



Reid Street Primary School

Charging & Remission Policy

Reviewed & Approved by Governors 24th October 2023

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Statement of intent

Reid Street 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.

1. Legal framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- 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 (2019) 'Governance handbook'
- The trust's Funding Agreement'
- ESFA (2022) Academy trust handbook 2022

This policy operated in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- The 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 religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.

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 and vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information

- 2.3. The school is committed to ensuring that its school uniform is affordable and accessible to all pupils, and does not place an unreasonable financial burden on parents. This is fully compliant with the statutory guidance which came into force in September 2022.

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 pupils is being prepared for at the school
 - Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
 - Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the trust board 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 e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision
- 3.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the following:
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
 - Buildings and accommodation
 - The employment of non-teaching staff
 - The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) 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. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.
- 3.4. The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.
- 3.5. 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. 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.

4. Examination fees and resits

4.1. We may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.
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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.

4.2. 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 parent/pupil will have their fees refunded.

5. Voluntary contributions

5.1. We 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 at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available. However if insufficient voluntary contributions are not received, we may have to cancel the activity.

5.2. No child 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. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

5.3. We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

6. Music tuition

6.1. Music (instrumental/vocal) 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. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

- 6.2. The school use the service of Durham Music Service and Front Row Music who provide a peripatetic music teachers to teach individual/small group lessons. Both Providers deal directly with the parent/carers regarding invoice payment.
- 6.3. Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.
- 6.4. Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.
- 6.5. No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

7. Transport

- 7.1. We 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.
 - Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
 - Transport provided for an educational visit (though a voluntary contribution could be requested).

8. Residential visits

- 8.1. We 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 religious education.
 - Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.
- 8.2. We may charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- 8.3. Currently parents are asked for a significantly reduced contribution to residential visits if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits, however this is reviewed annually according to the school's budget.
 - 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 £18,725
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – please check the threshold of your personal entitlement for eligibility.

9. Education partly during school hours

- 9.1. 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.
- 9.2. Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school is divided into two sessions. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.
- 9.3. 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 we may charge for the activity; however, we 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 religious education.
- 9.4. **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, we will not charge for the activity.
- 9.5. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.
- 9.6. Any charges for extended day services will be optional. The school offers various before and after school clubs during the year which are heavily subsidised, however it may be necessary to request a contribution to cover expenses to run these clubs. The school will inform parents if a contribution is applicable.

10. Damaged or lost items

- 10.1. 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.

11. Remissions

- 11.1. We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/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/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.
- 11.2. 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 £18,725
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – please check the threshold of your personal entitlement for eligibility.

11.3. To request assistance, parents should contact the Director of Business via the school office on 01325 251006.

12. School trip refunds

- 12.1. 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. In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.
- 12.2. In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take 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.
- 12.3. Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.
- 12.4. In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take 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.
- 12.5. In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 12.6. In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 12.7. Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.
- 12.8. The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

13. Income generation

In line with the ESFA's '[Academy trust handbook](#)', the trust will set fees for chargeable services at full cost, and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

14. Equal Opportunities

There are nine protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010, these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The school does not tolerate any form of bullying or discrimination against people with one or more of these characteristics.

The school's curriculum will celebrate diversity and the SLT has a responsibility to ensure that the curriculum does not discriminate against any of the above characteristics, including when making decisions around charging and remissions.

The school will have due regard for the Single Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan at all times, including when making decisions around charging and remissions.

Supporting pupils with SEND

- Pupils with SEND will receive the additional support they require both academically and with their personal development, in line with the school's SEND Policy.
- Pupils with SEND will not be discriminated against in any way, including when charging and remissions are applied.

15. Monitoring and review

The policy will be reviewed by the staff and Governors of Reid Street Primary School on an annual basis.