

Castlecroft Primary School Charging, Remissions and Arrears Policy

Introduction

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. However for certain activities or optional extras we may charge or ask for voluntary contributions. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity.

In accord with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, the Governors have drawn up the following charging and remissions policy. This was approved by the Finance Committee of Castlecroft Primary School on 29th June 2017 and will be reviewed annually. This policy shall be made available on the school website and paper copies to parents or carers on request.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or towards school activities. For example, contributions towards school fund, fund raising and costs associated with school trips and visits.

School Trips and Visits

When organising school visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school will write to parents asking them to contribute towards the cost. No pupil will be left out because a voluntary contribution has not been received. However if there are insufficient voluntary contributions, the school may be left with no choice but to cancel the visit. It will be explained to parents or carers at the planning stage if this is likely to be the case. Parents or carers who have contributed would then receive a refund. The school will make it clear at the outset what the policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

If a child is unable to take part in any visit or activity through illness, then a refund would be issued, less any financial commitments that have already been made. E.g. transport costs and/or admission costs.

Governors have agreed to subsidise some trips at their discretion.

Residential Visits and Overnight stays

Where a school activity involves pupils staying on nights away from home, there will be a charge for board and lodging. Parents or carers who are in receipt of the following support payments are entitled to claim remission from the payment of the board and lodging charge:-

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and the family gross annual income does not exceed £16,190
- Universal Credit
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

All other costs involved in residential visits are asked for as voluntary contributions. If a child is unable to take part in the residential visit through illness, then a refund would be issued, less any financial commitments that have already been made. E.g. transport costs, accommodation costs and/or admission costs.

Optional Extras

Out of hour's activities and clubs are classed as Optional Extra's. The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

- **Breakfast Club and After School Club**
Charges are made for attendance at the Breakfast Club and After School Club. There is a separate policy detailing these charges.
- **Sports Clubs**
Castlecroft Primary School currently offers football as an optional extra each Friday after school. This activity is chargeable at £2.50 per session.

Should arrears occur, through non-payment, where the amount becomes significant and verbal requests have been ignored then an official written request will be issued detailing a payment deadline. Should this deadline be missed no further access to the Club will be granted until payment has been made. If payment is still not made and the outstanding amount is in excess of £75.00 the debt may be forwarded to Wolverhampton City Council for collection.

Additionally a range of other sports clubs take place, at various times of the year, after school but there is no charge made to parents for these.

Music Tuition

Instrumental music tuition is currently available at parental request and is charged at £3.50 per lesson up to the value of £35.00 per term, with effect from 1.9.17. As there will be more than 10 lessons a term there will be no refunds if a lesson is cancelled unless the number of lessons per term drop below 10, then a refund will be offered. No profit is made from the provision of instrumental tuition.

Lessons will be paid for at the beginning of each half term. If a child decides they no longer wish to take music tuition there will be no refund for the terms payment as at this point the school is committed to paying the termly invoice to the music tuition provider.

Parents or carers who are in receipt of support payments (as listed previously) are entitled to claim full remission from the payment.

Should arrears occur, through non-payment, where the amount becomes significant and verbal requests have been ignored then an official written request will be issued detailing a payment deadline. Should this deadline be missed no further access to Music Tuition will be granted until payment has been made. If payment is still not made and the outstanding amount is in excess of £75.00 the debt may be forwarded to Wolverhampton City Council for collection.

Charging for School Equipment

No charge will be made for materials, books or equipment needed for lessons. The only exception to this is, where wilful damage to the equipment by the child has taken place. A contribution towards the cost of replacement shall be requested.

School Meals

Under the Education Act 2011 schools are permitted to charge up to the maximum cost of a school meal. With effect from 1.4.17 Castlecroft Primary School is being charged £2.30 for each Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM), £2.82 for each junior paid meal and discounted/flexible charge meal they provide. However the Governing body agreed to continue to pass on only part of this cost to parents/carers. The Governors have agreed to charge parents/carers £2.40 per junior paid meal and £1.40 per discounted/flexible meal and this will be effective from 1.9.16 however the price will increase to £2.50 and £1.50 respectively from 1.9.17.

To be eligible for a discounted/flexible charge meal parents/carers must meet a certain criteria of being a low-income family in receipt of working tax credit as permitted under the flexible charging framework (Education Act 2011).

Children in Early Years Education are eligible to receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal Scheme currently in place.

To be eligible for a free school meal where no charge is made for the provision of a school meal (separate to the UIFSM) parents/carers need to be in receipt of support payments (as listed previously).

Should arrears occur, through non-payment, where the amount becomes significant and verbal requests have been ignored then an official written request will be issued detailing a payment deadline. Should this deadline be missed no further school lunches will be provided and a packed lunch will need to be sent in daily until payment has been made. If payment is still not made and the outstanding amount is in excess of £75.00 the debt may be forwarded to Wolverhampton City Council for collection.

Milk

There is provision to provide $\frac{1}{3}$ pint (189ml) free milk per day to children under the age of 5 years attending approved day care facilities for 2 or more hours per day, until the term after their 5th birthday. Children aged 5 and over that are registered to receive free school meals are also entitled to receive free school milk.

With effect from 1.9.2017 Castlecroft Primary School will cease to offer the mid-morning milk provision for children in year one upwards. Milk will be available at lunchtimes with school meals.

Uniform

In addition to Bradsparts, located in Bilbrook School uniform can be purchased from the School Office – where a current price list is available.

Paying for Information

Where parents or members of the public request copies of information under either the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing copies of information. Details of charges are provided in the schools Data Protection policy and FOI Publication Scheme.

Lettings

All persons or groups wishing to hire school premises should complete a letting application form and read the terms and conditions of hire. Charges for lettings are set by the Governing Body, however the Local Authority do suggest minimum amounts. At present there are no lettings to note.

Receipts

An online payment facility or PayPoint facility is used for parents and carers to make payments relating to Out of Hours Club fees, School Trips, Music Tuition and to pay for School Meals so no receipt is required.