

SCHOOLS TAKING ACTION ON... RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Families in Scotland are under increasing financial pressure, with almost one in four children officially recognised as living in poverty. This figure is forecast to rise in coming years, which means that more families will struggle to meet the costs associated with sending children to school.

We know that children from low income families often encounter barriers to participating fully at school, making it harder for them to learn, achieve and be happy.

But there are things we can all do to make a difference.

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland asked schools what they are doing to address the financial barriers to learning for children from families on low incomes, and nearly 200 schools responded with lots of great ideas and practice. Here you'll find some examples of how schools are helping to reduce school costs and poverty related stigma. These changes are often low cost or at no cost to schools, but they can make a huge difference to children, young people and their families.

Every school is different, and while some of the ideas you'll find here might work for your school, some might not. However you should find plenty to think about if your school is just starting to think about making Cost of the School Day changes, or if you are ready to enhance what you are already doing.

**CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP**
IN SCOTLAND

RESOURCES FOR LEARNING AT SCHOOL AND AT HOME

The cost of learning, both in school and at home, can really mount up. These costs can crop up throughout the school year and include anything from stationery and calculators, text books, past papers and study guides for exam study, IT for homework, to curriculum costs such as cooking ingredients or materials for design and technology or art supplies.

Children have the embarrassment of us saying 'do you have your money? You can't cook today'. Course fees are just really unfair. It's not a free curriculum.

TEACHER

The cost of learning has been identified as a barrier for children and young people whose families are struggling financially, and can make a significant difference to the learning experience.

It's difficult in any subject that requires an essay - all the teachers ask for it to be emailed to them, they don't like getting it in paper form. One teacher wouldn't accept my homework 'cause it was handwritten.

PUPIL S5

Any child or young person who can't pay the curriculum costs for Design and Technology, doesn't have the right stationery for class, can't afford study guides, has no IT to complete their homework, maybe even just doesn't have access to pens and pencils can feel isolated and unhappy, and find studying difficult or impossible. If we want to help our children and young people to learn and achieve, then it's essential that they have what they need to learn.

There are things we can do to take the stress off children and their families. Schools who have taken steps to change have also reported how worthwhile this can be for children and their families:

- ✓ **Reduced parental stress helps to build stronger home-school relationships**
- ✓ **Reduced difference and stigma leading to happier children and young people**
- ✓ **Increased sense of belonging to school community**
- ✓ **Increased participation and learning for children and young people**

It's very much for our children and our families to feel included, part of the school. We don't want additional pressures for families. We don't want additional pressures for children where you're setting something you could access at home but actually they can't do that. I think it's about being inclusive and that anything we're offering we can back it up and support families.

NETHERBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL, SOUTH LANARKSH



From our survey results several themes and approaches crop up regularly. If you use them as a starting point they may help generate more ideas for you to use in your school:

- ✓ **Providing all resources or equipment free**
- ✓ **Providing basic or selected resources**
- ✓ **Offering resources for learning at home**
- ✓ **Reducing or removing curriculum costs**
- ✓ **IT access or lending schemes**
- ✓ **Homework clubs and supported study**
- ✓ **Offering additional resources for learning**

PROVIDING ALL RESOURCES OR EQUIPMENT FREE

Many schools told us that they provide all resources for learning. Universal provision of resources is stigma free, and helps all children to feel included and welcomed to learn.

You'll find more information about how schools have funded this towards the end of this document.

No expectation that pupils bring materials to school.

LOCHSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
ANGUS

School provides all resources children need for learning. There is no expectation for parents to buy anything.

COWDENBEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL,
FIFE

Our school supplies all children with the implements they need to learn, for example - pens, pencils, rubbers, rulers, jotters, etc.

NEWARK PRIMARY SCHOOL,
INVERCLYDE

Pupils are issued with all items they need for learning and are not required to purchase books, jotters, pens and pencils or other stationary needed in class.

SMITHYCROFT SECONDARY SCHOOL,
GLASGOW

All materials that pupils require in school are supplied by the school. Children are not required to bring anything in from home.

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, DUNDEE

The school provides every pupil with all their class resources. We encourage them to look after things but it is all available for them.

NEWINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL,
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

We've got everything we need in all the classrooms, like rubbers, pencils, pens, whiteboards, scissors, calculators, glue sticks, whiteboard pens, paper, all the things to help us with our learning...

PUPIL, MILLER PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW

Families have been reminded that school resources are paid for by the school and are encouraged not to buy them.

