

# FELSTED PRIMARY SCHOOL

## CHARGING AND ARREARS POLICY

October 21



Nurturing today's minds for tomorrow's challenges

- Be Respectful
- Be positive
- Be the best you can be
- Save our world!

# 1. 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 be made

# 2. 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 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools in England.

# 3. Definitions

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

# 4. Roles and responsibilities

## 4.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body 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 Body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Finance and Premises Committee.

## 4.2 The Headteacher

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

## 4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

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

## 4.4 Parents

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

## 5. Where charges cannot be made

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

### 5.1 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
  - 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
- 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

### 5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Governing Body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

### 5.3 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
  - Religious education

## 6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out **what the school can charge for**.

### 6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

### 6.2 Optional extras

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

- Education provided outside of school 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
  - 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 Local Authority/Governing Body 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)

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 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 to be charged for.

### **6.3 Music tuition**

The school 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.

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

## **7. Voluntary contributions**

As an exception to the requirements set out in sec on 5 & 6 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

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

- a trip (transport and entry costs). Our curriculum is founded on the belief that first hand experiences are vital for young children's learning. A well-chosen trip inspires children and deepens their knowledge and understanding
- swimming lessons which incur many extra costs
- Occasionally a visiting expert (e.g. dance teacher, puppet theatre) although we try to provide these experiences out of our school budget

The contribution is genuinely voluntary, and the pupils of the parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall from school funds, then it must be cancelled. There is no legal reason why a school should not invite parents/carers to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of providing activities within and outside school hours.

## **8. Activities this school charges for**

The school will charge for the following where the activity takes place outside school hours:

Pupil's travel costs

Board and lodging

Materials, books and other equipment

Non-teaching staff costs

Entrance fees to museums, theatres etc.

Insurance costs

## **Clothing**

Although no charge can be made for “equipment” for use in school in connection with education provided during school hours, clothing is specifically excluded from the definition of equipment. Parents can therefore be asked to provide their children with such things as PE and sports kit.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed in each year.

## 9. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Governing Board and will depend on the activity in question.

### **9.1 Remissions for residential visits**

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits may 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)
- 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)

## 10. Recovery of Debts

**Procedures** Felsted Primary School chases all monies owed for dinner money, educational trips, and all chargeable services.

The Office Administrator will try to recover any debt over £10 by text/telephone in the first instance and/or letter, indicating the amount of the debt, the reason for debt/services provided and length of time the debt has been outstanding. If, after 3 weeks has passed and all possible sources have been tried, the debtor will be invited to meet with the School Business Manager, to ascertain any financial difficulties.

Any action taken to recover the debt should be recorded, stating date, method of contact, amount chased and copies of any letters sent to the debtor.

## **When a Child Has Left**

If a child has left the school/due to leave the school, the school must maintain communication to retrieve any debts due. All reasonable effort will be made to recover any debt.

## **11. Refusal of Services**

If a debt relates to the non-payment for a school trip, the pupil will still be entitled to take part. However, if a debt relates to dinner money the pupil will not be entitled to a hot meal. The decision to refuse services as a result of outstanding debt will be made by the Headteacher. The decision will be made official in writing to the debtor indicating that services will be resumed once the debt has been paid.

## **12. Monitoring arrangements**

The Headteacher and Finance and Premises Committee monitor charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

**This policy will be reviewed annually or when new guidance is issued by the DfE. At every review, the policy will be approved by Finance and Premises Committee**