



Lowther Primary School - Charging Policy

This policy was adopted by Governors in February 2013

The next review of this policy is due in July 2026

1 Introduction

1.1 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 some individual or small-group music tuition.

2 Voluntary contributions

2.1 When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. 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.

2.2 The 1996 Education Act draws a distinction between the term 'charges', which are considered to be an obligatory cost, and 'voluntary contributions'.

2.3 Subsidies from various sources e.g. General Fund, PTA, Barnes Fund, voluntary organisations, will be considered to cover deficits. Any surplus finance will be used via the school fund for the benefit of the children.

2.4 Whenever possible, the school will give sufficient notice to allow parents/carers to pay in instalments.

2.5 If a parent wishes a 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.

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

- Visits to museums
- Sporting activities
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to or by a theatre company
- School trips

- Musical events
- Transport

3 Residential visits

3.1 If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education or travel expenses. However, we do make a charge to cover the cost of board and lodging. Parents of children who receive free school meals are offered the option to obtain a grant from Barnes Fund.

4 Music Tuition

4.1 All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

4.2 There is a charge for individual or small-group tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. We make a charge for these lessons. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

5 Swimming

5.1 The school organises swimming lessons. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We ask for a small contribution to pay for the lifeguard. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for written permission for their child to take part.

6 Lunch time/After School Sport and Creative Activities

6.1 The school offers additional activities after school and during lunch breaks. We reserve the right to make a small charge for these sessions.

7 Extended hours in Nursery Provision

7.1 For parents who are not entitled to 30 hour funding there is an option to apply for the extended hours at £9 per hour, subject to availability. This could be for one or more days per week. Additionally, we are able to offer a small number of lunch time places from 11.30am to 12.30pm.

Morning children have the option to stay an additional hour and afternoon children can arrive one hour earlier. This will be charged at £9 per hour or deducted from any 30 hour funding entitlement.

All extended hours places will need to be booked and paid in advance each half term with Mrs Day in the school office. Invoices will be sent at the beginning of each half term, and must be settled by the date specified. Lowther School reserves the right to refuse extended hours if payment is not made.

8 Applications for private and independent schools

8.1 If a parent applies for a private or independent school for their child and paperwork is sent from that school requesting that Lowther provide a report on the child, there are two options.

Option 1 – Lowther will forward on to the school the child's last academic year report – this will be done free of charge.

Option 2 – The child's class teacher will complete the form sent by the new school (or can write a new report) within two weeks of receiving the form from the school. This will incur an administration cost of £50 per form. This is payable in advance by the parent directly to Lowther School.

POLICY REVIEW

Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

This policy will be monitored by the governing body and reviewed every two years, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our school or in the local area. The policy will always take due note of guidance provided by the local Admissions Forum.