



**Joseph Turner Primary School**

# Charging and Remissions Payment and Debt Management Policy

Approved by Governors December 2019  
Finance and Staffing Committee

To be reviewed at least every 4 years  
Review Date December 2023

Chair of Governors print SUE CARTER

Chair of Governors signed 

Date 14/12/19

## **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

Joseph Turner Primary School Governing Body is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:

- Participate fully in school curriculum
- Contribute to all aspects of school life; and
- Be a valued partner in the process of education

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parents/carers on low income.

We aim:

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school; and
- To respond to the wide variations in family income whilst not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process within the school improvement plan and is linked to the annual budget cycle with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities.

It includes a number of key factors:

- The value of certain activities in relation to age and/or needs of pupils;
- The cost of an activity set against their educational value;
- How the activity will be paid for;
- The appropriate process for raising funding;
- An assessment of whether the educational aims can be met any other way;
- An understanding of the various types of activities involved e.g. educational visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- An assessment of local facilities.

### **2. Legislation**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activity. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions then the visit/activity will be cancelled.

Children of parents who are unable to contribute will not be discriminated against. However if there is not alternative method to make up the shortfall, the school will cancel the visit/activity.

### **3. Remissions Policy**

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Joseph Turner primary School will implement the following remissions policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent economic difficulties when planning the programme of educational activities for our pupils.



Staff will ensure that children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of FSM. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money which do not identify individuals who do not contribute.

School fund contributions are made through day trips, snack money, allocated non-school uniform days, charity events, the sale of tickets for special events or assemblies and the sale of raffle tickets at events (this list is not exhaustive and there may be other ways in which parents are requested to contribute to school fund).

#### **4. Informing Parents**

Joseph Turner Primary School will follow DfE Guidelines to inform parents.

A letter will be sent to parents giving them information about any proposed visit/activity which includes:

- Details of the visit/activity
- Dates and times
- Expected dress code
- Proposed voluntary contribution (if applicable)
- Return slip to include parental signature agreeing to the child partaking and individual consent forms as applicable, or if payment made online through SchoolMoney, the parent is made aware that by making payment, they agree to their child taking part on the visit/activity.
- Individual payment plans available on request
- A sympathetic timeline will always be considered

Any charge that is made for each pupil will not exceed the actual cost.

#### **5. Implementation**

Planning, as part of the process of budget building, is essential to developing a charging policy at Joseph Turner Primary School which recognises equality of access. We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school.

Members of staff arranging such activities will consider:

- The projected number of children
- Cost per head
- Entry fees
- Discounts
- Transport

Such a process however, should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities that arise during the course of the year.

### **PAYMENT AND DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY**

#### **6. Debt management**

Objective: To ensure the level of school meals debt is kept to a minimum.

Key Principles:

- To support parents by not allowing an unmanageable debt to accrue
- To have a clear threshold beyond which debts will not be allowed to increase
- To ensure that parents are made aware of the policy and procedures

School meals are provided by Dolce Ltd, an external provider. All payments are made directly to Dolce Ltd through their nominated third party contractor SchoolGrid. Payments are made either by Direct Debit mandates set up between the parent and SchoolGrid, or debit and credit card payments made by parents either through their SchoolGrid account or by telephone.

Parents are encouraged to pre-order their child's meals at home using their SchoolGrid account. Orders can be made for the whole of the term, or by 9:00am on the day.

The cost of school meals is set by Dolce Ltd on an annual basis. We will inform parents via the school newsletter and website. If parents feel their child may be entitled to free school meals, please contact the school office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that parents use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

#### ***Late payments***

Dolce Ltd allow five pupil meals to be taken before payment is due. This equates to £11.50 (£2.30 per day). Once the £11.50 debt has been reached, the pupil will not be allowed to have another meal until the debt has been cleared. Parents would then have to either make a debit or credit card payment using their SchoolGrid account or to call SchoolGrid direct on the telephone to make the payment.

The debt levels accrued by each parent is monitored daily by the Office Staff. Any parents whose child has received a meal but with no Direct Debit mandate set up, the parents are contacted to either set up the Direct Debit mandate or to make a debit or credit card payment to clear the debt.

If parents fail to provide their child with a packed lunch, the school will contact the parents so that they can bring a packed lunch into school. If the packed lunch is not provided, the school will provide your child with fruit/salad and a snack and parents will have to pay £1 the following day. Any instances where this occurs will be logged and monitored.

This policy is intended to support parents by providing greater clarity about how we intend to deal with school dinner money arrears.

#### ***How money is collected***

Dinner money payments are made either by Direct Debit mandates set up between the parent and SchoolGrid, or debit and credit card payments made by parents either through their SchoolGrid account or by telephone. School will not accept any cash payments for meals.

#### ***Milk***

Children under five receive a free milk carton daily. Milk charges for pupils aged five and above are set by the school's provider, Cool Milk Ltd, effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016. The agreement to provide milk is between the provider, Cool Milk Ltd and the parent. Parents register with the provider and arrange payment with them. The provider will inform the school on a weekly basis which pupils have paid for milk. For children turning 5 during the term a letter is sent out to register with the provider if they wish their child to continue having milk.

At the time of writing, the cost per carton of milk is 22p. The cost of milk will vary each term as the length each term will vary. New admissions will be able to register with the provider and order milk at any time. Information on how to register will be included in the school's prospectus pack.

#### ***Breakfast Club***

Breakfast Club is a service provided by Premier Sports. Bookings, queries and payments to be made directly to Premier Sports.

#### ***After School Club***

After School Club is a service provided by Premier Sports. Bookings, queries and payments to be made directly to Premier Sports.

#### ***After School Sports Activities***

Premier Sports provide sport specific after school activities for all pupils between Reception and Year 6. Bookings, queries and payments to be made directly to Premier Sports.



***Snack Money***

School provide snack for children in EYFS and ask parents for a voluntary contribution of £1.00 per week to support this. Parents of children in KS1 and KS2 are asked to provide their child with their own snack and the school encourages parents to help their children make healthy snack choices.

***School Uniform***

School Uniform items can be purchased from three providers; Shoebiz - High Street Princess End Tipton, CCUniform - Kings Square West Bromwich and MyClothing Embroidery Service which is an on-line purchasing facility only.

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***Payment methods***

Dinner money payments are made either by Direct Debit mandates set up between the parent and SchoolGrid, or debit and credit card payments made by parents either through their SchoolGrid account or by telephone.

Schools preferred payment is online using SchoolMoney. this includes day trips, residential trips, school disco, Young Voices Parent Tickets & T-Shirt order. The school has a Service Level Agreement with SchoolMoney for unlimited payment transactions.

Parents must ensure payments are made by the date provided in the letter. Payments can be made using cash or cheque. All cash/cheques should be sent in an envelope with your child's name, class, amount of payment and what it is for. Cheques should be made payable to Joseph Turner Primary School.

