Cost of the School Day Action Statement 2026-27

Staff at Cedarbank School work hard to ensure that every pupil, regardless of social or financial background, have equal access to the same opportunities as their peers.

We aim to remove any cost barriers to full participation in school life through the following measures.

- **Raising Awareness**

On our 2025-26 school survey, 82% of parents/carers stated they were aware of the cost of the school day and how we work as a school to reduce those costs. Consultation regarding our Pupil Equity Funding, interventions and pupil gaps will be presented to both our school staff team and Parent Council. Consultation with our young people will take place where appropriate.

On Dress Down Days and family fun events contributions are not required, but instead we ask for a voluntary donation of a tin of a food where possible. This raises awareness of need and supplies our 'take what you need, give what you can' trolley that is available for all pupils, staff and visitors to our school.

Communication surrounding Cost of the School Day will be done through newsletters. Our school website will also be regularly updated.

- **Interventions**

Principal Teacher, Kaitlynn Mendenhall, will oversee all interventions through the school year. Interventions will be closely monitored and will be assessed for their impact. These will take place to support our learners both academically and with their health and wellbeing.

Interventions will be put in place to support the gaps within our learning community. These include gender, poverty, barriers to learning, attendance and engagement. Our interventions include the following: Reduce the Cost of the School Day, impacting our Learners who are Hardest to Reach, Employability Skills, Improving the Learner's Confidence, Independence and Self-Regulation and Supporting our Leavers towards their Positive Destinations.

- **Food in School**

Breakfast is available free of charge each morning. This is accessible to all and independence is encouraged through this. All pupils receive free school lunches, snacks and refreshments. In the Senior Phase, pupils have the opportunity, with parental permissions, to attend the Centre during their lunch break. Where required, the school will support families with associated costs to ensure all young people have the opportunity to participate, further developing independence.

We have a strong and positive relationship with our local Morrison's outreach and can help families access this service at any time.

• Learning in school

We provide all the necessary equipment for pupils to learn at school. We do not ask our learners to contribute towards pupils' subject costs, such as in Home Economics. Pupils can be provided with a PE kit if necessary. If required, we provide pupils with the necessary equipment for Outdoor Learning, such as appropriate footwear. For Wider Achievement activities, such as Bikeability we provide pupils with bicycles, including adapted bikes. Young people take part in lessons to develop skills for life and work, including independent living skills. All materials required for this will be supplied for each young person to take part.

• School trips

There are no costs, including transport, for any school trip. Snacks, lunches and refreshments are provided for all pupils on outings. School camp is subsidised for identified pupils using our Pupil Equity Funding.

Participatory Budgeting: The Pupil Council previously decided that the Pupil Equity Funding should be used for subsidy or full payment to any pupil where there is a difficulty in meeting the cost of school camp, thereby ensuring that no pupil misses out on the opportunity to participate.

Additionally, our parent council have secured additional funding to enable all children to attend school camps and attend trips if they wish to do so.

• Fun events

We consider alternative ways to celebrate Fun Events that do not involve parents/carers spending money. We take into account the timing of such events so as not to put additional financial pressure on families. The participation of pupils and their families in Fun Events is monitored to ensure that no one is left out of activities, such as school cafes. We make sure that the costs of significant Fun Events, for instance school leavers' celebrations, do not interfere with any pupil or family being able to take part. There will be a limited number of 'no uniform' days which are not compulsory and do not require contributions. Refreshments for Fun Events, like attending a pantomime, will be provided if required.

• School clubs

All of our lunchtime clubs are free activities. These are developed to promote well-being, independence and friendships.

• Learning at home

Homework, though encouraged, is not compulsory and any that is given must be equitable in accessibility. Staff will be mindful of individual circumstances when setting work. They may choose to issue a pupil with a homework pack. Support clubs will be offered where possible.

• Digital learning

Every young person has access to a learning device in school. Our Digital Learning Strategy is working towards enabling all pupils and their families to have the digital skills required to support learning, while promoting digital wellbeing.

• Personal care

Sanitary products are always available. We make sure that pupils have a supply to cover holidays. Changes of clothes, underwear and access to personal hygiene products are provided if appropriate.

- **Family engagement events**

Refreshments will be provided at all family engagement events. Where possible we try to provide transport to events for those families who need it. For occasions which require resources, for example our family cooking sessions, we will provide materials to those families who require them.

- **Access to financial entitlements and crisis support for families**

All pupils will be given a Young Scot Card and helped to replace it if lost. We make use of local organisations and charities, such as food banks, to help support family life. We work with our families to access supports for identified needs. As part of our Every Day Counts Policy to promote positive school attendance, our attendance interventions team can support with the Education Maintenance Allowance, Independent Living Fund and Child Disability Payment forms. The team can also link families with our partners at Carers of West Lothian.

The following sources help cover the costs of removing the financial barriers to full participation at Cedarbank School: Pupil Equity Funding, Parent/Carer Council contributions and fundraising, external donations, income through the school's charity status and whole-school events. We work closely with social work and partner agencies to ensure pupils who are care experienced have funding for school camp and the necessary equipment. We take due consideration of the number of fundraising and charity activities which are organised throughout the school year.