



St Luke's Church of England (Aided) Primary School Charging Policy – Reviewed September 2023

1 Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the use of charging and remissions in our school. All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition.

2 Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary and the school budget is utilised to heavily subsidise these activities. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organized by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- Animal experiences: Farms, zoos, Sea Life Centre
- Museums (Black Country Living Museum, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery)
- Theatres
- Castles (Warwick Castle, Tamworth Castle)
- Workshops, i.e. Florence Nightingale, Timezone, Music, Safeside, Open Door
- Botanical Gardens
- Carding Mill Valley
- Seaside

3 Residential visits

As a school, we organise residential visits in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6. These overnight experiences vary in number of days, increasing as the children move through the school. In order to encourage as many children as possible to participate, we heavily subsidise the visits.

4 Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. However, we have individual or group music tuition for pupils in Years 5 and 6, this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. There is no charge for these lessons but there maybe a cost for tuition books, etc. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

5 Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all children from Years 2 to 6, with two year groups going swimming each term. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We ask parents/carers for £2.00 per week for this activity to help towards the cost of the hire of the pool, swimming instructors and life guards plus transport. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

6. Income from sales – Non-profit making

Some goods may be purchased through the school for the convenience of parents, pupils or teachers. The school will not seek to make a profit from these sales. Goods in this category could include snack, uniform, book bags, etc.

7. Milk

There is no charge for milk as children are provided with free milk per day.

8. School Meals

The school has adopted the standard Local Authority charging policy for schools meals.

9. Paying for Information

Where parents request copies of information under the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing copies of information. This is detailed in the Publication Scheme.

10. Exceptions

School recognises that there may be occasions when special consideration needs to be made regarding payments for activities. In these circumstances, parents and carers are encouraged to contact Mrs Grennan, Mrs Smith or Mrs Ferguson (Finance Officer) in order to discuss discounted options or exemption from payment. Exceptions to payment will be made where circumstances are deemed reasonable and necessary, in consultation with the School Governing Body.

11. Payments

Parents/Carers are encouraged to send monies in a named envelope which is then logged by the receiving member of staff in the classroom and then sent to the Finance Officer, who checks the amount in the envelope (in the presence of another member of staff) making a note on the system. In addition to sending money into school, parents/carers are now able to pay for meals, visits, snack, Skoolz Out via an on-line payment system. We have purchased, through the Local Authority, SIMS Agora which helps us to easily collect school payments from parents simply, securely and cost-effectively, using data which we already have in SIMS. The aim is to significantly reduce our school's payment administration, engaging parents/carers and receiving monies quicker into school.

12. Arrears

In the event of parents/carers not keeping up-to-date with payments for aspects such as school meals, Skoolz Out or swimming, the Finance Officer will notify parents/carers with a letter which informs the amount owed and asking for the payment to be paid as soon as possible. If this is not rectified then another reminder letter will be sent to parents/carers. If the debt is not settled then a letter from the Headteacher will be sent, with the information that if payment is not received, then details of the debt will be forwarded to the Local Authority Payments department.

12. Monitoring & Review

The procedures in this policy will be monitored in the light of any new information and guidance which becomes available.

Approved by Governors: FGP 05.12.2023

Signed by Chair of FGP: 

Date of next Review: September 2024

Minute Number: 11