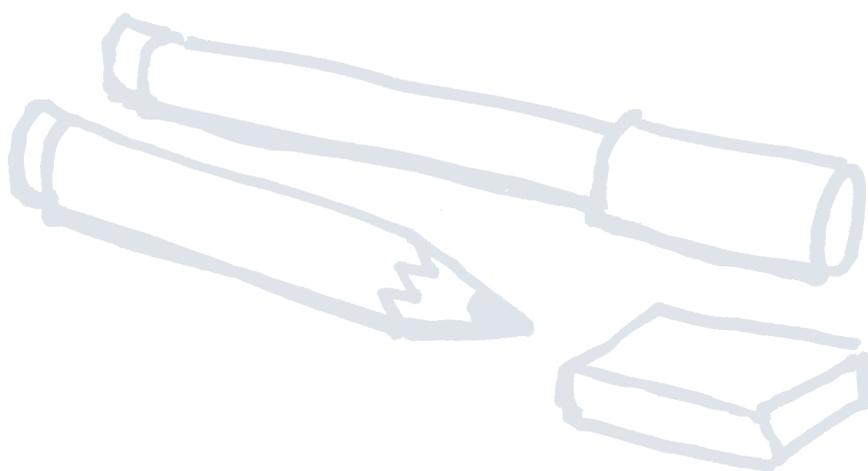
STENHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
CITY OF EDINBURGH

All equipment and materials are provided by the school. There are no charges for materials or cooking ingredients.

DRUMLANRIG ST CUTHBERT'S PRIMARY
SCHOOL, SCOTTISH BORDERS

All resources provided free for children, including any needed for homework.

PIRIE PARK PRIMARY,
GLASGOW



PROVIDING BASIC OR SELECTED RESOURCES

Some schools have identified a selection of items needed by pupils, or provided a 'welcome to the school' type of resource for young people going into S1.

At transition from primary to S1, all young people coming into the school are provided with a learning pack, which includes pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc. It also includes a school organiser.

GREENFAULDS HIGH SCHOOL,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE

We provided all S1 pupils with a calculator. Provide all pupils with free homework diary, pencils, pens, etc.

TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE

Equipment such as pens, pencils, calculators and so on, are provided for use in class by teachers. If a pupil requires a piece of equipment this can be discussed with Principal Teacher Pupil Support and Pupil Equity Worker to see if the school can provide the equipment from the Hardship Fund.

LOCKERBIE ACADEMY, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Staff raise funds to support pupils with curricular items such as past paper materials, scientific calculators or anything to help them achieve their personal best.

QUEEN ANNE HIGH SCHOOL,
FIFE

Equity in Maths essential equipment provided: scientific calculators, pencils, rubbers, rulers.

CARDINAL NEWMAN HIGH SCHOOL, NORTH
LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Pencils provided where required. We offer a wide variety and quantity of study and revision books available to borrow from school library. Homework diaries are provided.

ARBROATH ACADEMY, ANGUS

Approaching costs in this way allows schools to target help where it's particularly needed but it's important to consider how to do this without stigmatising those receiving the resources you are offering.

RESOURCES FOR LEARNING AT HOME

While many home learning tasks don't cost anything, homework which involves using IT or craft materials can be a problem for those on lower incomes. Many schools are mindful of what they are asking families to provide out of school, remembering that not all children have access to items like glue, scissors and stationery at home. We'll take a look at IT access later.

If there is a homework task over a few weeks, the children are asked to identify the resources they need and we provide them.

APPLEGROVE PRIMARY,
MORAY

Packs of resources available for pupils to use at home, for example scissors, glue, etc.

ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY,
INVERCLYDE

We give out materials to take home for topic projects.

NEWINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL,
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY



REDUCING OR REMOVING CURRICULUM COSTS

We didn't want there to be any financial constraints on pupils, especially on families when they were making choices in the senior stages of the school. And we were aware that there was quite a wide range of pricing that happens across schools. The curriculum costs might seem a bit hidden, just the 50p a week or £1 a fortnight. But that can be quite a challenge for some.

LOCKERBIE ACADEMY, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Schools have approached curriculum costs in a range of ways, drawing funding from a variety of sources. As it can mean the difference for some young people of being able to study a subject, many schools are keen to deal with this issue, choosing to allocate available funds to cover the cost for pupils.

Subsidised costs for Home Economics and Technical. Children not prevented from participating if they do not pay.

ARBROATH ACADEMY, ANGUS

Costs suspended for all pupils in receipt of Free School Meals in S1-3 in Home Economics and Technical. All pupils in S1-3 in SIMD 1-3 given free materials for Maths.

DENNY HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK

Equity in Home Economics - no donation required in BGE.

CARDINAL NEWMAN HIGH SCHOOL, NORTH LANARKSHIRE

Courses have been reviewed in an attempt to minimise costs by removing more expensive consumables. We no longer charge for BGE Art classes and have reduced charges for Technical and Home Economics. In addition we have paid subject charges for students where there is financial hardship or where the cost is seen as a significant barrier to progress. Throughout the school departments are encouraged to have sufficient resources to include all learners.

