

Poverty Proofing the School Day Report and Action Plan

Moorside Primary School
November 2022

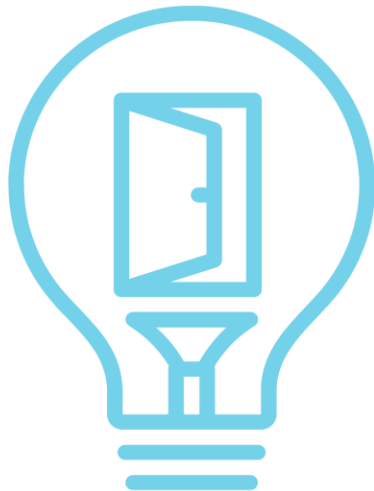


Poverty Proofing[©]

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Introduction

Summary of Moorside Primary School

What is working well?

1. **Support to families:** Some parents and children disclosed that they are struggling for money. The majority of children were keen to speak about the various ways in which the school support them.
2. **Resources :** There is a wealth of resources at school for children to access. They know that they can come to school and have the resources that they need, with only a few bringing anything in to school.
3. **Leadership:** The majority of staff are aware of the various difficulties that the children at Moorside face. This helps them to already make a large amount of poverty sensitive decisions in school.

What are the key issues pupils face?

1. **Charity and Fundraising:** A number of children reported that they sometimes feel left out during charity or fundraising days.
2. **Uniform:** Some pupils find the relaxed nature of the uniform policy to be challenging as it can make them feel jealous.
3. **Food:** There are some issues around the temperature of the food when children receive it as well as the time that children get to eat their dinners.

Key Recommendations

1. Involve pupils in policy decisions and have **clear and consistent rules and guidelines** around things such as uniform.
2. Explore the way in which food is accessed at break time, specifically for those who may miss fruit first thing. Work with staff to create a rota for providing a supervised space inside for snacks to be eaten at break.
3. **Improve communication with parents and young people** around help with costs available in the school. As well as improve signposting to additional external provision.

Background

Methodology

The findings represent a summary of what people told us. Children North East staff spoke to all pupils at **Moorside Primary School**. We explored what is poverty in a UK context; do they know who experiences poverty in their school? And if so how do they know? The researcher examined the school day from start to finish unpicking all policies and practices within the school. They attended after school club, had lunch with pupils and observed pupils through their day to day interactions within school. See findings below for more detailed analysis of the pupils' responses.

We also spoke with **school staff, governors** and collated surveys from **parents, staff and governors**.

Moorside Primary School

Pupils at **Moorside Primary School** spoke positively about a range of aspects of their school - their teachers, the curriculum and the inclusive approach the school takes towards its local community.

When speaking with Staff and Pupils it is clear that there is a wonderful community feel to the school. Many children spoke about how happy they are at the school and that they know that everyone has pupils best interest at heart.

Staff at school are clear about understanding the demographic and the need of children in the school. **“Teachers treat everyone equally”**

How to read the findings

We have highlighted things that the school is doing well and should be continued as well as areas to explore. All of the points raised in the action plan are practical steps that the school can take to reduce the unintentional stigma and discrimination that pupils and families from poorer backgrounds may inadvertently face.

Some of the actions can be taken with immediate effect with little or no impact on time and resources. Some will require further investigation and thought about the best way to implement them.

We have indicated throughout the report what level of priority each area is as a way to help schools decide where to start when prioritising actions.



High Priority



Medium Priority



Low priority

The levels are based on: number of 'areas to explore' for each topic, the importance of each action within the topic, the number of pupils/ families affected and the urgency in which actions need to be addressed. The ranking system is a guide – it offers an indication as to where it may be best for the school to start when prioritising their actions. It is not a grading system.

The table below shows the vocabulary that we use in this report to indicate the percentage of students to whom we spoke who shared the same views and opinions. While this table is intended to approximate the scale of each issue, the views of every single student are important.

Words	Frequency
Most, the majority, a significant number, in the main, all, frequently, often, a large number	75-100%
Many, a number, a lot of, numerous, quite a few, generally, regularly	50-75%
Some, several, sometimes	25-50%
A few, occasionally, a small number, on occasion	0-25%

What are the key
issues pupils face?



In this theme

We explored the curriculum beyond the academic, vocational and technical and discussed with pupils the artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities available at their school. We sought to understand how the school ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils to take part in a wide, rich set of experiences which provides them with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We sought to understand if all pupils benefit from these experiences and if there are any barriers for disadvantaged pupils.



What is working well?

Many pupils spoke about a number of free trips that children are able to attend that fit in with the scheme of work that they are doing as well as appealing to a wide range of interests. Some are aware as to the schools measures to keep costs of trips down.

“Newcastle Eagles, Safety works, Science at the centre for life”

“We walk when we can, sometimes we get the coach, but we don’t have to pay”

“We don’t have to pay for any trips”

A large amount of pupils spoke about going swimming in year 3. Some were excited to go swimming with school, while some were proud to have learned to swim.

“Year 3 gets to go swimming”

“Swimming in Year 3 is free”

Moorside Primary are excellent at sourcing and providing exciting opportunities within the context of the area. The majority of pupils spoke about an exciting performance they attended within school.

“Jungle book came and performed in the hall, not like on the screen like real people in it”



What is working well?

If there is anything pupils know they cannot walk to, a few spoke of a mini bus that can be used to help transport students when needed.

“There is a Moorside Blue Bus”

The majority of pupils were excited to talk about the clubs they have attended, or perceived to be able to attend soon.

“I think that clubs are coming back soon”

There are a wide range of clubs: **“cooking, board games, gymnastics, PE, computing, Multisport, Knitting, Violin, football”**

When speaking to pupils there were a wide range of aspirations and career goals that came through from pupils. Many also knew how to get to their chosen career, as well as feeling confident that staff will support and ask questions about their aspirations.

“I want to be a software engineer, I have been learning programming at home, like JavaScript”

“I want to be a chef, my grandad has a food place and sometimes I cook there”

Range of aspirations: **“contortionist, Olympics person, physician, mathematician, chemist, footballer, doctor, Police person, taxi driver**

“I want to be a doctor because they get paid a lot”

Pupils were also aware that the school will often arrange visitors to speak to them about a variety of things.

