

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION

Charges and Remission Policy

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2 VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Reason for Issue	Date of Issue
01	Initial Issue For Federation	May 2022
02	Review	May 2025

3 POLICY STATEMENT FOR CHARGING AND REMISSION

Sodbury Vale Federation wishes to provide for all pupils the best possible educational opportunities available within the funds allocated by the Education Authority. The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents. The school warmly endorses that principle and is committed to uphold the legal requirements.

It is recognised, however, that many educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependant on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without this financial support the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for the pupils. The school's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum.

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances, provided that each school has identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced, or waived for certain pupils. The Governing Body of Sodbury Vale Federation has decided that until further notice, its policy will be as follows:

3.1 VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions will be requested from parents for:

- Participation in activities which are supportive to but not essential for any part of the curriculum e.g. visits to museums, farms, theatres and visits by theatre groups etc.
- for visits occurring during school time the school will invite voluntary contributions from parents to meet costs.

It should be recognised that in some cases it will be necessary to cancel an activity if there are insufficient voluntary contributions. However, no pupils will be barred from an activity solely because a voluntary contribution has not been made on their behalf.

Activities will be cancelled if the total of the voluntary contributions received is less than 75% of the voluntary contribution requirement for each activity.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contributions sought nor any restrictions as to the use made of them.

3.2 CHARGES

A charge will be made for:

- Visits outside school time. Parents will be charged for all allowable costs.
- Practical activities resulting in an end product which parents/children have expressed a wish to own.
- Individual/small group musical instrument tuition (excluding recorder). (Payable to the school prior to the start of each term) – see further terms below

CHARGES AND REMISSIONS

- Damages and Breakages of any school or third party's property will be charged as part of the schools disciplinary structure.
- Milk provided by the school at the request of parents. (Payable to the school half termly in advance.)
- Residential activities/visits – see 4 below.
- School meals (excluding universal free school meals and pupil premium students) – see terms below
- Nursery sessions (in excess of 15 hour entitlement) – see terms below

3.3 MUSIC TUITION WITHIN SCHOOL HOURS

The school follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

The school is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for pupils on free school meals. There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for a student who is looked after by a local authority. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

3.4 SCHOOL MEALS

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per meal decided by the Local Authority. Meals should be paid the week prior to meals being taken, via the school online payment app for St John's Mead (if you are unable to use the app, please contact the school office) and cash/cheque for Horton.

3.5 NURSERY CHARGES FOR ST JOHN'S MEAD PROVISION

3.5.1 FEES OVERVIEW

All children over the age of 3 are entitled to 15 hours per week of free nursery provision from the term following their third birthday. The 15 hours is equivalent to 5 sessions at St John's Mead Nursery.

Some children may be entitled to 30 hours per week of free nursery provision from the term following their third birthday.

Information on eligibility can be found using the following link

www.southglos.gov.uk/freechildcare

The 30 hours is equivalent to 10 sessions at St John's Mead Nursery.

Any extra sessions required will be charged.

3.5.2 FEES

Nursery fees are £12.00 per session per child and are payable in advance. The Nursery Administrator will issue an invoice at the end of the preceding term and fees can be paid either online through School Gateway or at one of the local shops offering the Paypoint service either monthly or termly as agreed. NB Any child due to start Nursery in term 1 of the academic year (from September) will be sent an invoice for their term 1 fees in term 6 (summer term) of the preceding academic year.

If you wish to stop your child's attendance at Nursery, you will need to give 4 weeks' notice, in writing, of the date you intend to withdraw your child. Failure to do so could leave you liable for any fees for the following term.

LUNCHTIME FEE

The school can charge parents a fee of £3 per lunchtime session to cover for additional supervisory staffing provision for nursery children attending the lunchtime session. Nursery school meals are not provided and a packed lunch is necessary.

REGISTRATION FEE

A non-refundable registration fee of £10.00 made payable to St John's Mead School, should be included with any offer of a place accepted at St John's Mead Nursery. This fee includes the cost of a T-Shirt once your child starts attending.

FEES DURING HOLIDAYS & ABSENCE

If you are going away on holiday, you must notify the Nursery staff of the dates your child will be away from their session, in advance and in writing. All children in receipt of 15/30 hours free entitlement can only be away for a maximum of two weeks at a time and still claim grant money. If your holiday exceeds this given period, a child may not be eligible to claim free funding for the full period and may be required to pay for the sessions missed.

Children missing Nursery due to family holidays will have to pay for any session in excess of a weeks funded sessions. If your child is absent due to illness, any fees still have to be

paid. The only exceptions will be hospital/paediatric appointments. Parents may be asked to provide evidence.

NON-PAYMENT OF FEES/TOP-UP FEES

In the event of non-payment of fees, the following steps will be taken:

- A written reminder from the Nursery Administrator will be sent to the parent if fees have not been paid in advance of the term/month to which they apply.
- A parent may apply to the Nursery Administrator in advance to pay fees due on an instalment basis. Terms must be agreed between the Nursery Administrator and the parent.
- If fees remain unpaid by the deadline date given, the School reserves the right to exclude the child from Nursery until fees are paid in full. The Nursery Administrator will notify parents of this. (*NB* If a child is excluded from Nursery the place may be offered to another child and it may not be possible for the excluded child to return to Nursery for the same sessions.)
- See also Payments and Arrears policy SFV005.

FREE PROVISION

Nursery offer 38 weeks per year of free provision. If the Nursery is closed on a day that your child normally attends, you are welcome to bring them in on another day in the same week but only by prior arrangement with the Nursery staff or the Nursery Administrator.

Important Note:

Any sums payable by parents for optional extras such as unpaid nursery or school meal fees, extended school provision shall be recoverable. For more information on this, please see Policy 45 – Payments Arrears Policy

4 Residential Activities/Visits

4.1 DURING SCHOOL TIME

Voluntary Contributions - Voluntary contributions will be invited from parents to meet costs other than children's board and lodgings.

Charges - Parents will be charged for the full cost of children's board and lodgings. No charge for board and lodging will be made for children whose parents are receiving **eligible benefits**.

4.2 OUTSIDE SCHOOL TIME

Parents will be charged the full cost of the visit including **allowable costs**, board and lodging.

Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head.

No charge for board and lodging will be made for children whose parents are receiving **eligible benefits**.

No charge will be made for pupils using school musical instruments whilst receiving tuition for which a charge has been made.

Although there is no legal obligation to do so the Governors consider it to be good practice to produce an Income and Expenditure statement in respect of activities for which a voluntary contribution or charge has been made.

5 Glossary of Terms

For the purposes of this Policy Statement, "parent" is defined as any person having parental responsibility.

5.1 ALLOWABLE COSTS (OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL TIME)

Allowable costs include:

- The pupil's travel and subsistence costs.
- Materials, books, instruments and other equipment.
- Non-teaching staff.
- Costs of teaching staff where separately engaged under a contract for services for the visit or activity.
- Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatre etc.
- Insurance costs.

5.2 ELIGIBLE BENEFITS

For information regarding eligible benefits refer;
Department of Education web site at www.education.gov.uk

5.3 DETERMINATION OF SCHOOL TIME

The calculation is based on the number of half days taken up by the activity, including travel, defined as any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day of travel, relative to the number of school sessions the participants would have attended had the activity not taken place.

Where 6 or more hours in any half-day is spent on the trip, it counts as a whole half day.

CHARGES AND REMISSIONS

Where half or more of a school session is spent on a trip, the entire session counts in the calculation.

Where the number of school sessions amounts to or exceeds 50% of half days taken up by the activity it is deemed to take place in school hours.