

# Rakegate Primary School



## Charging, Remissions & Arrears Policy 2024/25

## **Introduction**

This charging policy has been compiled in line with DfE requirements and in accordance with s457 of the Education Act, 1996.

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 we may charge or ask for voluntary contributions.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

The school may ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school 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 trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents/carers to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. However if we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents/carers have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in a school 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. These children are not treated any differently from any others.

Parents/carers have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which may require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'.

This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to the theatre;
- musical events.

## **Residential Visits and overnight stays**

For residential visits in school time or mainly school time, which provides education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education or travel expenses.

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 may be entitled to claim remission from the payment of the board and lodging charge: -

- 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're 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 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

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.

### **Music Tuition**

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

### **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Year 5. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents/carers for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

A range of extra-curricular activities organised by the school staff are provided free of Charge.

The school is sometimes able to offer additional specialised after school. Qualified Coaches/teachers, who are not a member of the school staff to run and organises sessions. We may make a charge for these sessions.

## **School Meals**

The school has adopted the standard Local Authority charging policy for school meals. In addition to this, we are also following the Local Authority Universal Free School Meals initiative introduced September 2014 where all children in Early years Education are eligible to receive a free school meal under the Universal Infant free school meals 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).

We do ask that families who are eligible for free school meals still apply for them as the premium attached to this benefit comes in to school and helps provide children with additional benefits.

School meals are currently charged at £2.50.

## **30 hours Childcare - Lunchtime Supervision Charge**

In addition to the 15 hours free childcare provided to children the term after their 3rd birthday, Rakegate has a limited number of places available under the 30 hours childcare scheme. Subject to availability, an additional 15 hours may be offered, these hours are to be spread evenly over the school week, up to a maximum of 3 hours per day.

From September 2024, the lunchtime supervision charge will be included within the 30hrs funding if the child goes home before lunch on a Friday afternoon. If supervision is required after lunch on a Friday, up until 3.30pm, then £10 will be charged.

There will be an additional charge of £2.50 should the child require a school meal. There will not be a lunchtime supervision charge if your child is absent from school due to illness, is on a school trip that requires supervision over lunchtime or if the parent arranges for the child to be cared for at home over the lunchtime period.

## **Childcare Vouchers**

School Trips, Visits, Residential Visits and Overnight stays cannot be paid for using childcare vouchers, other employer schemes or via tax free childcare, as they are not classed as 'approved childcare'.

## **Goods or services sold by school**

Occasionally school will sell goods such as school uniform or book bags. A charge is made to the value of the goods received with the school receiving a small profit. It is not however school policy to specify which supplier people have to use.

## **Charges for miscellaneous services**

There are no charges for services, but we ask for a voluntary donation to school fund e.g. for passport applications.

## **Lost or deliberately damaged property**

If a child has provably and deliberately damaged or defaced school property or another child's property the parent of that child will be voluntarily requested to replace it. If the Policy on Charging parent requests the school to provide a replacement e.g. for a diary planner that they cannot access themselves, the school is happy to assist. However, these cannot be constituted as a charge because there is no way of enforcing this and it is therefore voluntary.

### **Paying for Information**

Where parents or carers request copies of information under the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing such copies – equivalent to the costs charged to school per copies by the photocopying contract.

## **Breakfast and Afterschool Club**

Breakfast Club and Afterschool Club is a service available to all Rakegate pupils, from Nursery through to Year 6. This is a chargeable service to cover costs of staffing and resources. These are led and managed by school staff so the children will be greeted and looked after by a familiar face. A range of activities are always available.

Charges listed below are effective from September 2020:

Breakfast Club  
7.30 – 8.40am            £4.00 per session.

After School Club  
3:10 – 4:30pm           £5.00 per session  
3:10 – 5:30pm           £7.00 per session

## **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. Our milk suppliers currently cease delivery of free milk the week before a child turns 5 years of age.

Children aged 5 and over that are registered to receive free school meals are also entitled to receive free school milk. Milk will be available at lunchtimes with school meals.

Children over the age of 5, who are not entitled to free milk but wish to receive it each day will be charged £8 per half term, from the term they turn 5.

## **Remissions Policy**

All payments made to school for any school activity should be made via the school app, Teachers2Parents. The school has been cashless since September 2023.

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 activity 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.

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **Recovery Procedure**

Outstanding debts below £75 will be pursued by the school. The Headteacher will make appropriate arrangements with parents/carers to ensure that arrears are cleared on a regular basis using the following guidelines.