“We had a doctor come to visit, they told us about our private bits and we got to ask them about their job”

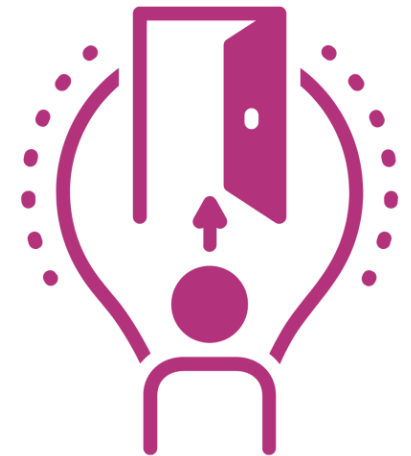
Many pupils spoke about the facilities they have at school. While some staff recognised that in some areas it could be improved, the majority of pupils that spoke about what they have access to are happy with the provision.

“We have gym equipment on the yard”

“We have a meadow, we get to go as one of the treats”

“We got tickets or vouchers for a carnival”

“We once had an artist come, we had to find them”





Additional Opportunities



What we heard or noticed

Swimming Lessons: Some pupils explained that if they didn't want to swim, they didn't bring kit. **"If you don't want to swim they just don't bring their kit they sit on the side with the teachers"**

"I don't like swimming so I didn't do it"

While a few others described barriers that had the potential to stop them from joining in with learning to swim with their peers.

"I had to buy a costume and towel!"

Extra-curricular clubs: Some children were unsure about whether it mattered how quickly they got their letter back in.

"We were given a letter to get permission to attend a club, they are starting next week"

A few pupils were not sure whether they could access the cooking club, or if they needed to bring in their own ingredients.

"Mam doesn't know if you get food or not [cooking club]"

"It's just for year 4, 5 and 6 [cooking club]"

Practical solutions

Ensure that pupils are aware of who to speak to if they are struggling to afford swimming kit.

If children are forgetting their kit frequently, endeavour to understand the reasons as to why they don't bring it.

Consider having a stock of spare swimming costumes / shorts and towels so that pupils who forget their kit don't miss out

Ensure that there is a clear message delivered by teachers when reading out letters that are going home. Try to allow children time to ask questions to clarify their concerns prior to taking the letter home.

Communicate this information on the school website, school social media page and other communication platforms so that parents know what is happening.

Bullying



In this theme

We explored pupil's understanding of bullying as well as whether or not bullying as a result of poverty takes place within the school. We also discussed from a pupil perspective how quickly, consistently and effectively the school addresses bullying if it does occur.



What is working well?

Across the school there is a good understanding about what bullying is and how it impacts on pupils.

“It means when someone isn't nice to you, fighting and its like every day”

“It's hitting and saying bad words like swear words to someone”

“When someone is mean to you many times”

“When someone keeps hurting you, or making fun of you, bullying is when it happens lots”

“It is continuous”

“Hurting people mentally and physical”

“When someone bullies you it makes you mad or sad”



What is working well?

Many children are aware how school staff will help if they report incidents of bullying.

- “We tell the teacher, they tell them to stop. Sometimes they tell your Mum and Dad, sometimes they have to go and see the headteacher”**
- “The teachers are really good at sorting it out”**
- “They make sure everyone is equal”**

The majority of children are also aware of how teachers will support if they are injured. They are confident that staff at school have their best interests in mind and go out of their way to ensure that children feel safe in school.

- “If you are hurt, they give you a bandage and make you better”**
- “The teacher has rules to help protect us”**
- “It is good to say sorry”**

Lots of children know who they can speak to if they have an issue at school.

- “We know we can tell a teacher or your adult at home”**

Some children feel that there is a low level of bullying within school.

- “I don’t think it happens much here, but the teachers would fix it”**
- “Sometimes there is fighting in the yard, but the teachers stop them”**

There is a strong sense of community among the children, they reported that for the most part the class get along and would look out for each other.

- “We stand up for each other”**



Celebrations



In this theme

We explored how occasions such as holidays, the end of the school year and Christmas are celebrated in school. We also looked at how key events within the school calendar are marked, exploring whether there are any barriers for poorer pupils.



What is working well?

The way that birthdays are celebrated in school is inclusive to all children as it doesn't highlight or shine a light on any differences.

“We celebrate something, we sing happy birthday and say hooray”

“school gives us a birthday card on our birthday”

“We used to bring in cake or sweets but can't anymore because of Covid”

“We are not allowed to bring in sweets”

Some children are motivated by the 'Star of the Week'.

“They give us a letter for star of the week”

When asked about whether children bring in presents for their teachers, some were keen to explain that they frequently bring in pictures they have drawn.

“I draw my teacher pictures”

“I give her notes and presents like little flowers every day”

“We make the teachers pictures or cards”

More quotes from pupils on celebrations can be found [here >](#)



What is working well?

The majority of children explained that they do not bring invitations into school.

“You can’t hand out invitations at school”

“Some children do but do not in the classroom”

Many children spoke about receiving something from school at Christmas. In school Christmas is mostly celebrated in an appropriate, inclusive way which doesn’t highlight differences.

“The headteacher gives us Christmas presents”

“At Christmas we got a book”

“We have special cookies at Christmas at lunch”

“We have a special lunch at Christmas, they put songs on and they give us a special dinner”

When asked about the way that school celebrates other religious holidays, some explained that while they are not explicitly celebrated in school they do talk about them in class. As well as this a few children explained that the school is accommodating to their needs.

“They let us stay off for Eid”

“During Ramadan, we are allowed to be in a different room with games and things instead of being in the lunch hall because we are fasting”

As well as learning about different celebrations in different cultures and religions, many children spoke about learning about Black History Month.

“We learnt about Black History Month we did about Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela”

Birthdays are also celebrated in a very inclusive way as all children are given a sticker. Some children spoke about how their class also sings happy birthday.

“We get birthday stickers and they smell nice”





What we heard or noticed

Sharing about the Summer: Some children spoke about being asked to speak about what they did in the holidays.

“Yes we put our hands up, most do and normally on a Monday”

“My teacher asked and I said it was boring, I sat at home and didn’t do anything”

“I don’t talk about what I do during the holidays, it is actually your own business”

Christmas celebration: Some children spoke about being able to wear non-uniform or Christmas jumpers as part of the Christmas celebrations in school.

“We wear Christmas clothes on Christmas dinner day”

Gifts for teachers: Many children spoke about bringing in presents for their teachers around Christmas or the end of the year.