KEITH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MORAY

Pupils receiving FME and in SIMD 1 and 2 areas did not pay Home Economics subject charges and costs for staff taking study support classes for SIMD 1 and 2 and FME pupils was also paid .

BALWEARIE HIGH SCHOOL, FIFE

IT ACCESS OR LENDING

Now that homework can be put on Glow blogs and school websites, or children can be asked to access educational games online, do online research or write essays on computer, many schools have also worked out ways of helping those who don't have computer access at home.

There's just an assumption that children have everything. You might have a computer but not a printer... or a printer but not broadband.

PARENT

IPads available for use to study and to access past papers.

ROSSHALL ACADEMY,
GLASGOW

ICT equipment available for use during homework clubs.

CLARKSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE

Laptop loan to targeted pupils. Use of SIMD data and FSME to target pupils in need.

CARDINAL NEWMAN HIGH SCHOOL,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE

For children who need access to technology to complete tasks at home, they are given access to school computers and technology during breaktimes and after school so that they are not disadvantaged in any way.

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, DUNDEE

IT lending schemes or time set aside in the school day for that kind of homework task are two ways in which schools are helping those with no IT access.

We have continued to develop digital learning platforms that can be accessed by the majority of our young people and their families, however we still retain the need for paper and hard copies of materials for anyone what has limited IT resource.

OUR LADY AND ST PATRICK'S HIGH SCHOOL,
WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

If homework relies on access to a computer programme, we provide time within the school day for the children who say they cannot access at home.

APPLEGROVE PRIMARY, MORAY

Ipads for specific interventions, for example, IDL where not having access to an iPad is a barrier.

ST SERF'S PRIMARY,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE

HOMEWORK CLUBS AND SUPPORTED STUDY

Homework clubs provide a space with resources and support for learning on hand for pupils who might have more limited opportunities to study at home.

A homework club at lunch time allows children access to computers and the internet. Support is also provided by teachers.

DRUMLANRIG ST CUTHBERT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL,
SCOTTISH BORDERS

We provide study guides and revision books at supported study. iPads are available for use to study and access past papers. Learning centre available after school with teacher to support learning if needed. Saturday school provision every week.

ROSSHALL ACADEMY, GLASGOW

Homework club in operation to support resources and parent capacity. ICT equipment available for use during homework clubs.

CLARKSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL,
NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

A homework club runs for children in P4-7 offering them access to materials that they might need.

STENHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
CITY OF EDINBURGH

We run a free family homework club every week.

MILLER PRIMARY SCHOOL,
GLASGOW

Some schools recognise that additional transport costs can stop young people attending supported study and cover them to encourage participation.

Easter school and summer school are funded by ourselves at no cost to pupils. Supported study is provided free of charge every week. After school clubs are free and transport costs are provided if needed.

CLYDE VALLEY HIGH, NORTH LANARKSHIRE

Free travel home for pupils after attending after school clubs and supported study.

DENNY HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

Extra resources for learning can make a big difference to those who are struggling to provide them at home.

Free books and games lending library for everyone to give families access to additional learning.

PIRIE PARK PRIMARY, GLASGOW

We organise a fun with literacy and play along maths programme every year. Parents and children take bags of resources with literacy and numeracy resources home to encourage learning at home and in nursery.

FASQUE FAMILY CENTRE, GLASGOW

Ensuring that reading books and basic materials are always in school to encourage maximum participation. The school provided a maths support book for parents to use at home to help up-skill adults to support their child.

ST SERF'S PRIMARY, NORTH LANARKSHIRE

Last session a group of parents took part in participatory budgeting to make decisions about reducing the cost of the school day, and one of the actions agreed was to give children two books each from the book club to promote reading at home.

MILLER PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW

HOW ARE INTERVENTIONS PAID FOR?

Schools who have already made changes told us about the different ways they've approached funding.

School level:

- ✓ School Fund
- ✓ School based fundraising

Local level:

- ✓ Local grants
- ✓ Council grants

National Level:

- ✓ Pupil Equity Funding
- ✓ Scottish Attainment Challenge
- ✓ LAC Attainment Fund
- ✓ National grants

To buy the IT equipment we used some of our Pupil Equity Funding, we also got a grant from the Scottish Government. Some of our older iPads and Chrome books had been bought through our school fund and the parent council. So we have quite a stock of items now, and from a variety of different sources.

NETHERBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL, SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

All resources for children are purchased from the school budget - children do not need to bring any resources.

MOUNT VERNON PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW

Costs of Home Economics and CDT are paid for from the PEF for those having difficulty paying.

