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# Charging & Remissions Policy

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## **Introduction**

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition.

### **Voluntary contributions for activities as part of the Curriculum**

When organising school trips, visits or workshop activities which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the activity. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel the activity.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child is still allowed to participate fully in the trip or activity as long as parental consent has been given.

If appropriate and funds allow, the school may pay a proportion of the costs in order to support a visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded.

### **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum - we do not charge for this. Extra-curricular clubs such as choir or recorder are also without charge.

There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. This charge is paid directly to the school which organises peripatetic music teachers through a service level agreement with Staffordshire Music Department to teach individuals or small group lessons on the school site.

We reserve the right that if payment is not made on behalf of a child that lessons will be withdrawn. Letters will be sent to parents/carers to inform them of any monies owing before such a decision is taken.

We give parents information about additional music tuition during the summer term prior to the start of each academic year.

### **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for two year groups of children. Lessons take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We do not ask for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of transport to and from the pool, provision of a lifeguard/specialist teacher and hire of the pool itself. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask for their written permission for their child to take part in these.



### Optional Extra Activities

(Activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to Religious Education)

It is the governors' policy to charge for such activities organised by the school. The basis for calculating the charge will be proportionate for each participating pupil for travel, board & lodging, materials, books, equipment, entrance fees and insurance.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- music tuition by peripatetic music teachers employed by Staffordshire County Council
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to the theatre;
- school trips abroad;
- musical events.
- provision of personal iPads
- contribution towards resources for some after school clubs

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents / carers at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents / carers to make a contribution and notify parents / carers whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parent / carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent / carer is unwilling to pay, their child will still be given equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and if the school does not choose to fund it via some other source, the activity will be cancelled.

### Activities not run by the School or Local Authority

When an organisation acting independently of the school or Local Authority arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents.

### Residential Visits

The school organises an annual residential visit for Year 5 and 6 children. The cost of this trip includes board & lodging, transport, materials, entrance to any sites visited and charges for any activities to be experienced.



The cost of this trip will be based on travel costs, entrance to sites, materials and charges for activities experienced. The governors' policy is for the school to cover the cost of any additional teacher time necessary to lead the trip or subsequent follow up work.

Where available, sponsorship will be provided for children of families on various forms of benefit, income support or in special circumstances to enable them to take part in the option of their choice. This is stated clearly on letters and is dealt with discretely and in confidence by the Headteacher. Parents will be given the option of a payment plan to spread the costs of the residential visit.

### **Charging in Kind**

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment, etc., needed for practical subjects, such as food technology or DT, is budgeted for and borne by the school. However, the school may charge for, or require the supply of ingredients and materials, if the product is to be owned and taken home by the child afterwards, e.g. food products, models containing electrical equipment or batteries. The school will inform parents prior to activities, giving them the choice to pay for materials or purchase their own materials for the activity.

### **Breakages & Fines**

The Governors reserve the right to ask parents to pay for the cost of replacing any item such as:

- broken windows
- defaced, damaged or lost text books & equipment
- replacement reading books or homework diaries
- any item damaged as a result of unsatisfactory pupil behavior

### **Special Needs**

The governing body confirms that no pupil with special needs or disabilities will be treated any differently than any other pupil. The school will take all reasonable steps to avoid putting children with special needs at a substantial disadvantage.



### Before & After School Club and Holiday Clubs:

All sessions for Fulfen Club places must be booked via the Fulfen Club booking form. The booking forms are emailed to parents / carer on the first Tuesday of each month to be completed and submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. By filling in the booking form, the parent / carer agrees to the terms & conditions, including the payment of all sessions pre-booked even if the child does not attend.

Payments for Fulfen Clubs (Before & After School and Holiday Clubs) will be invoiced by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of each month for all sessions requested by the parents / carers for the following month.

Payment must be made for the following month sessions by the last day of the month invoiced in.

For example: October Club places - invoiced by 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September for payment no later than last day of September.

Late payments may result in children not being accepted into Club sessions.

If payments are made using childcare vouchers (not directly via ParentPay) a screen shot of the payment must be sent to [fulfenclubfinance@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:fulfenclubfinance@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk) to confirm payment has been made by the last day of the month, as above.