“X brought in flowers, they were so pretty”

“We can buy them anything, some bring flowers or chocolate. My mum and dad said they can't get everything I ask for them”

Practical solutions

Ensure that staff are reminded just before a holiday about the effects that being asked to share about holiday plans can have on children.

Instead create a bank of questions that don’t identify or exclude for example:
Who did you spend time with?

Continue to ensure that staff do not ask children to do any writing about holidays.

Consider the need to allow non-uniform or Christmas jumpers on the day that Christmas dinner is served, as this may highlight differences.

Dissuade the gift giving culture in the school. Consider different ways in which families and children can show their appreciation for their teacher.

Ensure if presents are going to be brought in that they are taken to a central location and not the classrooms.

Charity, Fundraising and Community



In this theme

We explored how the school provides opportunities for pupils to engage with society and make a positive contribution to their wider community. We also looked specifically at fundraising activities and if there are any barriers for pupils engaging in these opportunities.



What is working well?

When there are charity days, some children spoke about being able to just place their donation in a box. However, there are no expectations for children to bring money in.

“We just put our money in a box”

“You don’t have to bring anything in, it’s okay”

When talking about charity and fundraising, children are able to explain where the money raised is going and how that charity helps their cause.

“We learnt about Pakistan and the floods, we raised some money to send to help”

“We learnt about the floods, I pray for them”

“We read lots of books and raised money for them”

“We do a minute or two silence for remembering day”

“We watch Newsround and learn about different things like the floods, Children in Need, Red Nose day”

Some children reported that they receive vouchers to buy books at a reduced cost on world book day.

“On world book day they give out vouchers for cheaper books”

More quotes from pupils on charity, fundraising and community can be found [here >](#)



Charity, Fundraising and Community



What we heard or noticed

Charity days: Many children reported that they are able to dress up or wear something different for charity fundraising days.

“I got my Pudsey day clothes from a charity shop”

“We wear headbands for Pudsey day”

“We had to wear something red for red nose day”

Non-uniform day: Some children spoke about non-uniform day in school. Some feel pressure to wear certain things or worry about what to wear for non-uniform day.

“We have non-uniform three or four times a year, I worry about what to wear, some wear dresses and pants and nice things”

“I worry I don’t have the right clothes”

Practical solutions

Consider different ways in which to place emphasis on the cause that the charity raises money for.

Consider the need for a dress up day at all, could there be an activity that all children get to engage with instead of coming in different clothes to normal. Consider removing non-uniform days and replacing them with inclusive charity focused events.

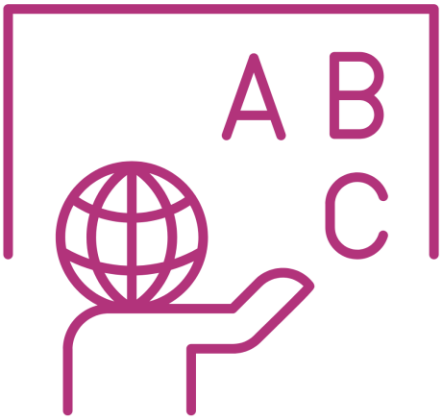
Consider removing non-uniform days altogether. Work with the school council to find an alternative, inclusive treat day, or charity focused event.

Curriculum and Ability Groups



In this theme

We sought to explore the school's curriculum intent with a focus on how the school ensures that disadvantaged pupils have access to a broad curriculum. This included looking at how ability setting is used within the school.



What is working well?

“Only thing that is streamed or set is phonics, the children have fluidity throughout the day with who they work with which helps them to make more friends, which in turn helps with the problem of high mobility”. (Staff) This is great as it doesn't highlight differences to children, it is an accepted part of the day that for phonics children move to their relevant group.

“They don't really bother, whether they're in highest or lowest group”

Many said in any other lesson that the teacher tells them where to sit and children don't really worry about it.

“The teacher just tells us where to sit”

“It doesn't really matter” “They don't really bother”

“Sometimes we are in different groups for certain lessons”

“It doesn't really matter what table you sit on”

Many children were excited to explain about the various enriching parts of the curriculum that they enjoy!

“We do music every Tuesday”

“We are doing a sewing project making clothes for a teddy”

More quotes from pupils on curriculum and ability groups can be found [here >](#)



Curriculum and Ability Groups



What we heard or noticed

Swimming: Some children recognised that there were different areas of the pool taking part in different intensities of swimming lessons.

“I found swimming too confusing”

“We had a few different parts of the pool, some people just walked and moved their arms but others went down to the deep bit”

Comments about reading: A few children spoke about there being comments made around what book band colour someone is reading at.

“Sometimes people laugh when they hear someone's reading colour”

Practical solutions

While it is great that all children have had the opportunity to engage with swimming lessons. Consider the need to catch up those who have missed out through Covid (via the LA).

Those children who have had swimming lessons outside of school will be more advanced within the school provided lessons.

Perhaps this is something that could be addressed during PSHE lessons that would help some children to understand their own feelings and the impact that comments such as these could have on others.

This is something that we talk about as some children, who have someone to read to each night will naturally progress through reading stages quicker than peers who do not have an adult to read to at home. Continue to ensure that children progress through reading stages in line with their attainment.



In this theme

We explored how pupils access food over the course of the school day including breakfast, break time, lunchtime and out of school visits. We examined how discretely Free School Meals are administered, how debt is tackled as well as the quality of the lunchtime experience for pupils.



What is working well?

The school has a great provision of milk and fresh fruit, **“when there is fruit and milk left over it has been taken home for families, but spoken about in a way as if we have far too much please take it rather than having the feel of charity” (Staff)**

All children are offered fruit each day which is excellent.

“The school council used to meet with the chef and then she would talk through the menu with the head teacher” (Staff)

This is an excellent way to try and ensure that the menu reflects pupils preferences and boost uptake of FSM. *This is anticipated to return with the return of a key member of the kitchen staff.*

When speaking to kitchen staff it is clear that they each care about the children in school, as well as ensuring as many as possible eat and enjoy their school meals. One of the ways in which the kitchen staff have adopted is that **“they [pupils] get more choices to choose from each day than they used to”**. Another way that staff are accommodating children's needs is with the pizza. **“The children wanted the pizza to look like at home, they didn't like the squares so we just cut triangles now it's fine”**.



What is working well?

Moorside has a breakfast club, allowing families to drop off children early – supporting parents who need to get to work, as well as providing those who need it with a well rounded breakfast.

