



Higher Failsworth Primary School

'Working together for an Education for Life'

Charging, Voluntary Contributions and Remissions Policy 2024-26

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Philosophy

We recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Introduction

This policy has been formulated in accordance with DfE guidance on: Charging for School Activities. The purpose of this document is to help the Headteacher and Governing Body set out their policy on charging, remission and voluntary contributions for school activities and school visits.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Head teacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered by the Head teacher, and the Governing Body on appeal.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. The governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges. If a particular activity is limited to a specific number of pupils, the inclusion of pupils must not make reference to the ability or willingness to pay on behalf of the parent.

Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the School recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;

- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; examination resit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

- Activities outside school hours including trips and clubs. This may be a fee for the staffing, coaching, travel or resources.
- The full cost to each pupil of any activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours including residential visits.
- Individual/Group Instrumental Tuition outside of that provided through the Wider Opportunities schemes. In such cases the charge will not exceed the cost of provision. Children who are looked after by the local authority who wish to have instrumental tuition are entitled to free tuition. This will be recorded in their Personal Education Plan.
- Breakages

Residential Visits

A charge will be made for the cost of board, lodging and travel costs (subject to statutory exceptions) the cost will not exceed the actual cost of provision. See remissions for further details.

Breakages

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books or equipment on loan to pupils the Head teacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

Clothing

The uniform list provide the maximum flexibility to parents as to where they can purchase uniform items and regarding style in order for parents to obtain best value. The school also has a stock of outgrown items which parents may have free of charge. Where parents need support as part of a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan the school may provide items of school uniform, including shoes, free of charge.

Fruit tuck shop

Children in Foundation Stage receive a carton of milk each day. This is funded through a Government scheme. Children in KS1 are also able to access a carton of milk each day and this is subsidised by the school. Children in Foundation Stage and KS1 also receive a free piece of fruit (or vegetable) each day through a government funded scheme.

KS2 Pupils can purchase a piece of fruit for 20p from the Fruit Tuckshop that is run by Prefects.

School Meals

School meals are provided by the schools own in-house service. Meals can be purchased by notifying the office. The charge for 2024/25 is currently £2.70 a day (£13.50 per week) as determined by the school. Payment should be made on the Monday for the meals for that week. Parents will receive a text, Class Dojo or email reminder if meals have not been paid by the end of the week. When debts reach £27, school meals will be withdrawn and a packed lunch will need to be provided.

All children in Reception to Y2 are currently entitled to a free meal under the Government funded Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM) scheme.

Breakfast Club

All children are entitled to attend Breakfast Club from 8.00-8.50am. This Breakfast Club is not designed to replace child care but to encourage and support punctuality and support working parents who need to drop off their children a little early. A charge is levied (£1.00 per day for 2024/25) and children are able to access a range of foods, which may include toast, cereal, fruit juice, milk and fresh fruit.

When debts reach £10 (the equivalent of two weeks' attendance at Breakfast Club), parents will be advised that their child cannot access this provision and will not be able to attend Breakfast Club.

Debts may be sent to the Council to be processed by their debt recovery department (the Council makes a charge to the school for this service). The school will notify parents of the fact that unless the debt is paid then this process will take place and the school will not be able to continue to offer the breakfast club service for their child.

Chargeable after school activities

The school also offers after school activities which may be chargeable as the services are bought in from external providers. The school currently offers the following chargeable clubs:

- **Dance Club:** This takes place after school on Wednesdays for different age groups and children are able to attend a weekly session. The cost of the club is £3.00 per weekly session. The charge for the attendance period should be paid in advance via ParentPay. If the charge for the period (normally a

half term) is not paid, parents will be advised that their child cannot access this provision and will not be able to attend Dance Club.

Nursery Top Up Fees

The school offers the standard 15 hour free entitlement to all children of Nursery age. Some parents may also be eligible for the additional 15 hours entitlement under the Government scheme to make up a full time Nursery place (30 hours).

Where parents are not able to access the additional 15 hours childcare the school is able to offer a paid option. The cost to 'top up' to a full time place is £75 per week (£15 per day) for either five mornings or five afternoons. Payments must be made weekly in advance through ParentPay. Attendance charges will be applied weekly following attendance at the sessions.

If your child attends for a full day, you will also be required to either pay for a school meal (charges as detailed above) or provide them with a packed lunch.

Voluntary Contributions

The Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of any activity that takes place during school hours. Parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution for any activity which takes place during school hours. This might include visiting theatre companies, animal groups, museum visits, etc.

Foundation Stage

Parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution of 50p a week to go towards the costs of items that constantly need replenishing e.g. ingredients for play dough & other messy play, masking tape etc.

Non-uniform days

During the year there are opportunities for children to come to school in an outfit other than their school uniform. This might be in connection with their topic e.g. Alien Day, Roman Day, World Book day. No voluntary contribution is usually asked for this.

However, there are occasions when, as part of our Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural curriculum, we try to raise awareness of a charity and we ask children to wear a certain outfit and bring a voluntary contribution (usually £1) e.g. Red Nose Day, Children in Need.

We try to avoid having an entrance fee for any fair at school. In order to do this and keep overheads down we often ask parents for a voluntary contribution of an item that can be used at the fair.

The terms of any request made to parents will specify that the request is for a voluntary contribution and in no way represents a charge. In addition the following will be made clear to parents:

- a) that the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay; and
- b) that registered pupils at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Senior Leadership Team.

Remissions

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of state benefits which would entitle their child to receive free school meals the Governing Body will remit the majority of the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity (classed as and taking place within school hours). This is made clear in all correspondence in relation to these activities.

Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Parents/carers in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Universal credit
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed State Pension

In these cases a voluntary contribution can be made and as with any other trip if sufficient funds are not received then the trip may have to be cancelled.

In other circumstances the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence to the Head teacher for the remission of charges in part or full. The Head teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will authorise the remission.

Refunds

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the pupil's control
- The school decided that a pupil should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason.

Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Governing Body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a yearly basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

Publication of Information

This policy can be found on the school's website.

Review and amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body who may, from time to time recommend amendments to the categories for which a charge may be made, this will be brought to the full Governing Body for ratification. However, the Governing Body reserves the right to review the Charging and Remissions Policy as necessary.