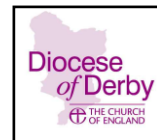




Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery



CHARGING POLICY

This policy has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies and the Equality Act 2010.

Written / Reviewed by	Date	Approved by GB	Minute Number	Next Review Date
S Rivington	August 2012	03/10/2012	GB/2012/70	September 2013
S. Rivington	September 2013	02/10/2013	GB/2013/60.1	September 2014
S. Rivington	February 2014	RMC 10/02/2014	RMC/2014/05	February 2015
S. Rivington	September 2014	GB 30/09/2014	GB/2014/66	September 2015
S. Rivington	September 2015	30/09/2015	GB/2015/72	September 2016
S. Rivington	September 2016	21/09/2016	GB/2016/68	September 2017
S. Rivington	September 2017	29/11/2017	GB/2017/85	September 2018
S. Rivington	September 2018	05/12/2018	GB/2018/84	September 2019
LA	September 2019	24/09/2019	GB/2019/71	September 2020
S. Rivington	September 2020	22/09/2020	GB/2020/44	September 2021
S. Rivington	September 2021	21/09/2021	GB/2021/65	September 2022
K. Downing	October 2022	22/11/2022	GB/2022/68	October 2023
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Written / Reviewed by	Date	Changes Made		New Policy/Version		Next Review Date
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
K. Downing	October 24	Yes	No	Yes	No	October 25

Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School & Nursery
Charging Policy

Introduction

It is the School's aim that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities. This policy sets out the School's approach to charging and remissions with the intention to ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are provided with the chance to access all provisions on offer.

This policy is based on the Derbyshire County Council's Charges and Remissions Policy. It therefore represents not only the School's but also the Council's Policy on Charges and Remissions.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 (revised in 2011) sets out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools. Parents on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits may be eligible for support in terms of contributions requested for school visits. Additionally, families in receipt of free school meals are entitled to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits. Further guidance can be accessed at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

Under Section 27 (1) of the Education Act 2002 governors have control over the use of school premises, subject to the local authority's general policy that all educational premises should be available whenever possible to provide for the wider educational and recreational needs of children, young people and adults. Therefore schools with available space are permitted to approve lettings in accordance with this policy.

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 and cost of travel to swimming lessons where appropriate.

1. Day visits within or mainly within school hours

Voluntary Contributions

- Parents/carers are advised in the instruction letter that unless sufficient voluntary contributions are received certain trips/events will not take place.
- Before the deadline for contributions, reminder texts and letters will be issued to those parents/carers who have not yet contributed.

- If a contribution paid for by cheque is subsequently returned 'refer to drawer' the school will on one occasion only request an alternative method of payment. If no payment is received the school will consider that the parent/carer has chosen not to make the contribution.
- In the event that a child is unable to attend a trip due to accident or illness we will endeavour to provide a refund where possible of up to 50% of the cost of the trip.

When organising school trips or visits which **enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children**, the School invites parents/carers to contribute to the cost of the visit. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a visit. If a visit goes ahead, it will include children whose parents/carers have not paid any contribution. We do not treat those children any differently from any others.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in a school trip, visit or activity or event but is unwilling or unable to contribute, we allow the child to take part in the trip, visit or activity. Sometimes, school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents/carers have the right to know how each trip, visit or activity is funded and school will provide this information on request. Children in receipt of Free School Meals or Universal Free School Meals will be offered a free school packed lunch.

2. Residential visits in school time

If the School organises a residential visit in school time (or mainly school time), which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum we do not make a charge. However, we do make a charge to cover accommodation, food and travel expenses.

To ensure all children are provided with the opportunity to participate on school visits, parents/carers experiencing financial difficulty are invited to talk to/write to the Headteacher in confidence.

3. Activities outside or mainly outside school hours

Parents/carers will be expected to meet the full cost. Participation in these activities will be voluntary when the activity is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or not part of religious education. Prices for individual activities will be provided to gauge interest. Activities will not run where full costs cannot be recovered.

4. Ingredients/materials for practical activities such as cookery and craft

To help school finances, parents/carers may be asked to pay the cost of materials where the finished product is to be kept by the pupil. Costs for these will be calculated based on the cost of the material. No profit will be made.

No child will be disadvantaged because of parents/carers inability or unwillingness to pay, and, therefore, all children will be able to participate in these activities.

5. Lost school equipment, books, etc.

Parents/carers will be expected to replace or purchase lost items of school property including IT equipment and books. The cost of these items will be the replacement cost to purchase the same or similar item at the time the loss occurs.

6. Breakages and damage to school buildings, furniture or property

In cases of willful damage to the School building, furniture or its equipment, the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body, may decide to make a charge. The cost of repairs will be as quoted on an individual basis. Where items cannot be repaired a charge will be made to replace the item based on the current cost to buy new at the time the damage was incurred. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

7. Music Tuition

Charges may be made for vocal/instrument tuition provided either individually or to groups, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

8. Other Charges

The Headteacher or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. Photocopying.

9. Equality

The School is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors irrespective of their race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or pregnancy and maternity.