Where free meals have been provided for a period of five days and no notification of entitlement has been received, procedures to recover payment, using the suggested documentation detailed below, should begin:-

- 1: Day 5:- Letter as at Annex A to be sent to parent/carer.
- 2: Day 10:- Letter as at Annex B to be sent to parent/carer
- 3: Day 15:- Letter as at Annex C to be sent to parent/carer
- 4: If arrears continue to accrue to more than £75 (current amount), letter as at Annex D to be sent to The Director for Customer and Shared Services – Financial Services.

Entitlement to free school meals should be pursued by the school on the 5th day, by means of a letter to the parents/carers advising that confirmation of entitlement has not been received. Refer to Annex A for recommended format.

If there is no response to this letter, payment for school meals arrears should be pursued by the school on 8th day, by means of a letter to the parents/carers requesting payment. Refer to Annex B for recommended format.

If immediate payment is not received a further letter should be sent to the parents/carers on the 10th day. Refer to Annex C for recommended format.

This procedure should ensure that there is no further increase to the existing arrears as parents/carers should have made alternative arrangements for their child(ren) at lunchtime. If, however, this is not the case, the school will provide crisps, fruit and a drink of milk for the individual.

The school will continue to pursue any increasing debts.

If arrears are allowed to accrue and reach £75 details should be forwarded to The Director for Customer and Shared Services - Financial Services, for the appropriate action to be taken. Refer to Annex D for recommended format.

An official invoice will be raised for all debts over £75. A charge per invoice – currently £10 will be levied against the school. This is necessary to offset costs incurred by the Council when raising Sundry Debtor Invoices. No invoices will be raised for amounts of less than £75.

### **Breakfast and After School Club**

When possible, breakfast and after school club costs should be paid on the day which the children use the club. In the case of children using most days then this can be paid at the end of a week.

Once a debt becomes more than £50, children will not be accepted into the club until the payment is made.

Approved: 10.07.2024

Due to be revised Summer term 2025.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

**ANNEX A**

**ADMINISTRATION OF FREE SCHOOL MEALS  
DAY 5 LETTER TO PARENT/CARER**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Carer

We have not been able to verify that your child is entitled to free school meals.

Could you please contact the City Council Pupil and Student Services Team, Children & Young People (Telephone number 551462) as they have no record of you applying for free meals?

Please note that if verification of your entitlement is not received you will be charged for any meals that your child has received at £2.50 per meal.

Yours sincerely

S. Horton  
Headteacher



ANNEX B

DAY 10 LETTER TO PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Carer

We wrote to you recently regarding your child's entitlement to free meals.  
Please note we do not appear to have received any payment for school meals taken as listed below.

Week Ending:	Number Of Meals:	Price Per Meal: £ p	Total Amount Due: £ p

Could you arrange to send in payment of £--- immediately? If you are unable to make payment, please contact me at school as soon as possible to discuss the matter as we will not be able to continue to provide a school meal for your son/daughter next week.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Horton  
Headteacher

ANNEX C

ADMINISTRATION OF FREE SCHOOL MEALS RECOMMENDED STANDARD FORMAT  
FOR DAY 15 LETTER TO PARENT/CARER

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Carer

Please note that I do not appear to have received any payments for meals taken as listed below.

Week Ending:	Number Of Meals:	Price Per Meal: £ p	Total Amount Due: £ p

I should be grateful if you would send in the above outstanding balance immediately. If you are unable to make payment, please contact me at school as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

Unless the balance of £ --- is paid by Monday --/--/-- it will be your responsibility to make alternative lunchtime arrangements for \_\_\_\_\_ by way of a packed lunch or other means. If there was any doubt as to whether or not this was happening I may have to refer your case to The Director for Children & Young People for further investigation.

In addition, if payment is not made by the above date, I will have no option but to arrange for an official invoice to be issued to you by the City Council who will pursue the debt through its procedures.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Horton  
Headteacher

ANNEX D

PROGRESSION OF SCHOOL MEAL ARREARS RECOMMENDED STANDARD FORMAT FOR REFERRAL TO CITY COUNCIL

Our Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For the attention of XXXXXX – Customer and Shared Services – Financial Services

Director for Customer and Shared Services  
Financial Services  
Civic Centre  
St Peters Square  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 1RL

Dear

Could you please arrange collection of outstanding dinner money arrears?  
I have written to the child's/children's parents/carers but, as of the above date these arrears still remain unpaid.

Pupil Name	Full Name, Address and Contact Telephone/Mobile Number Of Parent/Guardian	Period of outstanding meals (From – To)	Amount Due £ p

I acknowledge a charge (currently £10) per invoice raised in excess of £75 will be charged against my budget share.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Horton  
Headteacher