

Cost of School Day Statement 2024-25



Armadale Academy is committed to delivering both *Excellence and Equity* for our young people and their families. Our staff recognise the clear link between family socio-economic circumstances, educational opportunity and related attainment and achievement. We are proactive in identifying ways to reduce the cost of the school day for all students and we actively promote our school values of 'Equity', 'Respect' and 'Community' to create an inclusive environment which mitigates against the impact of poverty.

School Uniform and Agreed dress Code

Our school uniform can be bought in a number of high street or online stores. Young people were involved in the development of an 'agreed dress code' which includes:

- A white or black shirt with Armadale Academy tie
- Black, grey or purple sweatshirt or cardigan (no logo, other than 'Armadale Academy')
- Black school trousers/skirt
- Black shoes or trainers
- Plain Black Blazer (optional)

School ties and blazers can be purchased through our school office and BE Uniforms.

This session we bought all new S1 students a tie and PE top for starting Armadale Academy.

We have a bank of uniform that has been either donated by students or bought by the school. Our Student Support team works closely with families who are impacted by poverty to ensure that school uniform is not a barrier to attending or achieving in school. In addition, we use the information we support families to access the Clothing Grant Allowance and promote the West Lothian Clothing Bank. PE kit is available when necessary.

We will review our uniform in 2024-25 to ensure we are in line with new legislation from the Scottish Government.

Learning and Our Curriculum

We utilise funding allocated from Scottish Government to ensure that no contributions are asked for from families for practical subjects such as CDT and HE to ensure all young people have full access to the school curriculum.

We are committed to addressing digital exclusion and last session pilot one-to-one devices with an S1 class.

Study Support is available across all curriculum areas and sessions are free for all students. Where necessary, students who require transport home can access additional bus funding to support them to access study support. Easter Study Support is also offered at no additional cost. Again, where necessary, students can access transport costs to attend where this would be a barrier, or be supported to apply for a Young Scot card.

Targeted young people and families are offered Holiday Clubs during the Easter and Summer holidays. These opportunities are designed to develop, maintain and sustain positive working relationships with families.

All new S1 students are provided with a welcome pack of stationery as part of their introduction to Secondary school. Senior students have also been given a study pack prior to their SQA exams to ensure all young people have access to items necessary to studying successfully.

Transportation

Our catchment area includes students who walk to school, as well as those who are entitled to free access to travel. We support all young people to apply for Young Scot cards in order to access free bus travel.

Transport is provided for S4-6 students who attend West Lothian College as part of their studies.



In addition, we provide funded transport for students who are accessing bespoke interventions as part of their wider educational package. This is usually arranged through the Child's Planning Meeting (CPM) process. We also utilise the wider School Fund and PEF to fund a school minibus to support some bespoke interventions.

Trips

Whole school approval is only given to trips which have reasonable costs attached. Trips are planned in advance with a clear payment schedule spread over time.

We strongly encourage staff offering curricular trips to target specific students who are impacted by poverty and/or other adversity and access support through the Pupil Equity Fund. We manage these situations both sensitively and in the spirit of partnership with parents/carers.

Where attendance on a trips is universal, eg for a curricular experience, staff should have an awareness of young people who may be impacted by poverty and are therefore able to identify young people who may have financial barriers to attending. Teachers are expected to monitor any young person not signing up and Principal Teachers Curriculum and Student Support will then co-ordinate assistance to families where appropriate.

Parents should be encouraged to contact the school if there is a financial barrier, this will be handled sensitively.

Meeting Basic Need – Provision of Food

Our school canteen offers a range of healthy and low cost snacks and meals throughout the school day. We will ensure no child is ever hungry and have a discreet system in place to support young people who require this.

The cashless catering system ensures students who are in receipt of Free School Meal Entitlement are not identified, thus removing any associated stigma and promoting uptake. Food is available at breakfast, interval and lunch for FME students.

We work closely with local community partners to support families. The school will provide signposting to partners who could provide assistance to families in need. We also have an open door policy for organisations who wish to offer further support.

Clubs

All extra-curricular clubs at lunchtime and after school are free for all students.

Homework

All students have universal access to Microsoft Teams as a digital platform. ICT facilities are available at break/lunchtimes and at the end of the school day through the school library and achievement classrooms.

Events

Dress down days are now limited and any financial contribution is voluntary. Students identify which charities the school will support through events like this on an annual basis, or when specific incidents occur eg earthquakes.

Students plan additional events which raise funds for school projects and charities. Participation and financial contribution remains voluntary.

Actions for session 2024/25

- Mrs J McGee will instigate a short life working group to lead work on Cost of the School Day (COTSD), including a review of school uniform. Staff, parents, carers and students will be invited to join.
- Continue to support parents and students to apply for Young Scot card through PSE.
- Continue to monitor and review trips, excursions and extra-curricular activities to ensure equity of access.
- Greater consideration of equity and expanding support for school events such as the S6 prom.
- Further consultation with parents/carers around how we can support with the current cost of living crisis.
- Increase publicity of different support available through school communication channels.
- Continue to raise awareness of COTSD with whole school community - staff, students and parents/carers