



# *Four Lanes Community Junior School*

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

### **Background**

This complies with the requirements of the 1988 Education Act and DfE Advice October 2014 along with the guidance in the Education Authority's document "Local Management in Schools".

There are areas of school life where the cost of provision of an activity or event is exceeded by the school's ability to pay through the normal financial channels, i.e. the Official School Fund from Hampshire County Council and the school's own Unofficial Fund, which contains monies raised by the school in other ways (sponsorship, donations, voluntary contributions, etc). The school will seek charges for these "optional extras" as defined in the Act and seek voluntary contributions for Educational Visits and Visitors in order to help us provide activities and events that would not otherwise be possible because of financial constraints.

### **Aims**

The school's aim for charging for these activities is that each should be non-profit making, but cover costs. If an activity cannot be funded without a voluntary contribution, the governing body or headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. However, governors recognise that some families are not able to afford the charges to achieve this. In such circumstances, other parents of children taking part in that activity will not be asked to subsidise by increasing their charges. Therefore, on behalf of the governing body, the Headteacher will decide whether that activity should be subsidised. Each decision will take into account benefit to the children and financial position of the school. Amounts involved will be reported to the Governing Body at least annually.

No charge will be made, or voluntary contributions sought, for any essential curriculum materials. Voluntary contributions may be sought from parent/carers for activities which entail additional costs. In these circumstances no student will be prevented from participating because parent/carers cannot or will not make a contribution.

Charges will be made for optional extras such as reading folders. School uniform and water bottles and reading folders are sold at school.

### **Music Tuition**

The school has an arrangement with the Hampshire Music Service whereby we buy in their services (usually peripatetic music teachers). The cost for these peripatetic music teachers is passed on to parents at a termly charge. If pupils want to cease having these lessons parents must pay at least to the end of the full term to cover the costs incurred. If notice is given at the end of a half term, parents must cover the full cost of the full term.

### **Educational Visits or Visitors**

We will seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of transport and entrance fees for educational visits and also the costs associated with having visitors to the school. These are non-profit making activities and no parent has an obligation to make a contribution. It may be however, that unless sufficient voluntary contributions are received, the activity may not be able to take place. No child will be left out of the activity due to non-contribution. Every effort is made to keep the costs down to a minimum, with paramount importance being paid to safety and particularly transport safety.

### **Residential Trips**

The actual cost of board, lodging and transportation for residential trips will be charged directly to the parents. No residential trip at Four Lanes Community Junior School will be regarded as essential or compulsory. Cases of financial hardship will be considered on an individual basis.

As for educational visits, these are non-profit making.

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

## **Cooking**

Children may, occasionally prepare a meal/ dish as part of Food Technology. The parents of these children will be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the ingredients. The food is either consumed by the pupils after it has been prepared, or is taken home by the pupils.

## **Design and Technology**

Occasionally, children will as part of their D & T project, be asked to pay an nominal sum towards the cost of materials.

## **Sports**

Some of our Physical Education curriculum is run by an external sports coaching company within school time. Their salaries are paid for by the school. However, after-school clubs run by sports companies and other outside providers, outside of the school day for pupils who wish to attend will incur a cost to parents. Clubs run at lunchtime by outside providers may also be charged. Cases of financial hardship will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher and/or Governing Body.

## **Damage or Loss to School Property**

Legally parents can be asked to pay for damage to and/or loss of school property, however we do not usually charge for accidental damage to property. We would consider making a realistic charge where property has been wilfully damaged or where books or equipment belonging to the school has been misused or lost. If a book or piece of school equipment is lost, after a request to find it, parents/carers will be asked to pay towards the replacement cost of the item.

The school operates the Micro Librarian System recording on the computer the books each child borrows from the Library. There will be a charge made for any books damaged or lost.

## **Insurance Cover for Educational Visits**

Hampshire County Council holds a School Journey Insurance Policy. Details are held in the school office.

