

# Charging and Remissions Policy

## The Federation of Rawcliffe Bridge and Rawcliffe Primary Schools



**May 2023**

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## INTRODUCTION

We believe in the highest quality of provision for our pupils, and we allocate resources appropriately and within the guidelines to ensure that good value for money is achieved.

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.
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

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

We apply the charging policy in line with section 457 of the Education Act 1996. This allows charges to be made for residential school trips and for any artefacts made in school and taken home.

## AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to set out:

- What charges (a fee payable for specifically defined activities) will be levied for activities.
- What remissions (the can collation of a charge which would normally be payable) will be implemented.
- And the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

Questions and queries about the policy, or the application of this policy to an individual student, should be made through the school office. Enquiries will be dealt with in confidence by a senior member of staff.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst the school's Governing Body is responsible for determining the content of the policy, the Headteacher is responsible for its implementation. Any decisions regarding how this policy is applied to individual pupils/parents/carers will be discussed jointly by the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

## CHARGES

### WHERE CHARGES CANNOT BE MADE

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1998 and in accordance with sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, no charges are made to any registered pupil of any books, materials, equipment or apparatus used during school hours. Below we set out what we *cannot* charge for:

### EDUCATION

- Admissions 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 or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of 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 of 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 LA has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Governing Body and LA have arranged for students to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination by the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an education visit.

### RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Education on any trip that takes place during school hours.

- Education on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student 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 students on a residential trip.

## WHERE CHARGES CAN BE MADE

The school may recover costs of the following activities, which may be provided directly or through commissioned services, but charges will not exceed the actual cost. Below we set out what we *can* charge for:

### EDUCATION

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the pupil's parent/carer wishes them to own them.
- Optional extras (see Below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below)
- 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 syllabus.

### OPTIONAL EXTRAS

We can 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":

- Educational or other activities provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, which are not:
- Part of the National Curriculum
- Part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination, which the public is being prepared for at the school.
- Part of religious education
- Provision of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Art and Design or Food Technology, where pupils take home a finished product (note this could include before and after school clubs run by the school)
- Costs of entering a pupil for a prescribed public examination including re-sits where no preparations have been provided by the school.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Local Authority or Governing Body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education):
- Board and lodging on a residential trip (subject to remission arrangements)
- Extended day services offered to pupils such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions.

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 building and accommodation.
- Non-teaching staff

- The teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide optional extras (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extras).
- The cost, or 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 pupil who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents 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 which is charged for.

## MUSIC / OUT OF SCHOOL PROVIDERS

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parents. Charges may not exceed the cost of provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. The school has entered the Music SLA with East Riding of Yorkshire Council. At our schools, there may also be private arrangements made between externally based teachers or coaches and parents. The peripatetic teachers make their own charging arrangements with parents. Where children are taught in school by the LA peripatetic teachers, charges are made by the LA and school will charge for lessons for the term to parents at a rate that covers the cost to school.

Parents/carers will be given information about additional charges for the hire of the musical instrument from the Local Authority's School Service if applicable.

## SWIMMING

The school organises swimming lessons for all children at some stage in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in Swimming lessons.

## PRIVATE LETTINGS

School will arrange and charge for private lettings using the scale of charges as set out for directed community use of school premises by the Local Authority, to include VAT.

## RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

**Non-curriculum Based Residential:** for residential trips which are non-curriculum based:

- If the amount of school time on the trip is less than half of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied up to the full cost of the trip.
- If the amount of school time on the trip is half or more of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied for board and lodging only.

**Curriculum Based Residential:** for residential trips that are national curriculum based, a charge will be levied for board and lodging only.

These charges will be reviewed every two years and were last reviewed in April 2024.

## DAMAGES TO OR LOSS OF PROPERTY BY PUPILS

### SCHOOL PROPERTY

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials). The charge will be the cost of the replacement or repair. In some cases, a lower charge may be set but this decision is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### THIRD PARTY PROPERTY

A Charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be the cost of the replacement or repair. In some cases, a lower charge may be set but this decision is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### PAYMENT TOWARDS DAMAGES

Parents/carers must contact the school during the first week of receiving the invoice if they wish to negotiate a regular payment scheme over an extended period. The invoice must be paid within four weeks of the invoice date.

## DAMAGES TO OR LOSS OF PROPERTY BY STAFF

Staff are asked to take care of any IT equipment assigned to them. The Headteacher and Governing Body will consider levying a charge in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property on a case-by-case basis.

## SCHOOL MEALS

Parents/carers will be informed in advance of any meal charge increases. Guidance on meal price is obtained from the LA but discussed and approved by the school's Leadership and Management Committee on a termly basis.

Parents/carers should pay using the online ParentPay system on the day that meals are taken. Dinner money must be paid **when dinners are taken** as the school operates a "nil" arrears system. Parents/carers are encouraged to pay in advance e.g. monthly or half-termly.

Failure to pay for the meals taken will result in the school sending a text or email message towards the end of the week (see Appendix 1). If outstanding monies are not received by the following Wednesday, the school will contact the parent/carers by phone or text or email informing the parent/carer of the arrears incurred leading up to the current day and that their child/ren CAN NOT take any more school meals until the arrears have been cleared unless there are extenuating circumstances. (see Appendix 2). The Headteacher/Deputy must always be referred to before any action of this kind is taken, so as to assess individual circumstances.

## PASSPORTS

Due to General Data Protection Regulation (2018) school **staff may no longer verify passport applications.**

## BREAKFAST CLUB

The charge for the Breakfast Club is £4.50 per session for each child. Childcare Plus Vouchers (received directly from employers to school) are also welcome.

Please contact school office for further information when completing your application form.

