

Spring Vale Primary School

Charging, Remissions and Arrears Policy

2023-24



Introduction

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for school meals, school activities, external lettings and extended school provision, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contribution will be requested from parents and carers. It also details the action the school will take where arrears occur for payments relating to school dinners and use of the Breakfast Club. The policy is in accordance with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. The policy is reviewed annually by the Finance Committee of Spring Vale Primary School.

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. However, for certain other activities we may charge or ask for voluntary contributions.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or towards activities. For example, contributions towards school fund, fundraising and costs associated with school trips and visits.

School Trips and Visits (including Residential Trips)

When organising school visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school will write to parents asking them to contribute towards the cost. If a visit cannot take place without some help from parents or carers, this will be explained at the planning stage. No pupil will be left out because a voluntary contribution has not been received. However, if there are insufficient contributions, the school may be left with no choice but to cancel the visit.

Parents or carers who have contributed would then receive a full refund.

If a child is unable to take part in any visit or activity through illness, then a refund would be issued, less any financial commitments that have already been made. E.g. transport costs and/or admission costs.

Governors have agreed to subsidise trips at their discretion.

Optional Extras

Out of hour's activities and clubs are classed as Optional Extra's. The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

☉ Breakfast Club

Charges are made for attendance at the Breakfast Club (the daily rate is set annually). Breakfast items and refreshments are included (juice, toast, spreads, yoghurts and cereals). Parents are asked to pay on the day of attendance but arrangements to pay in advance or in arrears can be made with agreement from the school.

Should arrears occur, through non-payment, where the amount becomes significant and verbal requests have been ignored, then an official written request will be issued detailing a payment deadline. Should this deadline be missed no further access to the Breakfast Club will be granted until payment has been made. If payment is still not made and the outstanding amount is in excess of £75.00 the debt may be forwarded to Wolverhampton City Council for collection.

⦿ After School Activity Clubs

Additionally a range of clubs (sports etc.) take place, at various times of the year, after school but there is no charge made to parents for these if they are run by the school. Occasionally external club providers may charge for attendance (for example Soccer 2000 club).

Charging for School Equipment

No charge will be made for materials, books or equipment needed for lessons. The only exception to this is when loss or damage to school equipment has taken place, whilst in the possession of the child. An example would be lost or damaged reading books. A contribution towards the cost of replacement will then be requested.

School Meals

Under the Education Act 2011 schools are permitted to charge up to the maximum cost of a school meal. The current agreed cost to parents/carers is £2.40 per junior paid meal. Children in Early Years Education or of Infant School age at present receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal Scheme currently in place.

School subscribes to the LA free school meal checking service. If a parent becomes entitled to Free School Meals, the LA inform school and we provide a free school meal from the date of notification. To be entitled to receive free school meals, families need to be in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- ⦿ Income Support
- ⦿ income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ⦿ income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- ⦿ support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- ⦿ the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- ⦿ Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- ⦿ Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- ⦿ Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Should arrears occur, through non-payment, where the amount becomes significant and written/verbal requests have been ignored then an official written request will be issued detailing a payment deadline. Should this deadline be missed no further school lunches will be provided and a packed lunch will need to be sent in daily until payment has been made. If payment is still not made and the outstanding amount is in excess of £75.00 the debt may be forwarded to Wolverhampton City Council for collection.

Milk

From April 2018 milk is available for all children and is paid for by school. This is available in the dining room for all full- time children and in class for Nursery children.

Receipts

All income is recorded. Receipts are automatically given via Schoolcomms (online payment system). Receipts for cash payments are available on request.

Paying for Information

Where parents or members of the public request copies of information under either the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing copies of information. Details of charges are provided in the schools Data Protection policy and FOI Publication Scheme.

Lettings

All persons or groups wishing to hire school premises should contact the lettings department at Wolverhampton City Council who will provide the terms and conditions of hire.

Charges for lettings are set by the Governing Body, however the Local Authority do suggest minimum amounts. These are available on request.

Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances, school will make an exception to payments we would normally expect to receive. This may include cases of extreme hardship or circumstances where additional debt would cause further difficulties to families, for example if children are on child protection plans or at risk of eviction from homes. This is at the discretion of the head teacher and/or the F and GP committee of the governing body.

Date of next policy Review: March 2025