## **Conveyance of Pupils in Private Cars**

There are times when we rely heavily on the use of parents' cars for transporting our pupils on visits or sporting activities - indeed many of them would be impossible without this facility. Law changes on use of booster seats mean that travel for pupils is now the responsibility of parents who can either transport themselves or make private arrangements for the transportation to events.

If a member of staff conveys pupils they will require the appropriate business insurance cover.

Enclosed: Appendix 1: Debt recovery, Appendix 2: Community Facilities

**Revised June 2015**

**Approved by Governors: 11.6.15**

**To be reviewed June 2018**

## **Appendix 1**

## **DEBT RECOVERY POLICY**

Four Lanes Community Junior School may experience bad debts and therefore controls need to be in place to ensure that monies are recovered as soon as possible.

### **Debt recovery procedures**

In order to prevent further debt accruing:

- In line with our school policy, all monies owing should be paid within 7 working days.
- The school will send a reminder, if the debt is still outstanding, 7 days after it arose, a second reminder 7 days later and a final demand 14 days after the second reminder.
- If the debt is material (ie over £50) then funded services provided by the school will cease until the debt is paid in full.
- If action taken by the school to recover the debt is not successful and the debt is material (ie over £50) then it can be referred to County Treasurer's Debtors Group where appropriate action can be

taken. However, according to the Scheme for Financial Management in Schools:

'Head teachers may write-off any amount of income due up to a maximum of £200 if they consider it is irretrievable, and must sign an explanatory record giving reasons for the write-offs. Records must

be kept for inspection.' It is therefore at the head teacher's discretion to decide whether to

write off debt up to £200.

- The finance officer at the school must ensure that appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action. In accordance with the Scheme for Financial Management in Schools.

The Governing Body can approve the write-off of debts up to £1000.

The responsibility of the County Treasurer is:

- 'In consultation with the chief officer, to agree the write-off of bad debts of between £1,000 and £5,000.'
- 'To obtain the approval of the Executive member in consultation with the relevant chief officer, for writing-off debts in excess of £5,000.'

## **Appendix 2**

## Community Facilities

The community centre facilities work outside of this Charging and Remissions Policy. However, it may be useful to parents to have the following information.

The Centre understands that the cost of registered childcare may seem expensive to a parent/carer. However, providing a high quality, safe and stimulating service for children is not cheap and to ensure the continued high standards and sustainability of the Clubs, it must ask that parents/carers respect its policy in respect of fees.

- The level of fees will be set by the Registered Person and reviewed annually in the light of the Centre's financial position, its future strategic plans and any other broader economic or social considerations deemed relevant.
- Payment of fees should be made monthly, prior to the start of the month in question. Individual payment arrangements will be negotiated between the Manager and parents/carers.
- The Centre will be sympathetic to requests for weekly payment. Parents/carers wishing to negotiate this or any other alteration to the standard fees policy should arrange a meeting with the Manager at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Discounts or refunds will not be given for illness, holiday or other absences taken during regular bookings for Dawn Chorus or Twilight Zone.
- Discounts or refunds will not be given for illness or other absences taken during Planet Holiday.
- Payments are not transferable between Planet Holiday and Twilight Zone or Breakfast Club.
- If the fees are not paid on time, the Centre will notify the parent/carer in writing and request payment at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The Manager has the right to issue a formal warning to the parent/carer and inform them that continued late payment will result in their child's place being forfeited.
- If fees are paid persistently late or not at all with no explanation, the Centre will be forced to terminate that child's place. Under exceptional circumstances, the Manager may agree to allow the child to continue attending the Club for the remainder of that week.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to a member of staff or the Manager if they have any query about the fees policy, or if, for any reason, they are likely to have difficulty in making a payment on time. Parents/carers are strongly advised to arrange a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity, to avoid jeopardising their child's place.
- A period of one month's calendar notice is required to terminate or to make any alterations to the original booking for Twilight Zone or Dawn Chorus. This must be made in writing to the Manager and will be acknowledge on receipt.
- A period of one month's calendar notice is required to terminate or make any alterations to the original booking for Planet Holiday. Unless a refund is specifically requested in writing to the Manager, any monies owing will be made as a credit toward a future holiday booking.