



Charging and Remissions Policy

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Federation of Stoke Hill Schools

Charging and Remissions Policy 2023



Introduction

This Policy describes the circumstances when the parents of children at this school will be asked to pay for school activities, when they will be asked to make a voluntary contribution to costs and when they will not be asked to pay or contribute.

It also describes Remission; when costs will be waived for children from low income households.

Text that is underlined in blue indicates a link to further information within the document or online. If you don't have access to the internet or have any questions about this Policy, please ask for advice from the school.

1 Equality and Safeguarding Statements

- 1.1** This school and Devon County Council will only commit to policies and practices which will eradicate discrimination and promote equality for all, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion and belief, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation. This policy will be subject to an Impact Assessment which will be integral to all reviews.
- 1.2** We and our partners recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Whether their interest is in all young people 'staying safe' in all aspects of our services, or whether they are working in specific areas of vulnerability, all staff will have appropriate training and induction so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident in carrying them out. Settings, schools, children, young people and their parents or carers, or any member of the community should feel secure that they could raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously. This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This is supported by a clear child protection policy, appropriate induction and training, briefings on and discussion of relevant factors and refreshed learning in line with current legislation and guidelines.

2 Introduction

- 2.1** The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be charge.

The Policy has been informed by the Department for Education Guidance "Charging For School Activities" which was last updated in October 2014.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1** The head teacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Governors will review the policy from time to time to ensure that it meets with current guidance from the Department for Education.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1** All activities that are a part of the National Curriculum¹ for compulsory school age children,² necessary as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at school, or part of religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment, and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

We will normally make a charge unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s) at school,

5 Voluntary Contributions

- 5.1** We will ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards costs for activities during the school day³ which entail additional costs (for example school trips). If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions it will be made clear when parents are initially informed about the planned activity that this is the case. The head teacher or teacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities or trips.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a theatre company to arrange an activity or performance during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge in these circumstances the school may ask for a voluntary contribution from parents.

¹ The national curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject.

² Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). They must be in full time education by the beginning of the term following this. The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March. Children who are of compulsory school age do not have to be in school – they may be Home Educated.

³ Under [The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#), the school day is split into two half-day sessions, whatever time it starts and finishes. A school half day is any length of time up to 12 hours when the school meets, ending at noon or midnight that day.

6 Optional activities outside of the school day

- 6.1** We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education. Examples are sports activities, theatre visits and extended day services such as the before and after school club. Charges will be based on the cost incurred less any specific funding received, except the before and after school club which will be charged at a commercial rate.

7 Education partly during school hours

- 7.1** A charge will only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

A) Non-Residential

Where less than 50% of the time spent on activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

B) Residential

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening).

8 Music Tuition

- 81** Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).⁴

⁴ For further information, see www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/0184-2006PDF-EN-01.pdf

9 Residential Trips

9.1 There will be no charge for:

- 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, 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; and
 - supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

The school will charge for:

Board and lodging (the charge will not exceed the actual costs).

10 Remission

10.1 When parents are informed about a forthcoming visit, it will be made clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- 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 criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board & lodging has been aligned with free school meals criteria.)

The Governors have agreed that children who are not covered by the Remission Policy above may be subsidised in accordance with need, as identified by the Headteacher, so that no child is discriminated against. All applications for support/special consideration should be made direct to the head teacher

11 Calculating Charges

- 11.1 When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who are unable to or do not wish to pay.

12 Child Care Places Nursery

All 3 and 4-year-olds are entitled to a certain amount of free early education and childcare per week. This is called the **Early Years Entitlement**. More information can be found on the Devon County Council website

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/early-years-and-childcare/childcare>

[Early Years Pupil Premium \(EYPP\)](#) is additional government funding for childcare providers to improve the education they provide for disadvantaged 3 and 4 year olds.

Some 2-year-olds are also entitled to free early education and childcare. This funding is based on your child's circumstances or your family income and in Devon it is known as the **2gether scheme**.

The scheme helps improve children's learning and development, gives them the opportunity to make new friends, learn through play and have lots of fun in one of our specially approved childcare settings, which include day nurseries, school nurseries, childminders and pre-schools.

Your child is eligible if your family is receiving certain benefits, has a household income under £16,190, or if your child has a disability, special educational need, is adopted or placed under a residency order.

Free childcare places start the term after your child's second birthday, so don't miss out. Find out if you are eligible today.

