

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

At Orchard Head J I & N School we believe the children benefit from outside visits, journeys, visitors and extra-curricular activities in sport and the creative arts. This policy has been compiled in line with DfE requirements and in accordance with s457 of the Education Act, 1996. Any charges that are made will be to cover costs and not to make a profit. This policy aims to:

- let parents and carers know what the school will not charge for, what it will make a charge for or request a voluntary contribution from parents/carers;
- clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and carers understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities.

Orchard Head J I & N School is a cashless school. The only cash that school will accept is for sponsorship/charity donations. The website School Money (www.eduspot.co.uk) is used by school to manage payments for school meals and activities. On School Money, parents/carers can make a payment whenever and wherever they like, seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

For parents without access to the internet, payment can be made by credit or debit card either over the telephone or in person at the office.

1. School Dinners

- 1.1. School meals are currently provided by our catering partner Chartwells. Healthy, fresh nutritious meals are prepared on site daily and offer a choice of meat/ vegetarian, jacket potato or sandwich option on a daily basis. The lunch menu is published on the school website.
- 1.2. Universal Infant Free School Meals - Pupils in Reception Class /Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals. Parents are asked to confirm whether they would like their child to receive a free school meal.
- 1.3. For the Academic year 2018-19, school meals are available for pupils in KS2 (Years 3-6) at a cost of £2.00 per day, £10.00 per week.
- 1.4. Occasionally special themed lunches are promoted, which offers pupils who usually bring their own sandwiches, the opportunity to try a school meal.
- 1.5. Pupils may be eligible for Free School Meals if their parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits – see exemptions and a record of those pupils is maintained and regularly reviewed. Confidentiality is strictly adhered to.
- 1.6. Pupils' daily meal choices are made by the pupils in class.
- 1.7. Parents are asked to pay in advance for school meals, online at www.eduspot.co.uk If a pupil is absent, for example due to illness, no charge is made and any balance is rolled-over to the following week.

- 1.8. Dinner money balances are retained on School Money and are available for parents to check by logging on to their account.
- 1.9. Arrears are promptly identified and outstanding balances are pursued. Texts and emails are sent each week to those parents/carers who have an outstanding balance. Outstanding payments will be dealt with as follows: Any child whose total arrears amount to the cash value of £20.00 (**total arrears = Dinner Money + Breakfast Club + After School Care Club**) will be contacted and advised that, until the arrears are cleared, they will no longer be able to access school meals, Breakfast Club or After School Care Club.
- 1.10 Any debts remaining after a child has left Orchard Head J I & N School will be transferred to remaining siblings at the school, where applicable.
- 1.11 In line with Pontefract Academies Trust's Bad Debt Policy, all bad debts are reviewed on a monthly basis and, where necessary, outstanding debts are referred to the schools Governing Body Resources Committee to determine whether the school should take court proceedings via the county court or whether to write off the bad debt.

2. School Trips/Visits/Residentials

Trips and residential visits can be categorised into essential and non-essential. The guidelines for each are set below:

- 2.1. **Essential:** For school trips or visits that form part of the school's curriculum or religious education, or which meet the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, the school invites parents to make a voluntary contribution to the cost.

All contributions to curriculum trips are voluntary. **If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may need to cancel a trip.** If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from others. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school curriculum trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. The school **is not** under any legal obligation to pay additional costs in order to support the visit.

- 2.2. **Non Essential:** For school trips or visits that are not essential to the school's curriculum or religious education, or in preparation for prescribed examinations, a charge will be levied up to the full cost of the trip, including contingency and school administrative costs.

There are certain exemptions for parents in receipt of specific state benefits (see exemptions). These usually only apply in certain cases and are subject to change. The office staff will be able to supply details. Parents eligible for support with the cost of a non-essential trip should apply to the Head of School in writing. Requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis in line with the School's Governing Body approved remissions limits (Section 10).

If there are insufficient receipts/participants to make the trip financially viable, the trip/visit **will be cancelled**.

- 2.3. The school will organise residential visits in school time, or mainly in school time. Guidelines for charging for residential visits are as follows:

Essential. For residential trips which are essential to the School's taught Curriculum, statutory RE or in preparation for prescribed examinations, a charge will be levied for board and lodging and voluntary contributions will be requested for travel expenses. **If we do not receive sufficient contributions, we may need to cancel the residential.** If an essential residential trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school curriculum residential, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the residential. The school **is not** under any legal obligation to pay additional costs in order to support the residential.

Non-essential. For residential trips which are not essential to the School's taught Curriculum, statutory RE or in preparation for prescribed examinations, a charge will be levied up to the full cost of the trip, including contingency and school administrative costs.