Application forms must be completed prior to children using the Breakfast Club.

Parents/carers should pay using the online ParentPay system on the day their child attends or in advance.



The Breakfast Club will implement the following:

- To use breakfast club, we request that you book in advance using our booking form, wherever possible.
- All fees must be paid in advance of, or on the day.
- Children are not admitted into the club if the session is not paid for, unless there are accepted extenuating circumstances. Payment must be received as soon as possible after attendance.
- Fees will only be credited if the club receives 24 hours' notice of cancellations or if children are absent from school due to sickness or other unavoidable circumstance.
- The club will give parents/carers 6 weeks' notice of any increases to fees.
- Fees and charges are to be reviewed termly.
- All promotions regarding the changing of the amount charged per session per child must be approved by the Headteacher.

#### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

“Where the school cannot levy charges and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip of activity.”

*All pupils will be treated equally whether their parents/carers have made any contribution in response to the request of invitation. There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it may not take place.*

#### REMISSIONS

We believe that no pupil should be disadvantaged as a result of home or family background circumstances. The Headteacher and Governors may remit some charges in part or full as deemed reasonable. Decisions on whether there should be a remittance will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The charging and Remissions Policy is an integral part of our inclusive arrangements for pupils and is applied equally to all pupils.

## INVOICES

The school must receive payment of an invoice within four weeks of the invoice date.

An invoice for payment will be sent **within 10 working days** as this helps keep accurate monitoring records and reduces the possibility of a late payment fee (see below). A receipt will be issued on receipt of all payments. If payment is not received a reminder will be sent.

A late payment fee will be issued if a second reminder for any outstanding payment must be made. This fee will be set at £15 invoice per month. This is charged to meet the administration costs associated with time spent trying to recover the outstanding monies. If a debt remains unpaid, the Governor Body Finance committee will consult as to whether further action should be taken. This could result in the catering agreement being terminated with a terms notice given.

If you have a problem with making a payment, please contact the school immediately.

## REIMBURSEMENTS

There are occasions when it is necessary for school to reimburse parents/carers such as when:

- A child is unable to take part in a school trip due to illness.
- A school trip is cancelled.
- A child moves school but has paid upfront for school meals or Breakfast Club which they will not take.
- A child becomes eligible for Free School Meals
- A parent has accidentally paid for dinners when a child is eligible for Universal Free School Meals (UNiFSM)

In order to ensure that the school does not accumulate un-used credit office staff will:

ON AN AD HOC BASIS:

- Check Scholarpack when any child is added to the free school meals list and arrange for any dinner money credit to be refunded immediately.
- Check outstanding credit when a child transfers schools during the year and ensure any monies are refunded prior to off rolling the pupil i.e. undertaking the CTF transfer
- Refund any voluntary contributions made towards school visits within a week that any missed trip takes place.
- Refund any voluntary contributions made towards a cancelled school visit within a week of the cancellation decision being made.

## MONTHLY

- Run a credit report from SIMS and check that credit balances are not accumulating.
- Refund any erroneous payments or unused balances or earlier if staff are alerted by parents. Staff may need to liaise with parents/carers to establish whether they wish balances to be carried forwards.

## ANNUALLY

- Check outstanding credit for all Year 6 children prior to them leaving at the end of each school year and refund dinner monies and Breakfast Club payments prior to off rolling the year group
- Check outstanding credit balances for all children and contact parents/carers to establish whether they wish to retain funds on their school meal and Breakfast Club balances for the forthcoming year.

Rawcliffe Primary School will refund any positive credit balances directly to parents.

## MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REVIEW

The school Business Manager and the Administration Team monitor the implementation of this policy and report their findings to the Headteacher and Finance Committee on a termly basis. The Finance Committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and review the policy as required.

APPENDIX 1: TEXT/EMAIL MESSAGE (OR SHORT LETTER)

Your Child/ren has incurred £..... for dinners taken week commencing .....

Please send the outstanding amount of £..... on Monday.....

Thank you.

APPENDIX 2: ARREARS LETTER 1

Dear .....

Pupil: ..... Class: .....

Re: School Meal Payments for .....

We are writing to remind you that according to our records, you have arrears on your child's dinner money account. In order for your child to continue to receive school lunches it is important to keep your account in credit.

If you think this is not accurate, and that you feel you are up to date – please don't hesitate to contact the school office and let us know your query, and when the payments were paid so we can check and then update the system.

At the moment, our records show that for your child (name) .....

Class:.....

At 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 your outstanding balance is - £.....

Please could you kindly arrange for this to be paid by using ParentPay, our secure online payment system. You can use the login previously provided. Please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)

Your username is:

User Name.....

You can check your account balance at any time by logging into your ParentPay account.

Non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children therefore we need to ensure that all accounts are up-to-date.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or if you have difficulty making payment please contact the school office to discuss further.

Kind regards

The Rawcliffe Federation of Schools

APPENDIX 2: ARREARS LETTER 2

Dear .....

Re: School Meal Payments for .....

..... has been taking school meals this term, but the school has not received any dinner money recently.

Last week you were informed by letter of the amount owing. The outstanding balance on ..... was .....

As the school has not received the above amount ..... will not be able take any more school meals until the arrears have been cleared.

Please could you kindly arrange for this to be paid by using ParentPay, our secure online payment system. You can use the login previously provided. Please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)

If you are not able to pay, please make alternative arrangements for dinner i.e., packed lunches from tomorrow.

.....

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or if you have difficulty making payment please contact the school office to discuss further.

If you think you are eligible for free school meals, call 01482 394799. You will be told immediately if your child is entitled to this benefit.

Kind regards

The Rawcliffe Federation of Schools