“At breakfast club you can get toast and cereal”

“They have breakfast club so parents don’t have to give us breakfast everyday”

“I like having toast there, [breakfast club] there is good selection”

Many children spoke about being able to choose their lunch based on the pictures on the board in the morning, this supports those who speak English as an additional language in their selection.

“We choose our lunch on the board in the mornings”

“Children pick their lunch choices based on pictures” (Staff)

The majority of children reported they have access to fruit when they arrive at school. This is available to all children in school, not just certain year groups or FSM. What a great way to ensure all children have something to eat and are ready to commence their learning!

“We get fruit when we get to school”

“At the morning I get an apple”

Some children talked about the portion sizes being perfect, or on the larger size. **“I get too much food sometimes”**. Children are able to add to their meal if they would like by accessing a salad bar which is replenished throughout the lunch period. This includes things like extra bread and pasta.

“You can get salad at lunch”

A few children commented about the fact that they see the Headteacher in the lunch hall every day. **“It is nice that the teachers hand out the food it is good to see them”**

There are some firm favourites among children in regards to meals at school. It is evident that children have had an influence on the creation of the menu.

“fish and chips, pizza, jacket potato, pasta”

“I LOVE the shortbread” “I like the custard and I like cheese and crackers”

“I love the burgers, they taste good”

Many children are also aware of the ways in which school support families who are struggling to access food for them.

“They give us letters to tell parents about Free School Meals”

“School give out Asda vouchers before the holidays, they give them to children who’s parents said they need them”



What we heard or noticed

Packed lunch in year three: Some children are moving to PL in year 3 as it is a new expense for parents to pay for a school dinner. It is evident that some families are struggling with these cost implications. **“we have seen that some children in year 3 are moving to having packed lunches instead of paying for dinners and they are just putting in what they can afford” (Staff)**

Packed lunch bags: A few children commented on the styles of lunch bags that come in to school. **“Some people have packed lunch bags with spiderman and Elsa on, I don’t”**

Confusion around food: Some staff reported that the food they see at lunch time doesn’t look like the images they saw in the morning. A few children said they are confused about what the options are at lunch. **“Sometimes what the kids get doesn’t look like the pictures and they don’t eat it then” (Staff)**

“Sometimes I am confused about the dinners choices”

Food at break time: A large amount of children spoke about not being able to access food at break time.

“We can’t get any food at break time”

Practical solutions

Ensure that children in year 2 are made aware of free school meals and what the criteria is to get this going into year 3. Some parents will be aware, but with the nature of the school, and the need to read trip letters to children to ensure parents know the details, it should be assumed that children will be involved in passing on and sharing information about FSM in year 3. Where possible, share examples of healthy and balanced packed lunches with parents and children.

Continue to monitor comments around this. Cover material possessions in PSHE.

When using images of food to help children select their lunchtime meal, ensure that it resembles the sides and veg that they are given at lunch. Over the course of a few weeks, take photos of the actual meals that are served up to help children understand what they are choosing.

Consult with staff about what they are willing to put in place to ensure that pupils can access food at break time, consider opening the lunch hall for snack time with a few supervising staff.



Food



What we heard or noticed

Comments about Free School Meals: A small number of children reported that there are sometimes issues around comments about FSM.

“If you are on free school meals you can get bullied for that”

Packed Lunch Table: Lots of children reported that there is a separate table for people who have a packed lunch. This can influence children wanting a PL based on where their friends sit, thus putting pressure on families to provide a PL.

“There is a separate packed lunch table, so some days my friends are on a different table if they don’t want the dinners that day”

“Lunchtime is good if you sit with your friends”

Free School Meals: Some pupils as well as a few staff were unclear about eligibility for FSM.

“My dad gets it for me for free because he doesn’t have a job”

“It is just KS1 that get FSM, no one else I don’t think” (Staff)

Practical solutions

It is great that the majority of pupils do not know who has FSM, however it is important to monitor and discourage negative comments around FSM. As well as this the school could explore including a topic around comments in the PSHE curriculum.

Consider the need for a separate table for children who have packed lunch.

Address misconceptions around eligibility for FSM with staff, this will help them to signpost families in a timely manner.

Send out frequent information about how to apply for FSM and who to contact at school to get help with the application process.

Homework



In this theme

We explored how homework is administered, what resources and materials pupils need at home to complete homework, and the various ways in which the school supports pupils.



What is working well?

The majority of children explained that their homework isn't too much or requires a computer and internet access.

“Just spellings, times tables and numbers”

“We don't need to use the internet for homework, they say you can't share things online and that”

“We don't get it too much, but the book is good to show what we have done”

Some pupils reported that they do not suffer consequences if they do not manage to complete their homework.

“It is fine if you don't do it, they say try and do some of it”

“My teacher just says try and do it this week”

Some children spoke about needing to read for homework. However, they are aware that reading will support them with their work within school. It is great that a few children mentioned that they are able to do this reading in school with a teacher if they are unable to at home.

“If you do your reading then you know the sound next week”

“We read to a teacher at school”

More quotes from pupils on homework can be found [here >](#)



Homework



What we heard or noticed

Homework help: A few children explained that they sometimes struggle to complete the homework without support, and that support isn't always available at home.

“Sometimes it is too hard, I don't know what to do if I need help – we used to do the first question together last year so our teacher knew we were on track”

Homework environment: Some pupils reported that they struggle to find an appropriate space or time to complete their homework based on their home life.

“I only do my homework if they aren't making too much noise”
“I sit on the floor to do my homework”

Practical solutions

A number of staff commented throughout the audit and training about the way in which a 'homework club' could support children. Some pupils spoke about not having support at home. It would also support children who have many distractions at home and struggle to complete their homework.

Leadership and Governance



In this theme

We explored with leaders, staff and governors their awareness and understanding of issues relating to poverty; including their accountability in relation to Pupil Premium and what actions they have taken to address social disadvantage within their local context. This included an exploration of the school's curriculum intent.



What is working well?

There is a great awareness of who is living in poverty within the school and how that may affect them. The Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team have a valuable knowledge of the families and children that attend Moorside Primary School.

Notably there is a variety of ways in which they have observed poverty affecting pupils within the school.

During the audit teaching staff attended and engaged with training delivered by Children North East to gain a deeper understanding of poverty in the local area and the impacts. Staff also engaged in discussion around the barriers children at Moorside and how these could be combatted in the future.

Pupil Support



In this theme

We looked at what pastoral support is available for pupils, how pupils access support, and what impact it has. We explored how the school supports the development of pupils' confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy.