There are certain exemptions for parents in receipt of various state benefits (see exemptions). These usually only apply in certain cases and are subject to change. The office staff will be able to supply details. Parents eligible for support with the cost of a non-essential residential should apply to the Head of School in writing. Requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis in line with the School's Governing Body approved remissions limits.

If there are insufficient receipts/participants to make the residential viable, the residential **will be cancelled**.

- 2.4. The cost/voluntary contributions to School Visits/Residential Trips will be set at a level to cover all costs. However, on occasion, some trips/visits may be subsidised at the discretion of the Head of school. Costs/voluntary contributions will be calculated by sharing the costs equally between the number of children eligible to attend. For example, the cost of transport will be derived by dividing the amount charged to school by the number of children eligible to attend. Entry/admission costs are usually calculated per person.
- 2.5. All payment/voluntary contributions should be made in advance of the trip/residential taking place. Deposits are usually non-refundable unless a trip is cancelled by the school. Where pupils are unable to attend a trip/residential, the only possible refund for children who are absent, will be that portion of a voluntary contribution that has not been calculated by sharing costs equally, i.e. it has not been arrived at by dividing the total cost by the number of children. For example:

*The individual cost of a coach, calculated by dividing the total cost by the number of children originally attending the visit, would **not** be refunded.*

*The individual ticket cost to enter a site **could** be refunded. This portion will be refunded as long as the rules of the establishment being visited allow for this to happen.*

- 2.6. Where there is a surplus of less than £5 per pupil on a school visit account and less than £10 on a school residential account the balance will be transferred to the general school account and will be used for the future benefit of all pupils in school.
- 2.7. If the total surplus on a school visit account exceeds £5 per pupil or exceeds £10 per pupil on a school residential visit account, then the balance will be divided by the number of paid pupils and the amount returned to each paid pupil.
- 2.8. The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents, or charges to parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:
 - visits to museums;
 - sporting activities which require transport expenses;
 - visits to or by a theatre company;
 - visits to the cinema;
 - musical events

3. Music Tuition

- 3.1 All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.
- 3.2 There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an optional additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. The Music Service make a charge for these lessons (reviewed annually), but parents and carers in receipt of state benefits may be exempt from payment for one instrument.
- 3.3 Peripatetic Music Tuition is available to pupils in KS2; this is provided by Wakefield Music Service. For the Academic Year 18-19, pupils will be charged a flat rate of £64 per term (£192 per year) for a group lesson, which includes access to the Wakefield Music Centre on a Saturday Morning. Separate charging arrangements exist for individual lessons. Please see the office for details.
- 3.4 Payment is made directly to Wakefield Music Service who will invoice parents on a termly basis.

4. Charging for Materials

- 4.1 School can, if required, make charges for Design & Technology, Art & Design or other projects. In accordance with the 1996 Education Act, the school may make charges for materials used if the parent or child wants to own the finished product. In this case we will always advise parents in advance of the cost.

5. Swimming

- 5.1 The school organises swimming lessons, usually in Year 4. These lessons take place in school time and are part of the schools taught curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents and carers when these lessons are to take place.

6. After School Clubs

- 6.1 The school sometimes provides after school clubs where parents are asked for a contribution towards the cost of resources.
- 6.2 The school is sometimes able to secure the services of qualified sports coaches. It is necessary for the school to make a charge for this service and so children attending these sessions may be asked to contribute financially toward the cost of the coaching session.
- 6.3 A clubs offer list is sent to parents in advance, each half term outlining available clubs and the cost for each.
- 6.4 Clubs can be booked and paid for online using the facilities on www.eduspot.co.uk Clubs are available on a first come first served basis.
- 6.5 It is not possible to reimburse parents when a pupil is absent from school or if they decide to drop out of a club once they have secured a place.
- 6.6 On occasions teacher led / outside agency clubs may need to be cancelled due to staff absence. Where possible these sessions will be re-scheduled either to a different day or over a lunch time.
- 6.7 The school is unable to offer any exemptions or discount for pupils eligible for FSM (see exemptions) to attend After School Clubs.

7. Breakfast Club

- 7.1 The school offers a Breakfast Club starting at 7.45am each morning during term time and costs £2.75 per day.
- 7.2 Parents do not have to pre-book attendance at breakfast club although we do ask that payment is made in advance. Payment can be made via www.eduspot.co.uk.
- 7.3 Arrears are promptly identified and outstanding balances are pursued. Texts and letters are sent each week where there is an outstanding balance. Any parent/carer whose child's total arrears* amount to the cash value of £20.00, will be advised that until the total arrears are cleared, their child will no longer be able to access school meals, breakfast club or after school care club (***total arrears = Dinner Money + Breakfast Club + After School Care Club**).
- 7.4 The school is registered with several Child Care Voucher Schemes and is therefore able to accept certain childcare vouchers for the payment of breakfast club. Please contact the school office for more details.

