

Larchfield Primary & Nursery School

Charges and Remission of Charges Policy



Our Vision

Our children are central to all that we do:

nurturing, caring and preparing them to add value to an ever-changing world.

Ratified: Governing Body

Date: November 2024

Next review due: November 2025

OUR AIM

At Larchfield Primary and Nursery School we aim to provide as many opportunities as possible for our children. This can be fulfilled through the school budget but also with the support of parents/carers to ensure all stakeholders access the same opportunities. We aim to have partnership working between school and families.

- The Governing Body will expect all activities wholly or mainly outside school session time not to incur a cost to the school budget unless the School Management Team has been consulted and decided otherwise.
- The Governing Body may ask for voluntary contributions for school activities that are either wholly or mainly in the school session time and incur a cost to the school that is over and above the normal day to day expenditure.
- All charges or requests for voluntary contributions must comply with the law.

Admission

No charge is to be made for admission into any RBWM school.

Education during school hours

With very few exceptions a charge for education is unlikely to be legal. Where an activity is part of the syllabus of a prescribed examination or is required to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education, then compulsory charges may not be made for tuition, materials or transport.

No charge will be made for materials to be used in craft and home economics lessons, although a charge may be levied if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own a finished article. Any charge will not exceed the cost of materials. Alternatively, the parent may be required to provide the materials in question.

The only area of school curricular provision for which a charge may be made is instrumental music tuition for individual pupils or pupils in groups of up to four where that tuition does not form part of the National Curriculum or of a prescribed examination syllabus being followed by a pupil.

'School hours' are those in which the school is actually in session, not the break in the middle of the day.

A non-school organisation which arranges an activity to take place during school hours may charge parents who want their child to join the activity. Parents wishing their child to participate in the activity must obtain the school's permission for their absence from school.

Public examinations

No charge can be made for entry to public examinations where the pupil is being prepared for entry to the examination by the school. No charge is to be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or trips required for the purpose of the examination.

The cost of the examination entry may be passed to parents/carers only:

- If a pupil is entered for an examination for which he/she has not been prepared by the school.
- If the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it.
- Where the pupil 'fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements for that syllabus.' (However, schools are advised to proceed with caution, in particular ensuring that parents receive adequate information at the time when examination entries are made).

CHARGES FOR OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

An activity that takes place outside school hours cannot be charged for if it is an essential part of the syllabus of a prescribed examination or is required to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. Any other activity which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours, both day and residential, is defined as an 'optional extra' activity and can be charged for.

Charges for 'optional extras' outside of school hours may include:

- travel, board and lodging for pupils
- materials, books and equipment
- entrance charges to facilities
- staff costs - both support and teacher costs (where a teacher/instructor has been engaged specifically to provide the activity). These teachers should be given a separate contract to provide the optional extra insurance.

With an 'optional extra':

- Parents can choose whether their children attend or not;
- No profit can be included from any charges made - it is to be based on the actual cost of the activity divided by the number of pupils taking part;
- Charges on some cannot be used to subsidise others i.e. the cost will not include a share of the cost of any remissions - if further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising;
- A charge cannot be made for alternative provision for any pupils not attending.

For day activities, if most of the time spent is during school hours then the activities count as taking place entirely within school hours and no compulsory charge may be made. However, they school may ask for a voluntary contribution.

For residential activities, a trip counts as falling within school time if the number of sessions missed by the pupils' amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24-hour period is divided into two half days beginning at noon and midnight. The School Management Team will decide if a charge is to be made.

Damage to property

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is a result of a pupil's inappropriate behaviour.

VOLUNTARY CHARGES

Voluntary contributions in monetary or kind may be made for activities taking place during or outside the school day. However, no child is to be excluded because his/her parents/carers did not contribute to funds. It is permissible to warn parents in advance that unless a majority is willing to make a contribution, the activity will not take place.

Remissions

The Governing Body does not wish to see any child disadvantaged by virtue of the fact that their parent(s) are unable to pay. The School Management Team will consider remitting all or part of any charges payable if the parents meet the criteria for the 'benefits' that qualify them for free school lunch eligibility, or by a parent of a pupil with temporary financial difficulties. A report of any delayed payments will be made to the governor's Resources committee.