



# Garswood Primary School

## Charging Policy

### Philosophy

Garswood Primary School is an inclusive school committed to minimising the chance that pupils are excluded from school activities because of cost. It is our aim that all pupils should receive equal access to curricular activities and that we act sympathetically and supportively towards families who may not be able to afford to pay for extra-curricular experiences. This includes keeping such costs under review to ensure they are reasonable and seeking to arrange subsidies where appropriate from school funds or the delegated cost centre as identified in the agreed school budget.

Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information, normally by letter, detailing the cost of the trip and requesting the voluntary contribution. **From September, 2020, the school will use the Eduspot School Money system which will allow parents to pay online for Trips, School Dinners, snacks and milk, Wrap-around sessions and Nursery sessions.**

### Education During School Hours and Voluntary contributions

All education during school hours for children is free. The school also arranges a number of day trips out of school and visits by external providers into school to enhance and broaden the school curriculum. We make no charge for these enrichment activities but do ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost.

Parents are also asked to contribute towards the cost of other enrichment activities and some materials for practical activities in some circumstances. Examples of enrichment activities are trips out of school and visits by external providers or partner organisations into school or visiting 'experts' such as artists, musicians, theatre groups. 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. If parents are unable to contribute the full voluntary amount, they are encouraged to contribute whatever they can towards the trip or visit. The school may pay the shortfall and meet the additional costs in order to support the visit from School Fund. The school only passes on the overall cost of a school trip and under no circumstances makes a profit. Parents may, if they wish, pay more than the minimum voluntary contribution to enable an activity to take place where others are unable to afford the voluntary contribution. If parents kindly wish to pay more, they may do so at their own discretion. Any excess monies in this case will be absorbed into School Fund.

**Trips may not go ahead if the contributions made by parents are not sufficient to cover the cost.**

In addition, Years 4 & 5 and 6 have residential trips programmed into the school year – a PGL activity holiday and a London trip. In deciding for what charges will be made for we follow the guidance on the flowchart below. In asking for any payment for these opportunities we will give families advance notice to enable them to budget towards meeting the cost and arrange special payment arrangements to support individual families.

### **Remissions Policy**

Children in receipt of Free School Meals or in some extenuating circumstances, when a family cannot afford the cost of the trip and this is preventing the children from benefiting from the experience, we use monies from School Fund or the delegated cost centre identified in the agreed school budget to pay for or subsidise the trip.

### **Uniform**

We do expect children to wear our school uniform which can currently be ordered through Touchline. We allow children to wear polo shirts without the school logo in order to keep the costs down. We hold regular uniform 'swap shops' where parents can make a small monetary donation of their choice and take used uniform or bring old uniform and make a swap. We also expect children to be properly equipped for PE lessons wearing the appropriate kit. Where a parent/carer has a particular difficulty affording essential items of uniform, we will support them to ensure their child is kitted out appropriately. Monies may be sourced from School Fund or second hand items sourced. In addition we signpost parents to the opportunity to claim for uniform allowance if they are entitled.

### **Non-Uniform Days**

From time to time, the school may decide to allow children to come to school in their own choice of clothes. This is usually related to fund-raising for a charity or raise monies for School Fund. We ask for a voluntary donation on these occasions of money or an item that may be sold to raise money. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a non-uniform day but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities and After-School Clubs**

Where additional clubs are offered on school site by external providers or partner organisations before school, during lunchtimes or after school, a charge may be made. Charges for clubs and any other provision are made explicit at the time of offering opportunities to children.

At times the school may charge for extracurricular activities being run by staff member to enable resources to be purchased.

We can arrange special payment arrangements to support individual families, and for families who access free school meals the delegated cost centre identified in the agreed school budget may be used to subsidise or pay for the activities. In extenuating circumstances the school may absorb the cost ourselves using School Fund monies.

### **Out of School Care Club (KIDZ club)**

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2021 the charges for Out of School Care Club will be:

Breakfast Club £6.00

After School for up to one hour £7.00

After School for up to two hours £8.00

Bookings are made via the Microsoft Forms link that we provide to parents on a weekly basis. Bookings and payments must then be made online for the week ahead. An additional charge of £2.00 will be levied should a parent contact the school to book a place at the club on the same day.

Childcare Vouchers and Tax-Free Childcare can be used for payment for this club.

For a child who is collected late from the club there will be a one off charge of £10.00

Wrap around care for children is not subsidised from any source other than the fees charged to families and as such fees owed will be pursued in order to retain financial viability for the club. We ask that fees are paid in advance in order to secure a place at the Care Club. If in any event this does not occur and the child is permitted by the Manager into the club, the owing amount will be immediately requested from parents. If the monies owed is not forthcoming then a series of 4 letters are sent at fortnightly intervals before the debt is referred to the council for their pursuance. It is at this time that the child will no longer be allowed to use the care club.

A sibling discount of 50p per oldest sibling per session is applied to out of school club provision, in order to provide some financial support to families who are paying for more than one child to attend the club.

Should a parent cancel a session booked **48 hours** prior to the session the charge will still apply.

### **Nursery**

Garswood Primary School offers Nursery facilities for 3 and 4 year olds where FEEE funding is offered to parents through the Local Authority. Additional sessions can be organised at a cost, as well as lunch care and snack.

The charges for Nursery are as follows:

Morning wrap-around care £6.00 per session

Additional sessions £12.00 per session

Lunch stop (for those not accessing 30 hours FEEE) £3.00 per day

School Meal £2.81 per day. Please note VAT is charged on all meals based on the current VAT rate applicable at the time.

