



## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

**Approved by:** Finance Committee **Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023

**Signed by:** (Chair)

**Last reviewed on:** April 2023

**Next review due by:** Summer 2024

## Admissions

There is no charge for admissions.

## School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per week decided by the Local Authority

## Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school. However, if the pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the school may recover the fee incurred from that pupil's parents. These principles apply equally to re-sits.

## Activities that take place during school hours

There is no charge for activities during school hours except for music tuition. There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

### We may charge for:

- optional extras
- music or vocal tuition

## Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the National Curriculum
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

## Optional extras

The following is a list of additional activities as outlined, organised by the schools, which may require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive

- education provided outside of school time that is **not**:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - c) part of religious education
- transport that is not taking 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 for a pupil on a residential visit.
- extended day services offered to pupils ((for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).
- Reward Trips
- Some design and technology costs for materials and ingredients
- Celebratory events such as school prom

## The cost of optional extras

The head of each school will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set by the head teacher on the recommendation and approval of the finance committee. The charges, when determined, will be shared with parents via the usual communication channels

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- the costs of buildings and accommodation.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## Residential activities

- **Our schools will not 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
  - supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
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- **Our schools will charge for:**

### Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost

### Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs. Travel charges will not be made if pupils are travelling on the Schools' minibuses

### Activities

The school may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of school hours.

## Music tuition within school hours

- The North and South West Durham Learning Federation schools follow government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.
- **Charges will 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).
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The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case. Charges may 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 parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

- There may be a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by county peripatetic music teachers. A contract between the County Music Service and individuals' parents /carers is then issued. There is a cost for such tuition which is charged directly to parents from the County Peripatetic Music Service. School does not enter into this contract other than to give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year
- The Federation Schools are dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours may be remitted for pupils on free school meals or who are Looked After.

## **Swimming**

The schools organise hydrotherapy or swimming lessons for some pupils as part of their curriculum entitlement. These take place in school time. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

## **Extended services**

The Federation Schools provide a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Extended services enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services (such as health, social care or special educational needs services)
- ways of increasing pupil engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.
- Enriching a pupils experience and widening their interests

The schools may provide extended services such as breakfast clubs, out of school clubs and homework clubs, Charges may be made to cover the cost of non-teaching or teaching staff engaged to provide the activity or brought in to run the club or materials used by the clubs.

The total charge will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise others.

## **Refunds**

Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made to the individual school. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

## **Damage to property and breakages**

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher and dependent on the situation.

## **Voluntary contributions**

- The Federation Schools may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.
- In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.
- There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to contribute.

### **Inability or unwillingness to pay**

- The Federation Schools are committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

### **Complaints**

Complaints about the implementation of this policy or any decisions taken in line with the policy will be considered as part of the school's complaints procedures.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored annually by the Finance Committee of the Governing Body.