ST PAUL'S RC ACADEMY, DUNDEE

All departments have had additional school funding over the last few years to maintain provision of learning resources. In 2018 an additional £100 per department was allocated from PEF funding to create a bank of subject resources for use in the school's Learning Hub, that we are developing for those pupils who are not in mainstream classes for a period of time.

ST ANDREW'S RC HIGH SCHOOL, FIFE



We set up Queen Anne High School Pupil Universal Fund - this is a fund to target pupils in SIMD 1&2 and FME pupils and/or pupils who may be experiencing a significant shift in family circumstances. Staff raise funds to support pupils with curricular items such as past paper materials, scientific calculators or anything that could help them achieve their personal best.

QUEEN ANNE HIGH SCHOOL, FIFE

We have used PEF funding for literacy and numeracy resources to support raising attainment. Parent Council application for grant funding to support learning and improve resources. We've made an RRS/Global Group (pupils and staff) application to lottery funding and Tesco funding to improve playground and external learning environment for play.

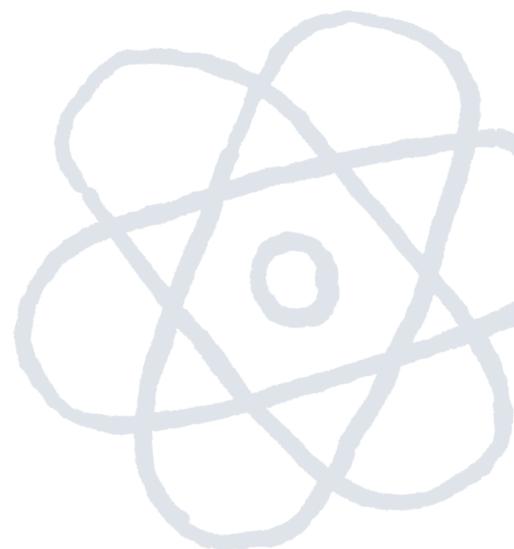
ST MARY'S PRIMARY, WEST DUMBARTONSHIRE

If a pupil requires a piece of equipment this can be discussed with Principal Teacher Pupil Support and Pupil Equity Worker to see if the school can provide the equipment from the Hardship Fund.

LOCKERBIE ACADEMY,
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Glasgow City Council give us a budget every year, and then it's what we want to spend the budget on, and I prioritise making sure that every child has what they need for a school day without a cost to parents.

MILLER PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW



A FEW MORE THOUGHTS...

You need pencils but you can borrow them but they always moan.
PUPIL

Some classes don't give you pencils - teachers say 'they're not expensive you've got technology so you can afford it'.
PUPIL

- ✓ Does your school have a policy on lending or providing resources, and is it applied consistently?
- ✓ Are children who are unable to pay costs, or don't always have the correct equipment treated consistently and with understanding?
- ✓ If there is a need for resources which can't be paid for by the school, can parents be given sufficient notice, so that they have the option of budgeting for the expense?

We've discussed a lot of different types of costs in this document, from pens and pencils to curriculum costs. There might be a lot to take into account when coming up with an action plan to reduce the cost of learning but reported benefits around increased participation in learning and reduced difference and stigma mean that changes in this area can make a big difference for children and young people.

I actually think, if you enjoy something, then I don't think you should have to pay for it if you're going to school. That you should just be able to take it if you enjoy it. And as well if like people can't afford it and they want to be a baker and stuff when they're older, they might not be able to take classes like this.
PUPIL, LOCKERBIE ACADEMY, DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Improved health and well-being, improved engagement and raised attainment.
COWDENBEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL, FIFE

More information and resources to help school communities explore financial issues and barriers and take action to resolve them can be found at cpag.org.uk/Scotland/CoSD and you'll find our Cost of the School Day toolkit at cpag.org.uk/scotland/cost-school-day/toolkit.

If your school has already made changes that you would like to tell us about please get in touch!

You can complete the Cost of the School Day Practice Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WTD3NDF> or get in touch with the team at costoftheschoolday@cpagscotland.org.uk



CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP IN SCOTLAND

Unit 9 Ladywell Business Centre
94 Duke Street
Glasgow
G4 0UW

tel 0141 552 3303

email staff@cpagscotland.org.uk
costoftheschoolday@cpagscotland.org.uk

web cpag.org.uk/scotland

ADVICE LINE

Free, independent, expert and up-to-date advice on benefits and tax credits for frontline advisers and support workers in Scotland

PHONE

0141 552 0552 Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm and Friday 10am to 12 noon

EMAIL

advice@cpagscotland.org.uk

FOLLOW CPAG IN SCOTLAND ON TWITTER ON @CPAGSCOTLAND

Sign up to get our ebulletins and monthly news at
www.cpag.org.uk/signup/scotland

**CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP**
IN SCOTLAND