



# Suffolks Primary

## Charging and Remissions Policy 2024

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Cassius'.

(Headteacher)

Date: 25<sup>TH</sup> March 2024

(Chair of Governors)

Date: 25<sup>TH</sup> March 2024

**Contents:**

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Charging for education
3. Optional extras
4. Voluntary contributions
5. Music tuition
6. Transport
7. Residential visits
8. Education partly during school hours
9. Damaged or lost items
10. Remissions
11. School trip refunds
12. Extended Nursery Provision
13. No Debt Policy
14. Monitoring and review

### **Statement of intent**

**Suffolks Primary School** is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

Please note we have ensured this Policy meets the requirements of the law.

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- No Debt Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- School's Scheme of Delegation
- Finance Policy

## 2. Charging for education

2.1. We will not charge parents for:

- 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.

2.2. We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
  - Music tuition (in certain circumstances)
  - Use of community facilities
- Certain early years provision.
  - The use of community facilities and other commercial activities
  - Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

## 3. Optional extras

3.1. We may charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is 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

– RE

- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA 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
- 3.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
  - Buildings and accommodation
  - Employment of non-teaching staff
  - Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
  - The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- 3.3. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils.
- 3.4. The school will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- 3.5. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.
- 3.6. The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.
- 3.7. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.
- 3.8. If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.
- 3.9. Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.
- 3.10. If a pupil or their parents consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parents. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parents or pupil will have their fees refunded.

#### **4. Voluntary contributions**

- 4.1. 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, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.
- 4.2. No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If

insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

- 4.3. The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when the school requests contributions.

## **5. Music tuition**

- 5.1. Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents.
- 5.2. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.
- 5.3. Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.
- 5.4. Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.
- 5.5. No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

## **6. Transport**

- 6.1. The school will not charge for:
  - Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
  - Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.

## **7. Residential visits**

- 7.1. The school 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.
  - Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.
- 7.2. The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- 7.3. Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:
  - 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

The school will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for the activity.

- 7.4. If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
- 7.5. Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.
- 7.6. If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is 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 RE.
- 7.7. **[Residential visits]** If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for the activity.
- 7.8. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school's contingency funds.
- 7.9. Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

## **8. Damaged or lost items**

- 8.1. The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

## **9. Remissions**

- 9.1. The school has set aside a small fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.
- 9.2. Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

9.3. To request assistance, parents should contact the **SBM** via [office@suffolks.enfield.sch.uk](mailto:office@suffolks.enfield.sch.uk)

## 10. School trip refunds

- 10.1. All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.
- 10.2. In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.
- 10.3. In the event that a school trip is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The **headteacher** will consult the **governing board** on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.
- 10.4. In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The **headteacher** will discuss options with the **governing board**, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 10.5. In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The **headteacher** will discuss options with the **governing board**, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 10.6. In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to whether a refund is given. The **headteacher** will consult the **governing board** on the matter, taking into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.
- 10.7. In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to whether a refund is given. The **headteacher** will consult the **governing board** on the matter, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.
- 10.8. The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.
- 10.9. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the **Complaints Procedures Policy**.



## **11. Extended Nursery Provision**

12.1 Please see separate document regarding additional charges for this extended provision.

## **12. No Debt Policy**

12.1. Please refer to School's No Debt Policy for full information. All debt write-offs will be referred to the Governing Body.

### **\* Parentpay**

Please note that ParentPay charge a transaction fee for each individual payment.

However, please be advised of the following:

- School Meal payment – transaction fee paid by LBE
- Suffolks TTC/BC and Yr6 Residential trip – transaction fee paid for by the school
- All other activities – transaction fee will be paid for by parents.

## **13. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme**

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

## **14. Monitoring and review**

14.1. This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the **governing board** and **headteacher**.

14.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **February 2024**