

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
POVERTY PROOFING STATEMENT

October 2025

Balbardie Primary School and Enhanced Resource Base



The cost of the school day

For many families, the cost of the school day can be a barrier to engagement. At Balbardie Primary School we dedicate ourselves to knowing our context and families well. We take every step to remove financial barriers for our community. As a staff team, we engage in meaningful professional learning to help raise awareness of poverty, how it impacts on our children and families as well as exploring strategies to help alleviate the financial cost of the school day.

Uniform

Universal

Uniform is an important sign of belonging. It is also an element of school life that can be a visible sign that families are struggling financially. At Balbardie Primary School, our school uniform consists of items that are easy to source. School uniform consists of a maroon sweatshirt, white shirt and school tie. Pupils can also wear a white/yellow polo-shirt. In order to support our families, we use some of our devolved school budget to buy a stock of school uniform items to have in the school office.

Targeted

Our Parent Council Team oversee a re-use/recycle school uniform initiative (Platform 9¾) for collection on the last Friday of the month. Parents and carers are welcome to help themselves to items on display at no additional cost. As well as this uniform samples are displayed at all parental engagement events to enable families to view and select items free of charge. The Parent Council Team have also suggested a digital forum to enable parents to discreetly request uniform. This digital forum will go live prior to Christmas

We also utilise our local community partners to support families access uniform. We can support families in making referrals to the School Bank Organisation as well as River Kids.

Travel

Universal

Our school serves the community of Bathgate. Many of our children live within walking distance of the school. Where possible, clubs and activities take place in school which removes the financial effects of travel. Staff and Senior Leaders consider all travel cost implications when planning activities out with school. When activities take place away from school, money from devolved budget, PEF or school fund is used to help subsidise or to reduce the cost of transport.

Targeted

We have very good partnership working with families. Where staff are concerned that a child may not be able to pay travel costs, we work discreetly with the family to explore options to help reduce or subsidise the cost.

Resources

Universal

School budget is allocated to the ongoing purchase of learning materials for children to use. Stationary, reading materials, digital devices, concrete learning materials, play materials and outdoor learning materials are available to all classes.

Targeted

Additional teaching resources are targeted at learners whose learning is off track. These resources include Support for Learning staff and adapted learning materials. Allocation of targeted support is managed through ongoing Excellence and Equity reviews as well as Individualised Education Plans and Child's Plans.

Our Parent Council Team support with the purchase of specific resources to support learning, for example, den building equipment. As well as this we spend part of our school funds to purchase specific resources.

This year we have applied part of our PEF budget to purchase assessment materials, specifically Dyslexia Screening toolkits and Communication Aid Resources to support pupils in the Enhanced Learning Resource.

Outings

Universal

We see outings as an integral part of learning and every effort is made to look for opportunities for children to work offsite. We apply our pupil equity funding to ensure that the children enjoy a free whole school excursion. This year the pupils voted to attend the Christmas Pantomime performance at The Regal Theatre.

School budget is used to reduce the cost of additional class outings and the Pupil Equity Funding/School Funds Account is used to reduce the cost of travel.

Targeted

Knowing our families well enables school staff to talk to parents and carers in order to provide targeted financial support to meet the cost of outings. Where staff have recognised particular families who are suffering from the effects of poverty, bespoke approaches are applied to support/part fund outings.

Eating

Universal

We operate a cashless catering system in school including Breakfast Club and lunch provision. This helps ensure there is less stigma attached to pupils eligible for free school meals. Breakfast club is heavily promoted to all new pupils and families within our school. We regularly have links for FSM and milk applications in our newsletters.

Targeted

Snack bags have been created and are available for children if they are hungry at morning break. Teaching and support staff are able to highlight any pupils who may be suffering from the impacts of hidden poverty. Staff are careful to ensure these pupils have access to snacks/lunches.

Clubs

Universal

We offer a range of clubs which enhance the learning opportunities for our children. Clubs are run in the school building before the school day, during lunch break and at the end of the school day. All school clubs are free for pupils to join and the necessary resources/materials needed provided to children at no extra fee. The Pupil Equity Fund is applied to cover the cost of clubs. Pupil voice activities are implemented to ensure that our learners have an opportunity to articulate the types of clubs they would be interested in joining.

School budget is used to reduce the cost of clubs when an external supplier is involved. Clubs run by staff are free and materials are provided by the school.

Targeted

Knowing our families well enables school staff to talk to parents and carers in order to provide targeted financial support to meet the cost of clubs.

Events

Universal

Careful consideration is given to the impact of school events on families. Charity events take place in school, including dressing up days, and children can bring a charitable donation but they do not have to do this. Where possible, funds raised by Parent Council events are used to support access to events for our children. Events are planned to take place across the school year to reduce the impact on families and information is shared in advance to give families time to prepare. Entry costs for events are by donation only.

Targeted

Where financial implications become a barrier to children accessing events, Pupil Equity Funding or school funds are used to support individual pupils and families.

Attitudes Towards Poverty

Universal

At Balbardie PS, staff have very positive relationships with children, families and community partners. We work in collaboration with local community groups, for example, the Adult Learning Team and River Kids. Within session 2025/26 the Senior Leadership Team are engaged with West Lothian Council's Equity Team to help ensure that our school staff are aware of the impacts of poverty and are applying the very best opportunities for our children and families.

Targeted

We promote a range of multi-agency partnerships to help ensure effective targeted support is provided to families in a timely manner.