What is working well?

When new pupils join the school there is a great level of understanding and time as well as support for settling in to life at Moorside.

**“We always give them a settling in period of about two weeks”
(Staff)**

A few pupils reported that school supports them in learning about their feelings, as well as how others are feeling. This empathy will support them in their understanding of others. **“In PSHE we learn about feelings, how we can cheer up your friends, what to do if you have a bad mood”**

A small number of children reported that they appreciate the different ways that Moorside support the children in their school.

“School helps people who don't have money but want a good education because everything is here already”

“Its an amazing school, they support you a lot and they give you free things to help you and keep you safe”



What is working well?

Many children reported that they can ask a member of staff at school for support if they are upset or worried. Many feel comfortable speaking to their teacher about a wide range of concerns, this opens the communication for those who may need extra support or signposting from school financially, especially at the moment.

“Sometimes I worry about people making me sad, but the teachers they help us”

“Yes you can talk to your teacher”

“At break time you can talk to your teacher, they come outside”

“We can put our hands up to speak to the teacher if we are worried”

“You can talk to the teacher or write it down and give it to the teacher or the office”

“I can talk to someone I trust”

“If I feel sad I tell teacher” (EYFS)

A few children were happy to talk about their teacher respecting and in some cases anticipating the need for privacy when dismissing their concerns, further allowing for openness.

“Sometimes the teacher will take you out the classroom to talk about feelings”

A small number of children were keen to explain how Moorside care about them and their families. For some this is evident through their care for pupils health.

“Your learning and education and your health is important to them that’s why they give us water bottles”

For a few children, they reported that they are no longer worried at school. This may be because they feel heard, and they trust adults are there to support them.

“I don’t really worry at school”

“I don’t cry at school anymore”

Support is offered to a small number of pupils to support them in adapting to life at Moorside, and to make new friends.

“If you are shy, they try help you not to be, and make more friends”

In some cases, children are able to ask for support in lesson through more tricky work.

“They help, I wanted to try more challenging questions so they gave me some”



What is working well?

A few children specifically spoke about the language used by staff to support them in their learning.

“Teachers phrase questions in a way we all understand, sometimes that’s tricky for some because of the different languages but they are patient”

“Teachers walk us through it”

“My teacher says there are three steps; try, ask a friend, ask the teacher”

Some staff are aware of the various ways in which school provide sanitary products for upper KS2 pupils. It is great practice to provide a bank of these resources for pupils to access in school as some may be struggling to fund these products outside of school.

“Sanitary products are available in the girls toilets for year 5 and 6, they are also in a drawer in the disabled toilet for those who you know want to have more privacy because of the wrappers and that” (Staff)

A small number of pupils were clear on the impact that school can have on their later life. Some were aware that their teachers are interested in their career goals and that school can help them to get there.

“You can choose what you want to do later when you're older and they help you”





In this theme

We explored what meaningful opportunities the school provides for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to debate and discuss issues, to share their views beliefs and opinions, and to be actively involved in school life.



What is working well?

The majority of pupils are aware that there is a school council at Moorside Primary School. Pupils are clear on how to become a member of the school council as well as who and when they meet with.

“The school council help to keep people safe and tell teachers about the bad things that are happening so they can help”

Many children reported that the school ask them their opinion about things and that they are able to have a say in what happens.

“They ask us what we want for a treat and we vote”

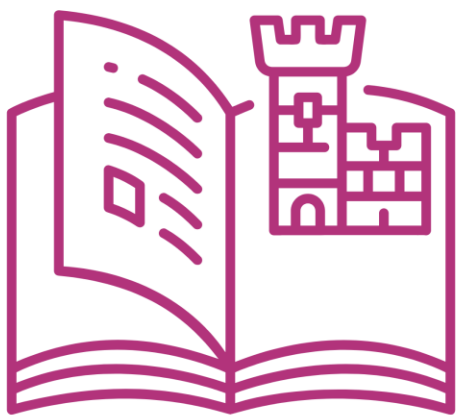
In the past kitchen staff have consulted the school council for input on the menu development for school dinners. This is a great way to ensure that pupil voice is heard and that the majority of children will eat something each day!

“The school used to consult kids about the menu”



In this theme

We explored whether pupils need additional resources to fully take part in the school day, and how the school supports pupils who cannot afford the resources required to engage with all lessons.



What is working well?

Many children reported that they didn't need to bring anything additional to school. Sometimes pupils need to bring in resources such as a coat, but many see this as being part of what they should bring anyway.

"You just bring yourself"

"I just bring my homework, book bag and packed lunch"

"Sometimes I have to bring a coat, but only when it is cold, and hat and scarf and gloves"

Many children when asked spoke about being able to bring in a bottle to drink from, or they could use a clean cup available in the classroom.

"You just put your hand up, get your water bottle and have a drink. They stay here and the teachers wash them I think. We all have the same bottles"

The majority of children reported that they are not allowed to bring toys into school, this is excellent Poverty Proofing practice as it discourages comparisons between peers.

"No, you don't bring in toys, you're not allowed"

"The teacher will take a toy and keep it safe for you"



What is working well?

Some pupils spoke about the support they received from school during the pandemic. One of the ways they recognised that the school helped keep them safe was to ventilate the school with windows open, but Moorside ensured that all children were warm by providing body warmers.

“They gave us all body warmers during Covid because we had to have the windows open”

The majority of pupils asked said that school take care of their needs well. They do not feel the need to bring any resources into school to support in their lessons.

“The school takes care of us, we don’t have to bring things in”

“There's really no reason to bring in a pencil case, they have supplies”

Across the school, almost all children reported that they do not do show and tell, if their class has done it in the past it has been work they have done in school or something they have found on the yard. This is great Poverty Proofing practice as it discourages children from bringing in items from home that could highlight differences, as well as promoting their pride in their work.

“Sometimes we show and tell about the things we have made in school like cushions, books or things we find in the playground”

In addition to providing all resources for lessons, many children spoke about the water bottles provided by school. This is great practice as it removes any differences based on brands or styles of bottles. It is great that these are kept in school and washed by staff, it ensures that all children in school have access to clean water throughout the day.

“Some of the water bottles are big, some are small but it really doesn’t matter”

“We get a new one every year, we use the bottle at school and take it home at the end of the year”

A small number of children reported that Moorside provide them with free resources to access in school and at home (if they can), in the form of online subscriptions such as Times Tables Rock stars and revision guides in Year 6.

