

E: Craig.Flunkert@gov.scot

Sent to:
Local Authority Directors of Education
Local Authority Directors of Finance
Local Authority Chief Executives

Cc: COSLA
ADES

May 2025

Guidance on the Removal of Core Curriculum Charges

In 2021 Scottish Ministers and COSLA reached an agreement to end charges sometimes levied on pupils in public primary and secondary schools for participation in core curriculum subjects.

The Scottish Government and COSLA continue to support the removal of core curriculum costs for all public primary and secondary pupils. This maintains the position that families do not have to meet the costs of resources and materials for practical lessons, and also removes cost as a factor when pupils are making choices about their education.

The scope of this policy includes:

- Class based activity within the 8 core curriculum areas in the broad general education in public primary and secondary schools, as well as interdisciplinary learning activities being delivered as part of the core curriculum, for example in relation to Learning for Sustainability.
- Activity associated with preparation for courses or qualifications which form part of a public school's 'core offer' in the senior phase, for example SQA qualifications or Foundation Apprenticeships.

Local authorities requested clarification on the purpose and scope of this policy. This has resulted in the publication of joint Scottish Government/COSLA non-statutory guidance which is available at [Education - core curriculum charges removal: guidance - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/education/core-curriculum-charges-removal-guidance). The guidance also signposts further support to schools as required.

This guidance does not signal any changes to the existing policy, but aims to build on the guidance in the initial circular for local authorities which was issued on the introduction of this policy.

The Scottish Government proposes to review this guidance after one year to ensure it remains fit for purpose. If you have any issues or comments regarding the implementation please do let us know via the following email address: Liam.Gemmell@gov.scot

The Scottish Government appreciates local authorities/ efforts to ensure our schools are as accessible as possible for young people whatever their home circumstances, and that no young person has to decide what to study based on ability to pay, rather than on their ability and interest in the subject.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Flunkert

Craig Flunkert
Unit Head
Curriculum Unit 2
Curriculum and Qualifications Division / Directorate for Education Reform

