

# Charging Policy



**Ashley Junior School**

Headteacher	Mrs C Bartolomeo
Date due for renewal	September 2024
Updated	September 2023

## **Ashley Junior School - Charging Policy (including Remissions and Debt Recovery)**

### **Aim of policy**

1. To ensure that the School's policy with regards to charging (voluntary contribution) for additional and optional activities (including excursion and school trips) is clear.
2. To advise parents/carers in receipt of certain benefits, that all children have the same opportunity to take part in all additional and optional activities for which they may not need to pay.

In the interest of a broad and balanced curriculum, the School wishes to promote enriching additional, and other opportunities, which make a valuable contribution to children's learning and school experience.

All education during school hours is free. "School hours" are those whilst the school is in session and do not include the break in the middle of the day.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Voluntary contributions are requested from parents/carers in order that the costs for each child are fully paid for, to cover for transport, entry fees and workshops and the like. If insufficient contributions are raised to fund the additional and/or optional activity they may be cancelled.

### **The School will ensure that:**

- a) all parents/carers are aware that contributions are voluntary.
- b) if a parent/carer does not make a contribution their child will not be treated in any way differently from other children.
- c) when planning an activity which would need a contribution, the educational value and cost of the amount required to enable the activity to take place is fully explained.
- d) any contributions are based on the activity cost for each child and do not include any element of profit towards the school or subsidy for those not making a contribution.
- e) opportunity is available for parents/carers to discuss with the Finance Officer if there is a problem in making a contribution.
- f) it informs all parents/carers of their right to claim free activity (remission) if they are in receipt of certain state benefits. Guidance on how to check eligibility to make a claim for free activity can be found at GOV.UK.
- g) it informs all parents/carers that if contributions are requested and are not forthcoming it may be necessary to postpone or cancel the activity.
- h) all parents/carers are aware that for residential activities full payment is required for each child unless special arrangements have been made, and that any payment schedule **must** be followed.
- i) it abides by the provision of the Education Act 1996.

## **Residential trips**

When the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly in school time which is to provide education directly to the National Curriculum, we do not make a charge for education. However, we do make a charge to cover the cost of board and lodging. Parents who receive certain state benefits\* can request financial assistance by writing in confidence to the Finance Officer.

\*The criteria is the same for School meals – see School meals section.

Payment schedules **must** be followed and parents/carers realise that they are making a firm commitment when making their deposit. A deposit and/or payment received will only be refunded if the school is able to receive a refund from the travel company or their child's place on the trip is taken by a pupil on any waiting list.

## **After school clubs and extra curricular activities.**

Occasionally charges will be made for materials or ingredients used in after school clubs run by school staff. After school clubs run by other organisations will have their own charging arrangement.

## **Sporting events**

Entries to team or school based sports events are generally paid for by the school for the first round. If an individual or team progresses to later rounds then charges may be made for entry fees.

## **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The specialist music teachers teach individuals or small group lessons. We make a charge for these lessons as per the Music Tuition (England) Regulations (2007). We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year. The school subsidises all specialist music lessons. No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the Local Authority.

Charges may also be made for the hire of musical instruments and the cost of entering a pupil for a public examination.

Applications for remissions will not be invited for such activity, though the school may make remissions at its discretion to meet the needs of individual students.

Payment must be received termly in advance.

## **School meals**

The school provides a school meal service (via Hampshire County Council/HC3S). School meals are available to pupils at the HCC/HC3S current school meal price, or at no cost to those in receipt of a free meal entitlement.

A free meal entitlement is available to pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of one or more of the qualifying benefits listed on the standard free school meal criteria list. There are no further remissions available for free school meals than those on the standard free school meal criteria list.

Applications for free school meals can be made via:  
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hc3s/freeschoolmeals.htm>.

Payment **must** be made weekly in advance. Our preferred method of payment is via the ScoPay on-line payments system. Details can be obtained via the school office.

The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment has not been received or where authorisation for free school meals has not been received. If a parent/carer repeatedly fails to make payment the school will write to the parent/carer and give notice that meals will no longer be provided. See Appendix 1 below.

## **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for some pupils in Years 5 and 6 who are unable to swim 25 metres. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. Parents may be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the costs of transport, pool hire, swimming badges and certificates. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask parents for written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

## **Materials and resources**

We charge for materials, books, instruments or equipment where the student or their parent/carer wishes to own the resource.

Applications for remission will not be invited for materials and resources, though the school may make remissions available at its discretion to meet the needs of individual students.

## **Minibus**

The school is not currently hiring out its vehicle and details have been removed from the Hampshire Minibus Loan Register.

## **Calculating charges**

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside the school day, they will be based on the full cost incurred, divided by the total number of students participating. The full cost may include a reasonable allowance for overheads. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not pay.

### **Value for money**

Value for money will be sought in planning activities that will incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

### **Other charges:**

#### **Lettings**

In accordance with the school Lettings Policy, the school will let to a variety of organisations and charge a sum agreed by the Governing Body. Availability and fees can be discussed with the Finance Officer.

#### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Publication Scheme)**

Charges will be made to cover the printing and administration costs incurred as a result of the publication scheme. Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10 no charge will be made. Thereafter the charge made will be the full cost of postage and copying.

#### **Damage and loss charges**

A charge will be made for any loss or damage to school property caused deliberately by a child. In each case an invoice will be provided to parents explaining the charges.

**This policy to be reviewed at least every three years. Next review date: January 2025**

## **Appendix 1**

**School Meal - final reminder letter**

Parent of carer of

Our records show that despite previous reminders you have not paid dinner money for your child ..... Class:..... .

As at ..... (Date) your account is showing a debt of £.....

**In accordance with our school meal's policy, your child will not be provided with school dinners as of ..... (Date) until the debt is settled.**

Please ensure that you have made sufficient provision for your child's lunch. Once the debt has been cleared your child is welcome to resume school meals with payment in advance.

Please contact the school to discuss your outstanding debt. Failure to do so will result in the activation of the school's debt management recovery procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher