



## **Stowlawn Primary School**

### **Charging, Remissions and Arrears Policy**

#### **AIMS**

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions;
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made; and
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

#### **LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

#### **DEFINITIONS**

- **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities.
- **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **The governing board**

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the headteacher.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Business Manager.

## **Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

## **Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently; and
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

## **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

## **WHERE CHARGES CANNOT BE MADE**

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

### **Education**

- Admission applications
- 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;
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - Religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

### **Transport**

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport.

- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

### **Residential visits**

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
  - The National Curriculum;
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - Religious education.
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

### **WHERE CHARGES CAN BE MADE**

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

#### **Education**

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, (eg. where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them).
- School meals;
- Optional extras.
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.
- Certain early years provision.
- Community facilities.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus.

#### **Charging for materials, books and 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 currently £2.50 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:

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 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.

### **Optional extras**

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - The National Curriculum;
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - Religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education).
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)/.
- Provision of milk.
- Sale of uniforms.

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

### Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost. To encourage attendance residential visits are subsidised by the school. The school exercises the right to offer 100% subsidies where considered appropriate and approved by the Headteacher.

### Provision of milk

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.

### Sale of Uniforms

Uniform is not sold in school. We operate a second-hand uniform collection and distribution service, for which there is no charge. Parents are signposted to local uniform retailers.

### Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

## **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

As an exception to the requirements set out where charges cannot be made, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- school trips,
- sports activities.

- In school visits.

**There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.**

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

### **ACTIVITIES WE CAN CHARGE FOR**

The school can charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast club;
- after-school activity clubs; and
- sports clubs.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed each year. Parents/carers will be informed of the charges for the coming year.

#### **Breakfast Club**

Charges are made for attendance at the Breakfast Club (the daily rate is set annually and is £2.50 for 2024/25). Breakfast items and refreshments are included (juice, toast, spreads 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 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.

#### **Sports Clubs**

We may on occasion run out of school sports clubs, for example football club, where the charges will be calculated on a cost neutral basis. In these cases the costs of running the club will be divided equally amongst the participants to calculate the attendance cost. Costings will be reviewed and approved by the Business Manager and Headteacher before approval is given for clubs to operate.

### **REMISSIONS**

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the delegated responsibility from the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

## **Remissions for residential visits**

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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).

The school reserves the right to remit (wholly or partly) any charge that would otherwise be payable, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

## **MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Business Manager monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by Business Manager annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and presented to the governing board.

<b>Reviewed by</b>	Ian Martin	<b>Date: 01 May 2024</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	Kate Charles	<b>Date: 01 May 2024</b>
<b>Next review due by:</b>	May 25	