“They give us free games to do [TTRS]”

“We are given revision guides to help”

A few children reported that they have great access to books at school, this wealth of literature will be supporting those who perhaps do not have their own at home.

“There are so many books at school”



Resources



What we heard or noticed

Pencil cases: Although many pupils know there are resources provided in school, a small number still bring in their own.

“Some people do bring pencil cases”

“Some people bring in fancy pens”

Practical solutions

Remind children that they are not to bring in pencil cases or pens from home. Ensure that all staff discourage bringing in pencil cases. Ask staff to keep belongings that come into school on their desk, or in the office and return at the end of the day. With all the wonderful resources that are provided by the school there is really no need for these things to come into school.

Rewards, Behaviour and Attendance



In this theme

We explored whether children from poorer backgrounds are rewarded or punished differently from other children. We looked at the consistency of the delivery of the rewards and sanctions system and how this impacts on pupils' experiences of the school day. We investigated what intelligent, fair and effective action the school takes to support pupils who are struggling with their attendance and behaviour.



What is working well?

It is great Poverty Proofing practice to remove public rewards for attendance. Staff are aware as to why there is a need to remove these awards. **“We have removed attendance rewards because they didn't feel fair during Covid, now we are discreet but we acknowledge improved attendance” (Staff)**

There is a great level of understanding and empathy around the reasons for poor attendance. While the school places a high focus on good attendance in line with guidelines and policies, by understanding the reasons behind poor attendance, the school is able to better support their pupils and families.

“Poor attendance is monitored and unpicked to discover the reason for the poor attendance, we offer support and where it might be needed ongoing, we signpost to external agencies for help” (Staff)

Rewards, Behaviour and Attendance



What is working well?

There is a clear and cohesive behaviour and rewards system throughout the school. This is excellent as it supports children as they transition throughout the school. It is clear what is expected and what they can expect in return.

“You get a cube and put it in the jar, when we fill it we get a treat – you can go to the meadow”

“We get a cube to put in a jar and then we get a whole class reward”

“It is about 50 ish cubes I think”

“If you are good or do good work you can get a chance of star of the week”

The same behaviour and rewards system is used all the way through school even in Early Years.

“You get stickers and cubes in a jar”

Some children spoke about the various ways they can get rewarded for good work or behaviour with a sticker. This is seen by many to be done fairly and alongside the more structured reward system.

“Sometimes you get a sticker”

Teachers are able to pick a star of the week. Many children spoke about the different reasons they have been up in assembly to receive star of the week. **“The teacher can choose star of the week and they go to the front in assembly”**

“Some people get star of the week, it is different each time”

Some children reported that pupils who misbehave are spoken to about the way they are behaving and why they need to think about it. If it persists they are sent to the Head teacher to talk to them and think about their actions.

“[if someone is misbehaving] they be in trouble, sometimes they see the headteacher”



Rewards, Behaviour and Attendance



What we heard or noticed

Attendance awards: Some children are under the impression that there are still attendance awards at the end of the year.

“I think you get a certificate at the end of the year for attendance”

“Your attendance is also part of your report”

Practical solutions

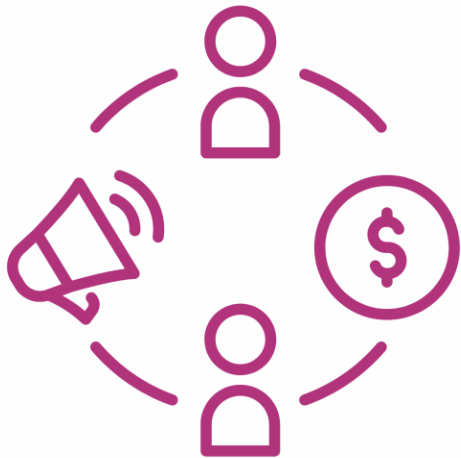
Communicate the rewards that are available for children. Continue to monitor and celebrate attendance at school with small conversations with pupils one to one.

Support to Families and Parents



In this theme

We discussed how school-related costs affect families. We sought to understand from a parent's perspective the ways in which the school already effectively supports families as well as exploring areas where this support could be improved.



What is working well?

Moorside has recognised an increase in the need for support for their parents. It is great that the majority of children in school are keen to report the various ways that the school support their wellbeing, learning and their families.

“We have seen a real increase in parents approaching us for help since the pandemic” (Staff)

**“If your parents are struggling the school will help”
“They literally do everything for us”**

One of the key ways in which Moorside has adapted to support parents and children is to send letters that have been read out about trips, avoiding using emails that could be hard for some to access.

“We tend not to send emails, instead we send letters round the classes and ask staff to read it to the children – many times they will then go home and be able to explain to parents what it says” (Staff)

Support to Families and Parents



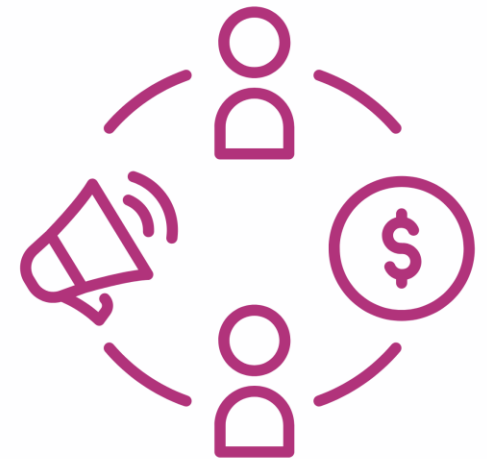
What is working well?

One of the great ways that Moorside supports families is by offering help through the Free School Meal applications. This is especially important in the location that the school is, as well as the translation needs of some families. **“Support is offered with new starters to fill in FSM applications”**

This is also essential support that is offered for pupils and families who are new to the school. **“Parents are encouraged to fill in form about FSM when they sign up and fill in the other forms for school” (Staff)**

Families who are new to the school are able to trust that their children are well supported in school. One of the key things that the school does to support is providing uniform, reading diary and book as well as a bag and PE kit. **“New EAL students we get have picture prompts, where possible we buddy them up in the class with someone else who speaks the same language or is from the same place, they also get 1:1 time with a TA or HLTA as well as a reading book, jumper, bag and PE kit” (Staff)**

“We have students in the older years who with permission and consent can help to translate for other parents as well as their own, we are also lucky to have some staff in school who speak multiple languages” (Staff)



More quotes from pupils on support to families and parents can be found [here >](#)



Support to Families and Parents



What we heard or noticed

Information for families: It has been recognised by some staff that dental hygiene is something that children and families may need more support or information about.

