

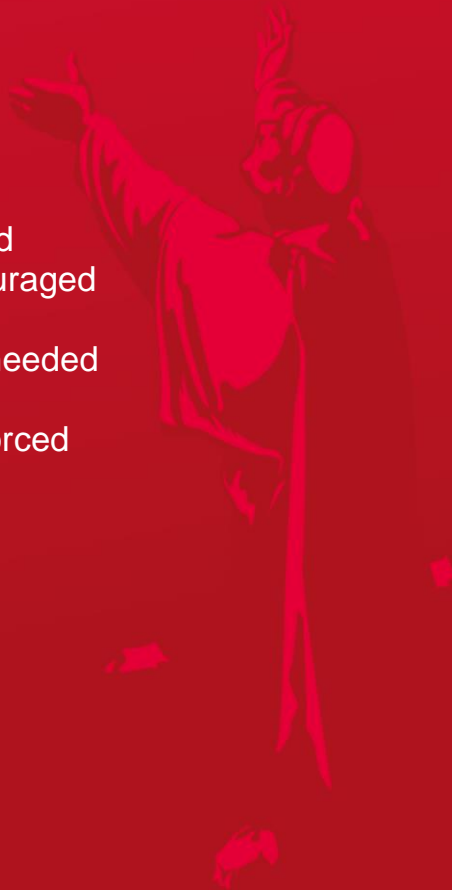


Nursery Fees Policy

Date: September 2024

Where the: 'Word of God, and the service and strength of St. Stephen, guides our steps and leads us in learning.'

We are a community where:
beauty and trust are treasured,
justice and tolerance are promoted
compassion and charity are encouraged
goodwill and loyalty are cherished
resilience and determination are needed
forgiveness and love are required
friendliness and respect are reinforced
faith and Spirit are shared.



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Statement of intent

St. Stephen's Catholic Primary School aims to provide a nursery experience for children that is affordable, high quality and geared towards a smooth transition to primary school.

This Nursery Fees Policy has been established to provide transparent fee information, set procedures for the payment of fees and create a framework for dealing with non-payment in a swift and fair manner.

Parents should be aware of, and given access to, this policy and the school's procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016
- The General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) Regulations 2016 (as amended)
- DfE (2018) 'Early years entitlements: operational guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Early education and childcare'

2. Fees

2.1. Parents are charged for care provided outside of the following provision:

- Universal 15 hours free provision a week for all three to four-year-olds.
- Extended 30 hours free provision a week for eligible three to four-year-olds.

2.2. The charges are as follows:

- £3.50 per day for lunch time supervision and £2.30 for each lunch provided

2.3. Parents will inform school of their child's lunchtime arrangements before the start of each school term.

2.4. The 30 hours free childcare offer cannot be used to pay for meals, other consumables (such as nappies or sun cream), additional hours or additional activities (such as trips). The school may charge a fee for these additions. If parents choose to pay for these, it is an arrangement between the parent and the school.

2.5. Parents will not be required to pay any fee as a condition of taking up a '30 hours' place.

3. Payment information

- 3.1. Payments for a half term's lunch time supervision should be made at least a week in advance of the half term starting. Payments for school meals should be made in advance of the meal being taken.
- 3.2. Payments for supervision charges are to be made via IRIS ParentMail. Payments for meals are handled by the school meals ordering and payment system, Appetite.
- 3.3. Payment is required when a child is on holiday or absent due to illness, as the nursery must hold the child's place during this period.
- 3.4. If a child is absent for a long period due to illness, the school will decide on a case-by-case basis as to whether fees will need to be paid for the period. The school's decision is final.
- 3.5. One month's notice and payment will be required to withdraw your child from the nursery.

4. Difficulty with payments

- 4.1. The school will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored.
- 4.2. Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care and education as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact Miss Celardi, the School Business Manager, as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.

5. Debt collection

- 5.1. The governing board has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled, including nursery fees.
- 5.2. The school will not initiate legal action to recover debts; however, we will refer uncollected debts to the Local Authority to consider such action.

6. Roles and responsibilities regarding debt collection

- 6.1. The Headteacher and School Business Manager will ensure that:
 - Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and well-maintained.

- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both letters and phone calls.
 - A final reminder is sent to the debtor.
 - The privacy of the family involved will be respected and only made known to those who need to know.
 - The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time.
- 6.2. The governing board:
- Will prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery.
 - At its discretion, will refer uncollected debts to the LA for consideration for legal action.
 - Will record all approved action in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
 - Will adhere to privacy arrangements.

7. The process for pursuing debts

- 7.1. **Informal reminder** – The debtor will be informally reminded in person or by telephone/text message that they owe money to the school.
- 7.2. **First reminder letter** – If the debt is yet to be paid after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor.
- 7.3. **Second reminder letter** - If the debt is yet to be paid after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further.
- 7.4. **Final reminder letter** – If no response is received following the second reminder, the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to the Local Authority to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.
- 7.5. **Possible legal action** – If no payment is made, and the governing board decides to escalate the matter to the Local Authority, the Local Authority will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

8. The waiving of debts

- 8.1. The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the headteacher and the governing board.

- 8.2. A debt may be waived when it is believed the debtor is experiencing serious financial hardship or if all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted and it is believed it would not be cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Headteacher and School Business Manager in conjunction with the governing board.
- 9.2. The next scheduled review date is September 2025.