7.5 The school is unable to offer any exemptions or discount for pupils eligible for FSM to attend Breakfast Club (see exemptions).

8. After School Care Club

8.1 The school offers After School Care starting at the end of the school day until 5:30pm each evening during term time and costs £4.00 per day. Children receive a light snack and drink whilst waiting to be collected by parents/carers.

8.2 Parents do not have to pre-book attendance at After School Care Club. Payment should be made at www.eduspot.co.uk

8.3 The school sometimes provides after school clubs, when parents are asked for a contribution towards the cost of resources or the costs associated with hiring a professional sports coach. If a child wishes to attend the after school club and then join the After School Care Club on completion of their activity parents should only pay for the After School Care Club. The office staff must be notified when bookings are being taken for After School Clubs so that a place can be reserved in the club as places are often limited.

8.4 Arrears are promptly identified and outstanding balances are pursued. Texts and letters are sent each week where there is an outstanding balance. Any parent/carer whose child's total arrears amount to the cash value of £20.00, will be advised that, until the total arrears are cleared, their child will no longer be able to access school meals, breakfast club or after-school care club (***total arrears = Dinner money + Breakfast Club + After-school Care Club**).

8.5 The school is unable to offer any exemptions or discount for pupils eligible for FSM (see exemptions) to attend After School Care Club.

8.5 Arrears are promptly identified and outstanding balances are pursued. Texts and letters are sent each week where there is an outstanding balance. Any parent/carer whose child's total arrears* amount to the cash value of £20.00, will be advised that until the total arrears are cleared, their child will no longer be able to access school meals, breakfast club or after school care club (***total arrears = Dinner Money + Breakfast Club + After School Care Club**).

9. Concerts / Performances

9.1 There may be times when we need to make a small charge for parents to attend school productions. This may be to cover the cost of hiring a venue (where the school hall is not big enough) or to cover the cost of costumes / licences etc.

9.2 Concerts and performances will be ticketed events to ensure numbers are compliant with health and safety guidelines.

10. Damage / Loss to Property

10.1 A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school

property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials). The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head of School may decide.

- 10.2 A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head of School may decide.

11. Exemptions

- 11.1 Parents who have **applied for Free School Meals and have received notification that they are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)**, i.e. they are in receipt of the following benefits and are exempt from paying certain charges:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (the government plans to prescribe these circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out).
- Income support.
- Income-based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child tax credit, provided that the family's income as assessed by HMRC does not exceed certain limits.
- The guarantee element of state pension credit.
- An income-related employment and support allowance

Further details and an application form for are available from the school office - all queries are dealt with confidentially.

Please note that exemptions do not cover parents whose children are eligible for free school meals based on age, i.e. pupils in Reception Class, Year 1 and Year 2 who qualify for Universal Infant Free School Meals.

- 11.2 Pupils of parents in receipt of certain benefits (see above) may be eligible for a 50% reduction on essential trips, residential trips and non-essential residential trips once per academic year up to a maximum of £40 for trips and £150 for residential visits. Parents eligible for support with the cost of residential and essential visits should apply to the Head of school in writing. Requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis in line with the Schools Governing Body approved remissions limits.

12. Payments / Refunds – School Activities

- 12.1 The school uses School Money as its main form of managing payments from parents. School Money has a facility for parents/carers to pay electronically for trips and clubs. Parents are encouraged to pay via the online facility offered by School Money. If parents are unable to access the internet office staff are able to take debit/credit card payments either over the telephone or at the office window.
- 12.2 There may be times when a trip is cancelled and a refund is necessary.

When refunds are made these will be by the original payment method, i.e. if paid by credit/debit card, the refund will be made to that card.

13. Payments / Refunds – School meals and Breakfast Club

- 13.1 Payments for school meals and Breakfast Club are managed by the school through www.eduspot.co.uk, where parents/carers should pay online by credit or debit card. **No cash or cheque payments will be accepted.**
- 13.2 Where applicable, credits will be transferred to siblings and refunds (e.g. at the end of the school year) will be returned to the credit/debit card from which the original payment was made.

14. Other Charges

- 14.1 The Head of School may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. providing a copy of an Ofsted report or a pupil's school record.

15. Monitoring and Review

- 15.1 This policy is monitored by Pontefract Academies Trust Board, the school's local governing committee and the Head of School. It is reviewed annually or earlier, if necessary.