“Dental hygiene is a serious issue with some children” (Staff)

Financial signposting: A small number of children reported that they know that their parents are struggling for money.

“I think my parents are using my money, when I come home there is none in my jar”

Practical solutions

Consider adding a lesson around personal hygiene into the PSHE curriculum. This is something that could be supported by the school nurse. Furthermore, consider adding it to the coffee afternoons/parent support workshops put on by the school.

AquaFresh have a Brush time app that has a song that children can brush their teeth to for the recommended two minutes.

Could the school create a page on the website with signposting links?

Ensure that staff have a bank of resources/leaflets about local support to offer to families if they approach school for support.



In this theme

We sought to understand the way in which school uniform and PE kits is supplied, how much it costs, and the expectations that the school has in regards to uniform and PE kits. We also investigated how the school supports families with uniform costs.



What is working well?

Moorside Primary School has a wonderful understanding of the area and the demographic of children that they provide for. The uniform policy reflects this, the school has made adjustments and provided support for a variety of children.

“We provide the elasticated head scarves for PE, for health and safety reasons”

Staff spoke about providing uniform and PE kit for all children. Children know they receive PE kit from school.

“When students join us they are given one of everything regarding uniform”

“We get a PE kit from school”

“When I just joined I went into the hall and picked some uniform”

Children and staff are aware that if they need to bring a phone into school they are required to keep it in the office to keep everyone in school safe.

“We have to put our phones in the office on the way in, even teachers don’t have phones in school”



Uniform



What we heard or noticed

School Jumpers: Although being allowed to wear plain sweatshirts allows for flexibility and for some children to feel included and part of the school community. For some it insights discomfort or in some cases it makes children feel left out or jealous.

“I think everyone should wear the same”

“Some people wear home clothes, it can make us feel jealous”

“I wish I had a school jumper”

Wrong Uniform: Some pupils think that it doesn't really matter if they wear the wrong uniform, while others think that they are asked to get changed. Many said that they are only challenged about uniform if it happens frequently.

“It doesn't matter”

“you have to get changed”

“It's okay to wear the wrong thing as long as it isn't every day”

PE Kit: A few children said that pupils wear their own clothes for PE despite being provided PE kit by school.

“Some people wear home clothes for PE”

Practical solutions

Look at the Uniform policy, specifically tightening up the rules around sweatshirts and school jumpers.

Encourage children to wear the jumper that they are provided by school, if a child comes in their own branded jumper, provide a spare for children to wear for the day.















Again, ensure the uniform policy is enforced with children being asked to wear the correct uniform – with understanding and questions around why they might not be wearing the right thing. As well as having some spare uniform that pupils can use.

Make sure that children are aware of their access to PE kit in school.

Additional information

Appendix 1

This is an overview of your school. Each individual school also works within its own local and regional context, and typically has additional factors to consider such as ethnicity, rurality, and school composition. It is important to stress that all of the actions identified in this report are important and should be carefully considered by the school. Those that have been labelled 'low priority' are important recommendations which should not be disregarded.

Area		Priority	Area		Priority
	Additional Opportunities			Leadership and Governance	n/a
	Bullying	n/a		Pupil Support	n/a
	Celebrations			Pupil Voice	n/a
	Charity, Fundraising and Community			Resources	
	Curriculum and Ability Groups			Rewards, Behaviour and Attendance	
	Food			Support to Parents and Families	
	Homework			Uniform	

Appendix 2

Additional quotes from pupils to help illustrate the points made in the report

Additional Opportunities

“We had a doctor come to visit, they told us about our private bits and we got to ask them about their job”

“Year 3 gets to go swimming”

“Swimming in Year 3 is free”

“We don’t have to pay for any trips”

“Jungle book came and performed in the hall, not like on the screen like real people in it”

“There is a Moorside Blue Bus”

“We once had an artist come, we had to find things on paintings with them”

“I think that clubs are coming back soon”

“I want to be a software engineer, I have been learning programming at home, like JavaScript”

“I want to be a chef, my grandad has a food place and sometimes I cook there”

Bullying

“It is continuous”

“Hurting people mentally and physical”

“Sometimes there is fighting in the yard, but the teachers stop them”

“We stand up for each other”

“We tell the teacher, they tell them to stop. Sometimes they tell your Mum and Dad, sometimes they have to go and see the headteacher”

“The teachers are really good at sorting it out”

“They make sure everyone is equal”

“If you are hurt, they give you a bandage and make you better”

“The teacher has rules to help protect us”

“It is good to say sorry”

“We know we can tell a teacher or your adult at home”

“They tell them off”

“I don’t think it happens much here, but the teachers would fix it”

Appendix 2 (continued)

Additional quotes from pupils to help illustrate the points made in the report

Celebrations

“We used to bring in cake or sweets but can’t anymore because of Covid”
“We are not allowed to bring in sweets”

“You can’t hand out invitations at school”
“Some children do but do not in the classroom”

“The headteacher gives us Christmas presents”
“At christmas we got a book”
“We have special cookies at Christmas at lunch”

“They don’t need to give us anything they are already giving us a lot – an education!”

“We have a special lunch at Christmas, they put songs on and they give us a special dinner”

“They let us stay off for Eid”

“During Ramadan, we are allowed to be in a different room with games and things instead of being in the lunch hall because we are fasting”

Charity, Fundraising and Community

“We just put our money in a box”
“We used to dress up for world book day, a few people don’t dress up, maybe they don’t feel like it, or they forget”
“We learnt about Pakistan and the floods, we raised some money to send to help”
“We learnt about the floods, I pray for them”
“We read lots of books and raised money for them”
“We do a minute or two silence for remembering day”

“You don’t have to bring anything in, it’s okay”
“On world book day they give out vouchers for cheaper books”
“We read as many books as we can in one hour to raise money for Pakistan”

Curriculum and ability groups

“Only thing that is streamed or set is phonics, the children have fluidity throughout the day with who they work with which helps them to make more friends, which in turn helps with the problem of high mobility” (Staff)
“The teacher just tells us where to sit”
“It doesn’t really matter”
“They don’t really bother”

“I love swimming”
“We are doing a sewing project making clothes for a teddy”

Appendix 2 (continued)

Additional quotes from pupils to help illustrate the points made in the report

“We have lots of fun and learn to play games in PE”

