**Our Lady of Lourdes**

**‘Cost of the School Day’ Position Statement**

At Our Lady of Lourdes we recognise the need to reduce the Cost of the School Day for all our pupils and particularly for our pupils who are already experiencing poverty. We examine the School Day through the following headings; Uniform, Travel, Learning, Friendship, School trips, Eating, Fun, Clubs and Home learning.

**Uniform** – Our current uniform is a navy skirt or pinafore/navy trousers, navy jumper or cardigan, blue shirt and school tie. The school blazer is an optional. Families can purchase uniforms from **www.logoxpres-schoolwear.co.uk**. Ties and badges are also available from the school office. On PE days, the children were school poloshirts. Next session we intend to update our practice by consultation with our stakeholders.

**Travel** – The majority of our children travel to school by car. Transport is also provided by the Local Authority for children who have a bus place. We are aware that this could mean many children are not able to attend after school clubs and we therefore ensure that we have lunch time activities as well as after school.

**Learning** – Children at Our Lady of Lourdes do not need to pay for any core learning activity. Pens and pencils are provided and young people do not need to bring their own equipment. We will look at putting in place a procedure for young people to borrow equipment if they need it for homework (e.g a calculator). Young people in receipt of Free School Meals do not need to pay for core curriculum. This will be addressed further in our consultation.

**Friendships** -We ensure that any pupil experiencing poverty-related bullying has a way of reporting this in confidence. We do teach young people about poverty related issues as part of Numeracy and Maths eg Finance Education as well as Health and Wellbeing eg Anti-Bullying programme etc. We intend to gather the views of our young people and families on the Cost of the School Day and involve them in decision making around this.

**School Trips** -Currently our summer trips are planned each year in consultation with our pupils. Whilst the actual average cost of these trips for pupils is £12, we try to reduce the cost each year and charge the parents £8 through using funding from the PTA to subsidize trips. We do have a policy for families with 3 or more children where the total amount payable for summer trips should not exceed £20. Children are asked not to bring an

**Eating at School** –Currently we have 14% of our pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals. We are aware that there may be a stigma associated with a free lunch and we try to reduce this by having a list of chn in receipt of FME rather than asking the children to identify themselves. We estimate that approximately 50% of P4-7 pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals take up their entitlement. In order to increase that percentage we intend to consult with families.

**Fun Events** –Our Lady of Lourdes recognise that events planned for enjoyment can actually put added pressure on to families. We intend to look carefully at attendance and participation in these events in order to see if there are any poverty-related patterns that require action. As with school trips, our Fun Events are planned in advance and appropriate notice given. When young people cannot afford to take part in any activity we ensure they can still experience it by either waving the cost or by finding an alternative means of payment. We currently fund raise through our Active Health Day and understand that not all families are able to contribute so, through the PTA, we also arrange several activities with the community eg Summer Fayre so that we are not solely targeting our own school’s families. In addition, we work with the local community who are very generous with their time and gifts eg free fruit to support our Sports’ Day.

**School Clubs** - At Our Lady of Lourdes, we have a wide range of weekly after school clubs (eg Netball, Badminton, Football, Athletics, Recorder, Choir, Website) as well as blocks of lunchtime clubs (eg Multisports, Irish Dancing etc). There is no charge for any of the pupils taking part. Some clubs may require specific equipment eg badminton racquet, football boots, and we do what we can to help families who may not be able to afford these by providing as much of the school equipment as possible as well as having our own school tracksuits, shorts and t-shirts, raquets etc.

**Home Learning** - We try to reduce the cost of learning at home as much as possible by setting tasks that can be carried out in a range of ways eg instead of looking up the internet, children can visit the library or have information books sent home etc. We endeavour to only set tasks that can be completed in a range of ways so that *all* pupils can carry them out no matter their family circumstances.

We are very clear that the Cost of the School Day is an area that requires constant vigilance and will not be ‘fixed’ by any one action. In our Improvement Plan for 2019/20 we will be focusing on taking this important issue forward to continue with what is going well and to improve our practice in any areas we can.

*This statement will be updated by June 2020.*