

Hunter Primary School

Cost of the School Day Policy



Together we are the 'Heart of Hunter'

Rationale

The impact that poverty makes on a child/young person’s education is well documented. 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.

Aims

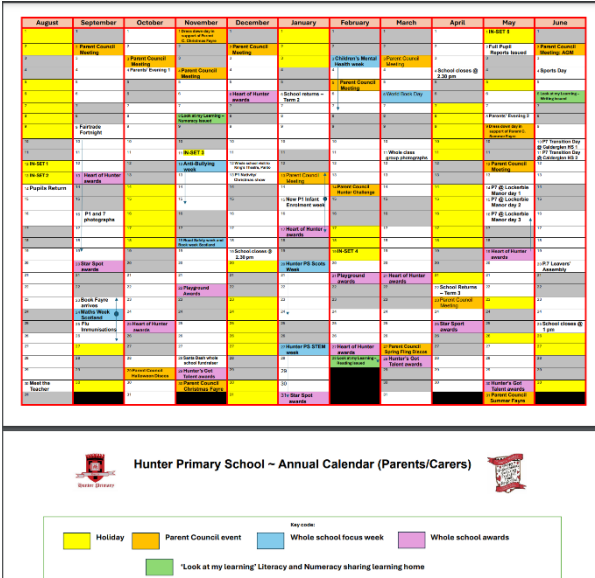
In Hunter Primary School we aim to ensure that all of our pupils have the same opportunities and expectations in life. Money should pay no part in how any of our children/young people achieve and experience their education. We aim to pay close attention to the Cost of the School Day. We will be clear with our parents and carers about any possible financial cost which may come up in the course of the school year and ensure that anyone who cannot afford a particular cost e.g., for a residential trip, will have our full support in ensuring their child can still take part, regardless of cost. No child/young person will miss out on any aspect of their school life because of a worry over money.

Awareness and empathy

At Hunter Primary School we ensure our staff are Poverty Aware. All staff will take part in training on this subject either in person through the CQIS and/or online through the NHS Child Poverty Learning Hub. All staff will receive an annual update on Cost of the School Day each August from August 2024 onwards.

Hunter Primary keeps track of all money requested and ensure that no parent or child is made to feel embarrassment or shame if they cannot afford to contribute to any event. This will never exclude them from participating. We will aim to reduce the amount of the school day each year.

At the start of each year our school will issue a Cost of the School Year plan to our parents 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.

Families will never need to prove their financial circumstances before help is given. Our staff always keep at the front of their minds that we are here to help the children in our care. If any parent/carer requires help in paying for anything in school they can contact any member of the Senior Leadership Team or Mrs McLaughlin who is our Cost of the School Day lead.

Support for families

Hunter Primary School website has details of agencies who may be able to help families struggling with finances e.g., Money Matters. We also signpost using the resource 'Money Is Not The Only Problem'.

Any parent who needs support to pay for any trip should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will deal with them with complete confidentiality and compassion. At Hunter Primary School we will never charge for an extra-curricular activity or club.

While our school is not responsible for all aspects of a family's life, we will try to help out when we can. If anyone is finding it difficult, 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 have an open door policy and would encourage parents to reach out in any way they feel comfortable.

Communication with families



We try very hard to be non-stigmatising in all our communications and do not presume that we know all the families who may be in need of help. We would encourage anyone to contact us in person, through email or telephone if they need help or advice on any matter.

We try and ensure that all messages are appropriate whether on our website, app, Parents Portal or email. If anyone finds any of our messaging offensive, they are encouraged to contact us immediately. We would never deliberately upset any member of our school community.

Fundraising

Our Cost of the School Day/Participatory Budgeting Group, led by Mrs. McLaughlin works with our Parent Council to ensure that we do not have too many events that cost our families money. For school discos or fun events where there may be an associated cost, this will be collected via Parent Pay so that any child who may not have enough money is not shamed by having to say they cannot pay.

We will try and access grants from charities and commercial organisations rather than asking parents for funds. If any parent works for an organisation who offers grants, we are grateful when they let us know and we welcome any parent who is willing to help us complete bids.

The cost of the school day

Uniform

Our school uniform consists of black trousers or skirts and a black sweatshirt/jumper with a white shirt or white/red polo shirt. We do not have a separate gym kit but note that football strips/colours are not encouraged in any South Lanarkshire school.

We have good quality pre-loved uniforms available, some next to new quality, and would encourage all families to make use of these to ensure we are recycling as much as possible. If any child has grown out of their uniform while it is still in good condition, we would be very grateful for the donation.

Hunter House café in the Long Calderwood area also stocks pre-loved Hunter uniform for families that do not feel comfortable approaching the school.



Travelling to school



We actively encourage walking, cycling or 'parking and striding' to school in order 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/>

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club takes place in the school dinner hall and is open from 8.15am until 8.45am and is free for all. Current breakfast options include Weetabix, toast, water or milk.