“Sometimes we are in different groups for certain lessons”

“It is based on our maths and English”

“We just sit wherever we are told by the teacher”

“It doesn’t really matter what table you sit on”

“They don’t really bother, whether they’re in highest or lowest group”

“Teachers treat everyone equally”

“We do music every Tuesday”

Food

“If you can’t afford it the school pays”

“Sometimes the food is a bit cold”

“When you go in it is cold sometimes”

“Sometimes I like them a bit”

“Packed lunches sit on a different table, they didn’t used to”

“We used to have coloured bands to represent different meals, I think it stopped because of covid”

“It is only free for reception, year one and two”

“Last term we all got milk in the afternoon and it was free”

“They give us letters to tell parents about Free School Meals”

“They have breakfast club so parents don’t have to give us breakfast everyday”

“School offers all children fruit in the morning”

“School give out Asda vouchers before the holidays, they give them to children who’s parents said they need them”

Homework

“If you don’t do it, you just get more to do for the next week”

“you might miss play time and might go to the head teacher”

“You don’t get clever if you don’t do the homework, they might make you do homework at school”

“They just say you have until next week”

“sometimes get a sticker for reading at home”

“I don’t read at home, I just sleep”

“We need to have our own pencils, you can’t take pencils home”

“I do my homework with my brother, he helps me with my times tables”

“It is fine if you don’t do it, they say try and do some of it”

Appendix 2 (continued)

Additional quotes from pupils to help illustrate the points made in the report

“My teacher just says try and do it this week”
“You just don’t get a sticker on a Friday and if you do your homework you do get a sticker.”
“If you do your reading then you know the sound next week”

“We read to a teacher at school”

“We don’t need to use the internet for homework, they say you can’t share things online and that”

“We get books to practice”

Pupil Support

“In PSHE we learn about feelings, how we can cheer up your friends, what to do if you have a bad mood”

“School helps people who don’t have money but want a good education because everything is here already”

“You can talk to the teacher or write it down and give it to the teacher or the office”
“Sometimes the teacher will take you out the classroom to talk about feelings”

“Its an amazing school, they support you a lot and they give you free things to help you and keep you safe”

“Your learning and education and your health is important to them that’s why they give us water bottles”

“Parents who are key workers, their children could come in during covid”

“Teachers phrase questions in a way we all understand, sometimes that’s tricky for some because of the different languages but they are patient”

“Teachers walk us through it”
“My teacher says there are three steps; try, ask a friend, ask the teacher”
“You can choose what you want to do later when you're older and they help you”

“I don’t really worry at school”

“I don’t cry at school anymore”

“We can put our hands up to speak to the teacher if we are worried”

“I can talk to someone I trust”

“If you are shy, they try help you not to be, and make more friends”

“If I feel sad I tell teacher” (EYFS)

“They help, I wanted to try more challenging questions so they gave me some”

Appendix 2 (continued)

Additional quotes from pupils to help illustrate the points made in the report

Support to Parents and families

“We tend not to send emails, instead we send letters round the classes and ask staff to read it to the children – many times they will then go home and be able to explain to parents what it says” (Staff)

“New EAL students we get have picture prompts, where possible we buddy them up in the class with someone else who speaks the same language or is from the same place, they also get 1:1 time with a TA or HLTA as well as a reading book, jumper, bag and PE kit” (Staff)

“If your parents are struggling the school will help”
“They literally do everything for us”

Uniform

“Only if you have the brightest yellow shoes”
“I think you are meant to wear school shoes and have black or grey trousers”

“You need to wear the right jumper”
“You don’t need to wear the jumper with the right logo if you don’t want”
“I think our parents choose the colour of the jumper we wear”

“You get a new bag or jumper from the office”

“We provide the elasticated head scarves for PE, for health and safety reasons” (Staff)
“When students join us they are given one of everything regarding uniform” (Staff)

“We get a PE kit from school”
“When I just joined I went into the hall and picked some uniform”

“sensible clothes and shoes, no wellies inside or sandals”
“If they change the bag logo they give us a new one”

“We have to put our phones in the office on the way in, even teachers don’t have phones in school”

“[What do you have to wear to school?] My jumper!”

Appendix 3

What is poverty?

Government statistics from March 2021 show that there are approximately 3.9 million children living in poverty in the UK today. This is around 27% of all children in the United Kingdom. In the North East of England this number is even higher, with 38% of all children in the region living in poverty, the highest rate of child poverty in the UK. This is not set to improve, as forecasts suggest that by 2026/7, 33% of children in the UK will be living in poverty, rates not seen since the 1990s. In schools, poverty is often equated with FSM but we know many children in poverty are not eligible for FSM. We use a broader definition of poverty that seeks to understand the ways in which poverty is experienced in school and how it restricts children and young people's opportunities to flourish.

A more useful definition of poverty, and one that Poverty Proofing© has adopted, is therefore:

"Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities, and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary patterns, customs and activities."

Peter Townsend

The full appendix can be found [on our website](#). This appendix is meant to be read in conjunction with the UK Cost of the School Day report and action plan. In it, we cover the following topics:

- What is poverty?
- How does poverty affect different socio-demographic groups?
- Poverty and education
- Poverty Proofing© and Ofsted
- The consequences of poverty on health, housing, education and employment

We also provide a list of references you can consult for further reading about any of these topics.

About Us

Children North East

Children North East want all babies, children and young people to be happy and healthy, and to grow up feeling safe and loved, resilient to the challenges they may face, and valued and confident.

We have a strong children's rights ethos and believe that real, lasting social change is achieved when those who are experiencing or have experienced issues lead that change. We work both directly with babies, children and young people, and in their families, schools and communities, delivering services, support and interventions that provide a platform to work through issues, take action and provide tools for individuals and communities to reach their full potential.



Poverty Proofing the School Day

Poverty Proofing© the School Day is a project developed by Children North East. The project provides a toolkit to Poverty Proof© the school day, to reduce stigma and remove barriers to learning and to assist schools in exploring the most effective way to spend school funding provided for those eligible for Free School Meals. Poverty Proofing© the School Day consists of an audit for each individual school, questioning pupils, staff, parents and governors.

The result is an action plan tailored to each individual school to address any stigmatising policies or practices. There is then the opportunity to be awarded an accreditation following a review visit. We also offer training to staff and governors on poverty and its impact on education.

**Thank you to Moorside Primary School and their
pupils for participating in Poverty Proofing the
School Day**