10. Lettings

The Governing Body is responsible for setting the charges for the hiring of the School premises but has delegated the day to day responsibilities of managing lettings to the Headteacher. Where a letting is agreed, an agreement form must be completed, ensuring that the person requesting the letting agrees to the School's terms and conditions and is appropriately insured. Invoices will be issued promptly with payment expected, wherever possible, in advance of the letting date. VAT is not chargeable on School lettings in line with the Derbyshire VAT Guide – Schools.

All costs associated with letting the School premises must be considered when determining an appropriate charge. The Governing Body's method of calculating the actual cost of the letting comprises three main elements:

- i) Energy
- ii) Caretaking Fees
- iii) Per Capita costs

However, where appropriate an additional fee may be levied for the following:

- i) Computer & Printer Costs
- ii) Lettings by non-community/commercial groups
- iii) Excessive cleaning
- iv) Profit Margin
- v) Wear and Tear
- vi) Other costs

A lettings calculator has been developed to assist with the above calculation and is available from School Support Finance.

Concessionary rates or free letting agreements may be appropriate in certain situations where it is deemed by the Governing Body to be of benefit to the School, its children or meets community goals. In such situations the reasons for the concessionary rate must be clearly minuted and approved. The organisation requesting the letting must still sign to agree to the School's terms and conditions and must have appropriate insurance.

- Hirers will be issued with a lettings agreement form indicating an annual, monthly, half termly, termly or one off charge.
- School reserves the right to cancel a letting at any time.
- Payment is required at time of booking for occasional lettings.
- Payment for regular lettings will be required at least half termly in advance.
- Any cancellations of bookings must be made at least 2 weeks before the booked dates for a full refund.
- All payments must be made to the school office.
- If payment has not been received at this time a letter will be issued requesting payment within 7 days.
- If after the extended period funds are still not forthcoming the Head and Admin Officer will discuss whether the let should be allowed to continue. Special consideration will be given to lets for after school activity clubs which generally will be allowed to continue to the end of the appropriate school term.
- The Headteacher may agree to re-schedule outstanding payments subject to the arrears being cleared by the end of the letting year. Any defaults on the new repayment programme may result in cancellation of the agreement.
- If a cheque for payment is returned marked 'Refer to Drawer' immediate contact will be made with the hirer and a request that an equivalent amount in cash be paid to school within the next 7 days. Failure to do this will result in the Head and Admin Officer reviewing the viability of the let and whether notice to cancel the agreement should be given to the hirer.

11. Provision of Extended Services

The following core offer of extended services will be provided:

High quality childcare – breakfast club will be available at school from 8.00 am (during term time)
External Provider: Debbie Ducks Childcare services (off site) will provide After School child care and holiday provision. School also signpost the Families Information Service¹, which will provide them with information of other childcare available during the school holidays

Varied menu of activities

A programme of lunch time and after school learning activities will be developed and delivered on a termly basis. These include:

¹Families Information Service provides information to parents and carers on what services are available locally or nationally. They can be contacted on 0161 342 5434

- Extension activity (eg booster classes)
- Enrichment activity (eg special interest clubs such as gardening, craft, cooking, etc)

The programme of activities will be made available each term to parents and carers and children via letters and texts.

We will also signpost children and parents and carers to other local activities through their flyers and via the Families Information Service.

Swift and easy access to specialised services

We have effective arrangements in place for the early identification and support of children with additional needs.

Through a referrals process we have access to the following specialist services:

- Speech and language therapy
- Educational Psychologist
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Behaviour Support
- Physical Impairment
- Hearing Impairment

A named member of school staff will retain responsibility for liaison with the service that provides any intervention.

We will ensure that members of staff are trained in using the Team Around the Family Framework and that they use it proactively to identify needs and ensure that any interventions and referrals are appropriate.

Parent support

Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery aims to work in partnership with parents and carers to achieve the best possible outcomes for children in school and will:

- Offer transition information sessions for all parents and carers when their child starts reception class and in year 2 in readiness for moving on to the junior school.
- Offer family learning opportunities, where children and parents and carers can learn together, and signpost to other family learning opportunities locally.
- Provide information, advice and assistance to parents and carers to support their child's learning and well-being, and provide, via the Families Information Service information about local and national services which are available to parents and carers.

Extended services are reflected in the following school policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Equalities policy
- Behaviour policy
- Charging policy

Any partner agency delivering extended services on school site will adhere to the relevant school policies, in particular safeguarding, equalities, and health and safety.

Parents/carers who choose to use the School's extended hours provision will be informed in advance of the charges applicable which will be reviewed on an annual basis. The charges for the current year are:

- Breakfast Club - £3.50 per session
- School Lunch - £3:25 per meal (current DCC charge – subject to change)
- After School Clubs - £3 per session. These should be paid for in full at the time of enrolment or in advance of enrolment.

Cost of Extended Services

Any revision to the Extended Services prices will be notified to parents/carers the term prior to the new charge taking effect.

Background

The Langley Mill Infant School and Nursery Extended Services Policy has been adopted to ensure that a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers whose children attend Extended Services provision. The Local Authority is not accountable for the administration of Extended Services, therefore the responsibility falls on the school to pursue instances of non-payment. As a result the school budget will have to directly fund any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered thereby directly affecting the amount of money that is available to provide education to all pupils.

