

WL Cost of the School Day Action Statement 2025/26

Statement of action to address the cost of St Thomas' Primary School's school day



All of our staff are aware of the effects of poverty and how it pertains to the context of our school, community and children. We are committed to ensuring that we offer an equitable and accessible curriculum for all of our learners and have consulted with parents and carers as to how we can be proactive in minimising the cost of the school day.



In line with the UNCRC, our Cost of the School Day Action Plan ensures that we are fully compliant with the following articles.

Article 2 (non-discrimination)

The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Article 3 (best interests of the child)

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 24 (health and health services)

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean

environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 26 (social security)

Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

Article 28 (right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline

in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29 (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

We currently have the following measures in place which help our families with school costs and make sure that our children can participate and learn.

Financial Calendar: We provide our families with a copy of the financial calendar for the year ahead. This provides information about the different events that are happening throughout the year where there might be an additional cost to families. In cases where meeting these additional costs are difficult for families, we find ways of helping to reduce or completely eliminate the costs.

Uniform: We carefully consider our uniform supplier each year to ensure that we are providing low cost/durable uniform at a good price for our families. Uniforms can be ordered through the school (forms go out in May) or online, and we also hold a small stock in school. We have a good selection of 'new to you' uniform items which are available to families at all times (please speak to any member of staff if you require anything). We can provide support for families who wish to apply for a clothing grant - <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/mealsandclothing>, or we can refer you to the School Bank West Lothian.

Family Support: All families receive regular communication about free events in the community. We have an STPS Cost of the School Day and Community Support Information Sway this signposts families to groups which can support them. We work with various community groups, such as the Addiewell Regeneration Group to enable families to have access to free seasonal items e.g. Christmas Presents, throughout the year. We are able to refer families to St Vincent Di Paul for financial aid towards the cost of the school camp. We can provide support for families who wish to apply for a clothing grant - <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/mealsandclothing>, or we can refer you to the School Bank West Lothian. We can make referrals for families through the 'The FORT system', the 'Clothes Bank' and the 'Food Bank'.

Travel: We have no children who require bus transportation to get to school each day.

Resources: We stock each classroom with a full range of stationary items at the start of the school year to ensure that no child is disadvantaged. We also provide free access to our school supply of stationary resources so that staff can access these when they need them, in order to meet the needs of the children in their class. There is no requirement for children to bring their own resources to school.

Trips: We organise a wide variety of experiences for our children throughout the year. We use school funds to reduce the cost of bus transportation for school trips.

Eating: We provide a free breakfast club each morning. All children in P1-5 receive free school lunches each day. Our 'cashless' lunch system ensures that there is no stigma for any child in P6&P7 who receives free school meals. We always have a supply of healthy snacks and food available for children. The children are provided with a drink of water or milk (if they are entitled to free milk or if parents have chosen to order it for them). Please *note – Even though all Primary 1-5 pupils automatically receive school meals, it is very important to still apply for this if you are eligible. Having Free School Meals and a School Clothing Grant automatically entitles you to additional supports such as a winter clothing payment, school meal payment during the holidays and riding payments.*

Clubs: We are currently planning to provide every child with the opportunity to attend a before / after or lunchtime school club as part of our wider curriculum. All clubs will be free to attend. We monitor our quintile 1 children's participation in these clubs to ensure that they are accessing and enjoying them.

Homework: We do not have mandatory homework in St Thomas'. However, during our Family Learning Events, we provide our families with information and advice on how they can support and enhance their child's learning experiences at home.

Ethos and Life of the School: We organise fun events in the school like; Easter Egg Hunts, Summer Water fun afternoons etc. These are all free of charge. We hold dress down days at the end of each month, where children have the opportunity (without obligation) to bring a small donation to help raise school funds.

Outdoor Learning Experiences: All children have the opportunity to take part in regular outdoor learning sessions in the woodland meadow at the back of our school. These are planned for by the teachers. Throughout the school year we have other opportunities for outdoor experiences by, for example, helping in the community garden, and working with community groups like the Wee Forest Group and Kids Gone Wild. These groups involve the school in improving the green areas of our community.

Friendship: Uniform is promoted to negate any peer pressure for branded and fashion clothing. While there is a device policy in school, all pupils have access to digital technology in school. We provide nurture support for social skill development, deploying support staff to support individual needs when required.

Attitudes towards poverty: We work closely with the West Lothian Excellence and Equity Team to ensure we are acting on the most up to date guidance regarding equity for all of our children. We are constantly exploring the issues surrounding poverty through our Cost of the School Day Action Plan and Pupil Participatory Budget Model. Learner voice is an intrinsic part of our curriculum where they discuss and take action on

certain topics including the United Nations Rights of the Child, ECO issues and make decisions about the spending of the Pupil Participatory Budget.

Staff Team: Staff have a good awareness and knowledge and understanding of the children and families in our school. Our staff are provided with regular training opportunities to further develop their understanding of the issues surrounding poverty. Our staff are committed to helping reduce the cost of the school day and to narrow the poverty related attainment gap. We are mindful of this when planning learning experiences and aim to mitigate costs to parents where possible.

If you have any questions regarding this action statement, please speak to any member of staff.