After school club charges Same as shown above for KIDZ club

Snack 40p. per day/£2.00 per week

There will be the option for parents to utilise their entitlement to 15 hours FEEE and 30 hours FEEE. Those accessing 30 hours FEEE can use them flexibly to access breakfast and afterschool care.

Should a child be absent, through illness or due to holiday, the fee for the session booked, irrespective of whether this is FEEE funded or a non-funded session, will still be levied. Payment for all non-funded sessions should be made in advance. Non-payment of fees will be pursued and may result in refusal of non-funded sessions. Please note that children in receipt of Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) currently receive 15 hours of funded nursery education per week.

### **Covid 19 Amendment**

**From the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020, people in England have been required by law to self isolate if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or are contacted by NHS Test and Trace. Accordingly, if a child is self-isolating having been contacted by NHS Test and Trace, we will not charge the parent or carer for this period.**

**However, should a parent decide not to take up a place for their child during any lockdown period and they would normally pay a charge for their usual session the charge will be discounted by 50% and the parent would be expected to pay this reduced fee.**

On signing up to the nursery parents/guardians select their preferred pattern/organisation; for example; 5 mornings, 5 afternoons or 2 full days (paying extra for lunch stop) and 1 morning session. As we provide flexible hours we do our best to accommodate. At any point changes may be made to the pattern of sessions and unless we are full, we accommodate accordingly. If a Bank Holiday falls on a FEEE planned session parents may wish to take this FEEE session at another time during the week, we will try to accommodate this – but the request to change the session must be provided in writing one week in advance. Booking an additional session without letting us know will result in charges for an additional session.

We cannot guarantee that it will be possible to accommodate a change because if the sessions are full then we cannot. This does not entitle parents to a reimbursement as these are FEEE funded and cannot be exchanged for monetary value.

If a school INSET training falls on one of your planned sessions you are not entitled to rearrange a FEEE session. These INSET dates have been built into the overall termly entitlement. Any additional sessions booked that week would be paid sessions.

When the pattern of sessions include paid sessions (not FEEE) that fall on Bank Holidays or on INSET days charges will not be levied.

Childcare vouchers can be used in payment for Nursery sessions.

### **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. Subject to availability and to the terms and conditions of individual tutors, children are offered the opportunity to study a musical instrument with peripatetic teachers. Parents who wish their child to participate may be asked to pay for the additional music lesson fees. If this is the case, this will be requested on a termly basis.

Currently the school pays for tuition through the St. Helens Council Music Service. The school has a stock of guitars and brass instruments which are loaned to these children free of

charge although the signed loan agreement dictates that any damage done to the instrument will be charged to the parent. Parents may choose to purchase instruments for their child to use should they wish.

### **School Property - Damage and Loss**

If a child damages or destroys furniture or fittings, materials, apparatus, equipment, books or any part of the fabric of the building the school reserves the right to ask parents to pay the full or part cost of repair, replacement or restoration, where this is a result of a pupil's inappropriate behaviour. Parents will be asked to pay the replacement cost of any library or reading book issued to a child that is lost or not returned to school when requested. We act sympathetically and supportively towards families who may not be able to afford to pay however unless the family alert us to this then the debt will be pursued.

### **School Dinners**

Parents/carers reserve the right to choose whether their child has school dinners, or a packed lunch brought from home. Parents/carers who wish their Junior child to have a school dinner are required to access the Eduspot School Money online system and upload their payment; either weekly or termly in advance. Parents will now also be given the opportunity through Microsoft Forms to choose their child's menu for the term. Non-payment of dinner-money will be pursued. A debt of £20 will trigger the initial letter (Appendix B) and the following letters will be sent fortnightly before the debt is then transferred to the Council Finance Department to pursue.

A child is eligible for free school meals if the parents/carers receive income support, Job Seekers Allowance (income based), Child Tax Credit or Pension Credit with Child Tax Credit and have an annual income of less than the specified amount (and not in receipt of Working Tax Credit) or are assisted by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS)

### **Milk**

Infant children can have milk which is subsidised with a resulting cost of £6.00 per year. Children entitled to Free School Meals will also receive free milk. Parents will be requested to pay for the milk annually or half termly, again through the online payment system. We act sympathetically and supportively towards families who may not be able to afford to pay however unless the family alert us to this then the debt will be pursued.

### **Snacks**

Healthy toast is sold in school during morning playtime. The cost translates in 20p per slice. Children are also allowed to bring into school any healthy alternative snack and we are part of the Government's "Fruit for Schools" scheme and endeavour to ensure that all infant children receive a fair allocation of the fruit received into school through this scheme. We also have a Junior tuck shop selling healthy snacks and drinks; all items are priced individually. The children operate this as their own enterprise. The children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day and the school provides water coolers and water fountains for this purpose, at no cost to the children.

### **School Documents and Curriculum Information**

The school is committed to making information easily accessible to parents/carers. Parents/carers are able to read school policies available on the school website or on site at the school premises, free of charge.

**School Fund**

This policy does not include provision to ask for a voluntary contribution per child on roll, per term to a School Fund. If parents kindly wish to make a donation to support school activities at any time, we will be very pleased to accept their generosity.

**Lettings**

The Governors will consider any request for Lettings of the school building each on its own merits, and in accordance with the lettings matrix available on the school website.

*To be reviewed*

*By Finance, Buildings and Staffing Sub-Committee*