Provision of Extended Services

The Extended Services provision is no different to any other business in that it has to be paid for by someone. This provision is available to children, **but at a cost to the parent / carer.**

Payment for Extended Services

Payment should be provided (preferably by ParentPay, although cash or cheque made payable to ***Derbyshire County Council is also acceptable***) in advance. The School must ensure that all Extended Services money collected is banked in a timely manner in accordance with the School's Financial Regulations which are periodically inspected by audit.

Management of Extended Services

To ensure that the School's budget is not adversely affected by the cost of providing Extended Services, the Governors consider the fairest system to all families is to pursue a 'Zero Tolerance' approach. Although, this may seem harsh to some parents it is important that the Extended Services provision does not run at a loss, otherwise the school budget will be affected, and to the detriment of all our pupils.

If a child has Extended Services provision which has not been paid for, a letter/text detailing how much is owed will be sent to the parent/carer requesting payment directly to the school within 7 days.

When the debt exceeds £30 for a *child or family* a formal letter must be sent to the parent/carer informing them of their required actions.

If the debt exceeds £50 for a family and/or action proves unsuccessful in securing Extended Services money arrears, the School will write to the parent/carer, explaining that the School is not obliged to provide Extended Services provision which include activities and clubs outside of the school day until settlement of the debt has been made.

The same process will be used if a cheque is not honoured by the bank. Prompt action will be taken to address any debt issue at an early stage in order to prevent arrears amassing.

Where a child continues to require this provision, the School must establish if the parent/carer is experiencing hardship which affects their ability to pay. Under these circumstances the parent/carer should be invited to speak confidentially to the Head Teacher.

Monitoring and Recovery of Extended Services Debts

The Head Teacher will provide Governors with details of any outstanding Extended Services debt and the current / profiled position with regard to the overall profit or loss of the provision. If the provision is running at a loss, the Governors then will have to decide on the existence of the provision in school.

The aim of this policy is to minimise the opportunity for debt balances to build up and incurring costly referral to the School's solicitors. The School does, however, reserve the right to begin legal proceedings to recover outstanding Extended Services debts and inform the Local Authority, Legal Services.

Where full or part payment for Extended Services is to be made via voucher scheme, regular reconciliations should be performed to ensure all monies due is received from the voucher company to avoid the commencement of action with the parent should there be a delay in payment from the company.

All Write-offs for outstanding debt below the sum of £50 has been delegated to the Headteacher ensuring that Recovery of debt should be pursued where it is practicable and economical to do so, taking into account any reputational damage that may be caused to the School.

All supporting evidence must be retained to allow the debt to be pursued, the lack of evidence may result in the original transaction being reversed. Request for write off for debts over £50 must be presented to the Governing Body for approval. Each school must supply a copy of such policy to the Director of Finance and ICT if requested to do so. In the case of larger debts (above the school limit and in any event where the debt is greater than £1,000) the school must consult the Director of Finance and ICT. Outstanding debt should be actively pursued and actioned promptly and accurately within 6 months of the original posting so that it is correctly reflected in the schools budget, non-compliance may result in the original transaction being reversed.

Example – Letter 1

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)
(Address Line 1)
(Address Line 2)
(Address Line 3)
(Post Code)

Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

Extended Services provided to (Pupil Name)

According to the School's financial records you have not paid Extended Services money for your child (pupil name). As at xx/xx/xx your account is showing a debt of £xx.

In order that there is no detriment to the school's budget, please clear your child's debt by making arrangements for the outstanding Extended Services debt to be paid immediately. Once you have cleared the current debt I should be grateful if you could ensure that you keep your account in credit. The current cost of this provision is xx per hour / week.

As per the schools Charging Policy, School is not obliged to provide Extended Services provision which include activities and clubs outside of the school day until settlement of the debt has been made. Failure to make payment may result in your child being withdrawn from such provision.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Gardner
Headteacher
*On behalf of the Governing Body of
Langley Mill Church of England Infant School and Nursery*

Example – Letter 2

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)
(Address Line 1)
(Address Line 2)
(Address Line 3)
(Post Code)

Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

Extended Services provided to (Pupil Name)

I am writing regarding the current level of outstanding Extended Services debt that is showing on your account. Despite previous correspondences and messages the debt for your child xx is still outstanding.

The School's records show that as at xx/xx/xx your account is £x in debt. The current cost of Extended Services provision is £x per hour, £x per day or £x per week.

I would ask that you please make arrangements to clear this debt immediately and take steps to ensure your account is kept in credit in the future.

As the School's budget will have to fund any overall debt incurred through Extended Services provision, it is essential that all payments are up to date so that the quality of the service provided to all pupils is maintained.

Unfortunately, if the debt is not cleared by xxxxx the Extended Services provision will no longer be provided to your child. The School reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the outstanding debt and to inform the Local Authority.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately so that this matter can be resolved.

Mrs S Gardner
Headteacher
*On behalf of the Governing Body of
Langley Mill Church of England Infant School and Nursery*