Your child is eligible if the family is receiving any of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

- Child Tax Credit and have an annual household income (as assessed by HMRC) of no more than £16,190 per year
- Working Tax Credit and have an annual household income (as assessed by HMRC) of no more than £16,190 per year
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payments received when someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Family supported through part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act.

Or if your child:

- receives Disability Living Allowance
- has a current statement of special educational needs or an Education Health and Care plan
- has left care through special guardianship, or an adoption or residence order.

There is more information available on the website

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/childcare-parenting/schools-education>

13 Recovery of arrears

a) Dinner Money Accounts

This school operates a prepaid dinner system and parents can choose their children's dinner choices online and pay straight away. The system will not let you choose your child's choice unless you pay up front. It is therefore very difficult to get into arrears, however this can happen if you do not choose online and your child chooses their meal in the morning at register time.

- When card balances are in arrears by more than £10, letters will be sent weekly by the Business Manager until a limit of £20 debt is reached. The first letter will be sent via the child.
- If the debt is not paid, subsequent letters will be sent
 - Via the child for debts less than £20
 - Via the post for debts of more than £20 but less than £40

The advice at this point is likely to be that the child cannot take further meals until the balance is paid and a packed lunch must be provided daily. However, the school may allow meals to continue to be provided where it is felt that this debt is a temporary situation e.g. minor domestic problem, etc
- Arrears of £40 or more will be reported to the Head of School.

- d. The Federation Business Manager will contact the parents verbally to ascertain the situation and chase money accordingly. *Stoke Hill Federation is of the opinion that no child should go without lunch because their account is not in credit.* The parent may also, at this stage, be signposted to the Federation Family Support Worker who may be able to help. Details should be recorded in writing in a book with all action taken recorded and maintained as a record.
 - i. If, in the opinion of the Federation Business Manager, it is unlikely that payment is forthcoming, this will be reported to the Executive Headteacher for their consideration.
 - ii. If, at the Executive Headteacher's discretion, they feel that the situation merits it, a Final letter will be sent reminding the parent that their child should not order a school meal and that they will be contacted to bring in a packed lunch should the child not have one on any given day. The Final Reminder shall also state that the debt will be referred to Devon County Council which may affect their credit rating. If no payment has been received in full within 14 days of the date of the Final Reminder a Devon County Council invoice will be raised via a CT10 for the amount due provided the minimum arrears amount as per guidelines set is met. Generally, only longstanding debts where parental engagement has not been successful will be referred to Devon County Council provided the debt is in line with the minimum amount as per guidelines provided by them.

b) Extended School

When a booking is taken, the parent will be invoiced for the amount. The Invoice shall detail the sessions booked as well as the breakdown of the cost and the total amount to be paid. The Invoice shall also state the deadline of when the payment is to be made in full.

- a. If the full amount has not been paid by the deadline, a Reminder shall be sent out via the child notifying that payment is immediately due and to contact the Extended School Manager to discuss individual circumstances should it be difficult for the parent/guardian to make the said payment.
 - i. Arrears of £50 or more must be reported to the Head of School immediately.
- b. Where a pupil continues to attend Club sessions and no payment is made, the Extended School Manager will contact the parents verbally to ascertain the situation and chase money accordingly. The advice at this point is likely to be that the child cannot attend further Club sessions until the balance is paid. However, the school may allow Club session attendances to continue to be provided where it is felt that this debt is a temporary situation and that there is a payment plan in place. The parent may also, at this stage, be signposted to the Federation Family Support Worker who may be able to help. Details

should be recorded in writing in a book with all action taken recorded and maintained as a record.

- i. If, in the opinion of the Extended School Manager, it is unlikely that payment is forthcoming or if the arrears reaches £50 or more, this will be reported to the Executive Headteacher for their consideration.
- ii. If the debt proves unsuccessful, a Final Reminder will be sent notifying that the child will be excluded from attending the relevant club(s) and that the debt will be referred to Devon County Council
- iii. which may affect their credit rating. If no payment has been received in full within 14 days of the date of the Final Reminder a Devon County Council invoice will be raised via a CT10 for the amount due provided the minimum arrears amount as per guidelines set is met.
- iv. Where a cheque is returned by the bank, the senior administrator must be informed and he/she will chase a replacement payment.

14 Related Policies:

Nursery Admission policy

15 Policy version:

This policy was determined by the Governing Body of the Federation of Stoke Hill Schools on 7th February 2019. It will be reviewed and determined annually.

Contacts for Further Information

School contact

Stoke Hill Junior School 01392 667830

Stoke Hill Infants and Nursery School 01392 258894

The Department for Education (DfE)

0870 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) - Bristol

0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/b00199952/educationfundingagency

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