Learning at school

While we recognise that some children are given pencil cases as gifts and enjoy bringing them to class, our children are not encouraged to bring their own stationery to school as everything is provided and all the children are therefore the same.

Children at Hunter Primary do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Children have access to all required resources and equipment when at school.

Friendships and attitudes to poverty

As a nurturing school, all of our children are included and our 'Vision, Values and Aims' promote a very positive message where we all must work together to ensure everyone feels happy, healthy and nurtured within our school.

We take part in Challenge Poverty Week each year. This gives us the opportunity to talk about poverty and the impact it can have on families. We are aware of the fact that poverty can form a basis of bullying and our staff are vigilant to this and treat all bullying in the same manner as outlined in our Anti Bullying/Relationships Policy. We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence.



Break time

Children are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to eat for morning break. Children who do not bring a snack will be offered a piece of fruit from the canteen.

School trips

As a school we will actively look at ways to reduce the cost of all educational excursions. Charges will be minimal, ensuring parents/carers are given as much notice to pay monies in advance and/or after the trip takes place.

For the senior Residential trip, we will always give enough notice to ensure that parents/carers can 'pay up' small amounts of money each month. We give 2 years notice, when the child is in the final term of P5. For families where this would be difficult, we will find another way for the child to go on the trip. No child will miss out on the Residential Experience because of money. The Parent Council has made a commitment to paying for the cost of the bus. This removes a transport cost for families.

We are aware that there can be 'hidden costs' to trips and work hard to avoid these where possible. Trips during the school day will normally involve children wearing their school uniform and there should not be a visit to any shop.

At Hunter Primary School we will always 'shop around' before booking any school trip to ensure we get good value for money and where possible have local trips using their free bus pass.

School lunches

We all work better when we are not hungry and our body is fuelled. Children in Primary 1 to 5 in Scotland are entitled to a free school meal. This is paid for by the Scottish Government. Families on low income can apply to South Lanarkshire Council for free school meals for their children in Primaries 6 and 7.



We are aware, however, that there are still families struggling 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.

As with all South Lanarkshire primary schools, our Cook in Charge shares any food that has not been eaten with direction from Education. Any leftover fruit will be used either at lunchtime or collected by the school to use for snacks.

Fun events

At Hunter Primary School we believe fun should be free where possible and not all fun events need to have additional expense. We want to make sure our children do not miss out on fun things so we still take part in special events, for example, each year we will take part in World Book Day but there will be no obligation to dress up as a character. We will celebrate the joy of books with lots of free fun reading activities.

Each year our Parent Council host a Halloween Disco and Spring Fling. At the start of October we will encourage our families to hand in old Halloween costumes that no longer fit and allow our children to swap for a different costume.

We also have a 'swap shop' for Christmas Jumper Day to allow parents to recycle jumpers that no longer fit.

All fun events will be communicated as early as possible at the start of the school session. Any costs will be kept to a minimum.

School clubs

None of our after-school or lunch time clubs have any cost associated with them. This will remain a priority at all times.

Learning at home

We will never give homework that requires our families to use additional resources. We use Google Classroom most days and for families who do not have a computer/laptop, we print materials where possible.

Any parent/carer who does not have a device at home is encouraged to reach out to the school for support/guidance.

Conclusion

We believe all of our children at Hunter Primary should have the same experiences at school and we are determined to make this a reality. Money will never be the reason a child does not achieve or experience all the benefits of their time at Hunter Primary School. Partnership between home and school and the strong relationships we build together are vital for everyone and we believe that when we have open and honest communication everyone succeeds.



Uniform

We have good quality second-hand uniforms available and would encourage all families to make use of these to ensure we are recycling as much as possible. If any child has grown out of their uniform while it is still in good condition, we would be very grateful for the donation.

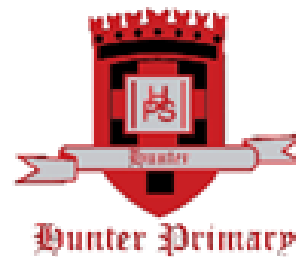
Learning

Children at Hunter Primary do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Children have access to all required resources and equipment when at school including stationery. We will never give homework that requires our families to use additional resources.

School Clubs

None of our school clubs cost any money!

COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY AT HUNTER PRIMARY



Eating

Any left-over food in the dinner hall is given out after everyone has eaten. Any leftover fruit will be used either at lunchtime or collected by the school to use for snacks.

Fun for everyone

We believe fun should be free where possible and not all fun events need to have additional expense. Each year we will take part in World Book Day but there will be no obligation to dress up as a character. We will celebrate the joy of books with lots of free fun reading activities. We also have a 'swap shop' or 'rake and take' for Halloween Discos and Christmas Jumper Day to allow parents to recycle costumes and jumpers that no longer fit.