throughout the session and are placed in P1 Transition Packs. Regular reminders are sent out on the School App and Website and put in the monthly Newsletter.

Travel:

Travelling to School



Our school currently services the catchment of Polbeth, West Calder and Harburn. After-school or lunchtime clubs are held in school or at the adjacent Polbeth Village Hall/ Community HUB to ensure no further travel cost implications.

School Trips

We carefully check the number of trips across year groups for families to reduce the cost to parents. We plan residential experiences throughout Primaries 5 and 7 and have set up savings options to enable parents to spread the cost in advance. A Parent Council discretionary fund is available to families to subsidise or finance pupils if required. Newsletters/ School trip letters – we have added a paragraph to advise that school can help cover the cost of trips. Costs of trips is considered before booking. Residential trips – payments made in instalments. Family Link Worker (FLW) can access school clothing bank and this is advertised on app and in newsletters School lunches provided for P1-5 and those in receipt of FSMs to take on trips.

Learning at School



Essential supplies of stationery are available for all classes to access. Resources may be borrowed to support learning i.e. devices, calculators and dictionaries. While there is a bring-your-own device to school policy, all pupils have access to digital technology in school and all pupils have access to a device. We provide devices for home and school.

Regular planning meetings to review learner's progress are held termly for all classes. Individualised Education Plans, with effective multi-agency working, are also reviewed termly to target support for our most vulnerable pupils. We have used our PEF budget in a variety of ways to close gaps in learning by employing additional Pupil Support Workers to implement many curricular interventions. We also have a Family Link Worker (FLW) to provide another link between home and school.

Friendships at School



School Uniform is promoted to negate any peer pressure for branded or fashion clothing. All staff and pupils are part of pupil committees where they discuss and act on certain topics so that all within our school community are growing in awareness of the difference between Equity and Equality. We run Nurture Groups and offer Nurturing Group support for social skills development. Pupils can also access 1:1 support with the FLW as required.

Resources

We have produced a Financial Planner, highlighting all costs for the whole school session, which is readily available through our communication channels.

Eating at School



We actively encourage uptake of Free School Meals (56%) and milk and share information about how to apply with all parents at various times throughout the year. We endorse iPayimpact as a form of cashless catering that reduces stigma. Canteen staff are aware of the needs of our pupils.

The free Breakfast Club is very well attended (40-70 pupils daily). For those children who have not had breakfast and do not make it in time for this, support staff provide daily 'toast in the playground' for any child who requires a snack out with this time.

The FLW accesses vouchers for families, to keep them from going hungry, from the West Lothian Foodbank within the West Calder Community Education Centre. As a referral is required, she can also support their access to food from the Community Fridge and Shop initiative within the adjacent Polbeth Community HUB. She can arrange transport as required. We advertise places for The Holiday Club, arranged by Polbeth Community HUB, which provides food in the holidays when pupils attend activities.

In Challenge Poverty Week, families will be invited to a Big Breakfast event with targeted awareness-raising opportunities; arranged from our close partnership working between the school, local community groups and health initiatives.

School Clubs



All organised in-school clubs or after-school clubs are run either free or participation is subsidised by the school when clubs have a charge attached e.g. Football Club (currently free for participants). Our staff team promote these and encourage families to attend after-school clubs and activities. Our pupils also have access to the out-of-school Children's Clubs at Polbeth Community HUB.

Homework



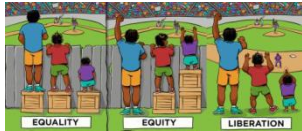
Online home activities have been increasingly prevalent over recent years and there is no expectation that any homework be printed at home. Pupils are increasingly upskilled and can submit work online through platforms such as Seesaw and Microsoft Teams. All families were contacted periods to ensure adequate access to digital resource.

Events



Many events have been curtailed of late but when future planning any educational, cultural or sporting opportunities, they are usually free to pupils as they are paid for through the School Fund, or often subsidised by the Parent Council. Class parties or discos are charged at a nominal amount of £1, with a maximum charge of £2 per family, although collection of payments is not pursued. The timing and frequency of dress-up or -down days and other fundraising events have similarly been reviewed with the school Social Media and Events Committee. Subsequently, costs have been reduced to a suggested contribution of 50p per individual or £1 per family, again on a voluntary basis. To ensure equitable access, our Junior Literacy Team organised a successful Book Swap in place of a fundraising Book Fair.

Sustainability



This vital work is built into our School Improvement Plan (SIP) and undertaken by a working party, headed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Feedback is a standing item on Staff Meeting Agenda to sustain staff awareness of the measures taken.

Issue Identified	Baseline Information	Desired outcomes	Interventions	Impact	Next Steps
Eating – Breakfast during recovery period – no access to Breakfast club. Ready to learn – access to breakfast	No access to Breakfast Club – all children	No child hungry at the start of the school day	Soft start focus on health and wellbeing – breakfast cereal/milk/water/fruit provided daily	All children will receive breakfast to start their day and be ready to learn.	Continue to promote attendance at breakfast club through school communication channels.
School Uniform – return of Swap Shop once safe to run.	Parental feedback: best to flag up availability of new-to-you <i>before</i> a new uniform is bought for their child.	School uniform and P.E. kit garments to be made accessible at the start of each term.	Appeal: Flyer posted on School Blog, App and Website for outgrown uniform and P.E. garments. Request that these be stored at home until safe to bring them in to school.	Stockpile of items is available to parents when they collect orders of new garments before the first term.	Also request (if clearing out): dressing up/ down clothing: Hallowe'en Boo-tique items Christmas Jumpers Party outfits for future events.
Preliminary consultation for dispersal of the Participatory Budget (currently set at 3% of Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) allocation). This will be directed by pupils in School Improvement Committees (once restrictions allow these to be re-established).	Pupil Voice captured via a survey undertaken by committees and suggestions recorded	Pupils have direct input into school improvement experiences, resources and opportunities offererd.	£600 budget to be given to each committee.	Pupils impacted directly as a result of their decisions.	Pupils to be involved in the planning of events and activities. Pupils also to have an input into improving resourcing relating to their selected focus area for school improvement.