### Cost of sessions:

Breakfast session (inc breakfast)	7:30am to 8:45am	£6.50
Drop-off session (no breakfast)	8:00am to 8:45am	£5.50
Club session (inc snack)	3:30pm to 4:30pm	£6.50
Tea session (inc light tea)	3:30pm to 6:00pm	£11.50

### Holiday Club:

Full day (inc snack)	8:30am to 3:30pm	£28.00
Full week (not inc bank holidays)	Mon to Fri 8:30am to 3:30pm	£126.00

### Other charges:

Late booking fee (after 15 <sup>th</sup> of the month)	£10.00
Ad-hoc session fee (requested during the week required)	£5.00
Late collection fee after 4:30pm	£5.00
Late collection fee after 6:00pm	£20.00
Late payment fee (after last day of the month deadline)	£5.00



### Fulfen Pre-School:

Any hours in Pre-School wrap-around that are not covered by EEF funding are chargeable, this includes lunch sessions and school meals.

All payable (non-funded) sessions for Fulfen Pre-School places must be booked via the wrap-around section in the electronic application form. By completing the electronic application, the parent / carer agrees to the terms & conditions, including the payment of all sessions pre-booked even if the child does not attend.

Invoices will be sent out by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of a month for all sessions requested by the parents / carer for the following month.

Payment must be made for the following month sessions by the last day of the month invoiced in.

For example: October places - invoiced by 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September for payment no later than last day of September.

Late payments may result in children not being accepted into sessions.

If payments are made using childcare vouchers (not directly via ParentPay) a screen shot of the payment must be sent to [nursery@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:nursery@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk) to confirm payment has been made by the last day of the month, as above.

### Cost of sessions:

Morning session 8:30am to 11:30am	Covered by universal 15-hour funding
Lunch session 11:30am to 12:15pm	£6.00 unless covered by extended EEF funding
Afternoon session 12:15pm to 3:15pm	£18.00 unless covered by extended EEF funding
Pre-School snack	50p per day, payable termly
Pre-School meal (pre-booked and paid on ParentPay)	£2.00
Forest School	£5.00 per term (£15.00 total)
Late payment fee (after last day of the month deadline)	£5.00

All payment items are payable via the ParentPay system or Childcare vouchers (excluding snack & lunch) unless funded by Early Education Funding (EEF).



### Debt Recovery:

Fulfen Primary will take all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

We will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Financial Regulations for Schools and any other legal requirements. In particular:

- the Governing Body will approve the write-off of all debts in line with the Scheme of Delegation
- all such write-offs will be recorded in the minutes of the governing body
- a formal record of any debts written off will be maintained and this will be retained for 7 years (the form of this record is specified below).
- the school will seek the advice of the Council's Legal Services Section should they consider taking legal or other action to recover the debt.

All communication requesting monies outstanding will be accurately recorded and maintained.

Documentary evidence of all steps undertaken by the school to recover the debt including dates that letters were sent, and/or phone calls that have been made to debtors.

For all outstanding debts over £25, an invoice will be raised in My Finance & SCC debt recovery team will begin their process to recover the debt on behalf of school.

Each case involving a family will be judged on the family's individual circumstances and the amount outstanding as to the length of time before legal action is started. The identity of the family involved is only disclosed to those who need to know under this policy.

One half term is the acceptable credit period, unless otherwise stipulated in writing. Debt recovery procedures will commence after this time.

### Debt monitoring /reporting of outstanding debt levels

The Head teacher and Business Manager will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored and reported to the Governors.

### Verbal and Written Reminders

Where a letter is issued, a copy will be retained on file. An initial reminder may be informal and can be made either in person (when a parent/carer comes to collect/drop off the child), or by telephone / email.

A formal reminder letter will be issued two weeks after the informal reminder.

A log of correspondence and telephone calls and copies of letters will be kept for audit and legal purposes.



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If after 2 reminders, a response or payment is not received, a letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the matter will be referred to the Local Authority via the school raising an invoice through the Finance system and the debtor will be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future services or the service will no longer be available to them.

In cases where debtors are unable to pay, a sensitive approach to debt recovery will be adopted. The following factors will be taken into account:

- Hardship: where paying the debt would cause financial hardship.
- Ill health: where our recovery action might cause further ill health.
- Time: a payment plan will be agreed.
- Cost: where the value of the debt is less than the cost of recovering it.
- Multiple debt: where someone owes more than one debt to the School. In this situation an attempt to agree one repayment plan to include all debts will be established.

In the event that a debtor requests 'repayment terms', these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Head teacher and Finance Governors.

The school will retain a record of all such agreements entered into.

In all cases, a letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms for repayment.

When all practical and cost-effective methods of debt recovery have been exhausted by the County Council Income Team, the Director of Finance and Resources will notify the school of the amount of debt that is considered to be irrecoverable and should be written off. Writing off debt will lead to a charge in the school budget as the income was credited to the school when the invoice was raised.

Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt then the Finance Governors will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor. Should the Committee decide to do so; the debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt.

A formal record of any debts written off will be retained in school for 7 years.

File location: GovernorHub - Approved Policies Folder/School - Approved Policies Folder



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