



# ELSTON HALL

## Learning Trust

# Charging & Remissions Policy

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**Review Date: July 2025**

# Charging and Remissions and Arrears Policy for Parents / Carers

## Introduction

We want all our children to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means. This policy sets out our Trust approach to charging and remissions.

In doing this, our intention is to ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are able to access all the provision on offer. The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 2011.

Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

### 1. Admissions

No charge will be made for admission to any school within the Trust.

### 2. School meals

No charge will be made for children entitled to free school meals.

We will charge all children not entitled to free school meals an amount determined by the Local Governing Board of each school and approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee of the Trust, as appropriate, which will include discounted/flexible charges for meals.

School meal charges will be reviewed periodically in line with charges applied by the school meals provider (currently Miquill Catering) in order to determine and agree the rate at which school meals will be subsidised from the school budget.

Eligible pupils are entitled to a free school meal (the eligibility for free school meals is checked using the Local Authority's free school meal eligibility checking service).

In accordance with the 'Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)' legislation, all Key Stage 1 pupils (Reception, Years 1 and 2) are entitled to receive a free school meal (correct as at June 2022).

### Paying for school meals.

The payment for meals is required in advance on a weekly, monthly or half-termly basis.

Payment for school meals will be made using the Trust's online payment system (Arbor). However, the option to pay at school will remain open to parents, only where they are unable to access online facilities.

Cheques should be made payable to '***name of school***'. (if the cheque is returned unpaid. The relevant banking fee will be passed on to the payee).

Should a child arrive at school without payment or a packed lunch, the School will telephone home in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made.

If a child's entitlement to free school dinners has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or send payment for a school meal in a sealed envelope.

**If payment has not been made**

If a child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for, a reminder will be sent detailing how much is owed. If payment is not received by the following week, a second letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made.

If the matter remains unresolved, a 3rd and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action. The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming.

Where dinner money arrears have an outstanding balance in excess of **£30**, the school reserves the right to refuse provision of a school meal until arrears have been paid or a suitable payment arrangement has been agreed with school. We will act promptly to address such issues at an early stage, in order to prevent accumulation of dinner money arrears to a point beyond parents' means to settle.

The school will, in exceptional circumstances, postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and school is satisfied that monies due will be forthcoming.

**3. Milk**

It is a legal requirement to provide 1/3 pint of free milk per day to children under the age of 5 attending an approved day care facility for 2 hours or more per day, until the term after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Children aged 5 and over who are entitled to free school meals, will also be entitled to receive free milk.

For children aged 5 and over, who are not in receipt of free school meals, will be charged termly (charge currently determined by the milk provider) which is payable at the beginning of each term, or from the pupil's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**4. Uniform**

Items of school uniform may be purchased directly from school (where available). Items will be sold at cost price and a small addition to cover administration costs may be levied. Uniform prices are available from school Reception.

**5. Breakfast and After School Club Charges**

We will charge families for any childcare offered to children before and after school, with the level of fees and any remissions to be determined by the CEO / Business Manager /Headteacher.

Payment should be made in advance or on the day that the child attends the club.

Where instances of non-payment occur, club staff reserve the right to refuse entry until payment is made or until a suitable payment arrangement is agreed with school.

Charges and opening times for club can be obtained from each School Reception.

**6. Lettings**

The school facilities may be hired and subject to a 'letting fee'. Details of fees will be determined and administered at individual schools. At the very least, the letting fee will cover costs in relation to premises' staff overtime, heating, lighting and cleaning.

**7. Public examinations**

No charge will be made for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list and the child has been prepared at the school.

Where supported by school, we will not charge parents for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list, but the child was not prepared for it at school.

Where supported by school, we will not charge parents the entry fee if the examination is not on the set list, but school has arranged for the child to take it.

We may charge parents the examination fee if a child fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of a public examination where the school originally paid the entry fee. This will be decided by the CEO / Executive Leader.

**8. Activities for children that take place during school hours**

No charge will be made for activities (i.e swimming) provided during school hours (with the exception of music tuition).

A charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients or materials where parents/guardians have confirmed in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

Where the majority of time spent on a non-residential activity is within school hours, we will treat the activity as if it happens fully within school hours.

**9. Activities for children that take place out of school**

No charge will be made for an activity that takes place out of school when it is:

- A necessary part of the curriculum
- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the child is being prepared for at the school
- Part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

If the majority of the time spent on a non-residential activity is outside school hours, we will treat the activity as if it happens fully outside school hours.

**Trips/Educational visits**

We may charge for some other activities , such as trips and educational visits, that take place outside school hours. Where we make a charge, the total collected will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise the cost to other children by paying more than an amount equal to the total cost of the activity divided by the number of children participating.

Costs we can legally recover are as follows:

- a) Teaching and Non-teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- b) Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the activity
- c) Transport to an activity outside school hours

## **10. Residential**

Residential are classified as being within school hours if the number of school sessions missed by the children is at least 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip.

We will charge children an amount up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential whether it is classified as taking place within or outside school hours. With the exception of those entitled to remission (as determined by the Headteacher). Refunds will be considered by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances only.

### **Travel**

If the residential is classified as being within school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs (legal requirement), although, a voluntary contribution may be sought.

Where the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge will be made for travel to cover the unit cost per child other than those entitled to remissions (but no paying child will be required to subsidise the cost of non-paying children).

### **Activities on residential**

If the residential is classified as being within school hours no charge can legally be made for the educational activities provided.

If the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge will be made for the educational activities provided.

## **11. Music Tuition**

No charge will be made for the music tuition, if it is an essential part of the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by children (including instrument hire, music books etc).

We will charge for all other instrumental and vocal tuition requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors within school hours, whether offered to an individual or group of pupils.

Charges will be determined by the Headteacher and may vary depending on size of group, length of lesson and type of instrument.

Where we make a charge for instrumental and vocal tuition within school hours we will remit charges for children on free school meals as well as in certain other circumstances (e.g. for siblings) in order to ensure specialist music tuition is accessible and affordable for all children.

**12. Damage to property and breakages**

We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of school property. This will be determined by the Headteacher.

We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of property belonging to a third party where the school has been charged. This will be determined by the Headteacher.

**13. Remissions and concessions**

We will comply with legal requirements for remissions as outlined throughout this document, for pupils defined as eligible.

We may choose to subsidise, in full or part, charges for certain activities and pupils, as determined by the Headteacher.

**14. Voluntary contributions**

We may in certain circumstances invite parents to make voluntary contribution towards activities that are exempt from charging. Where we do ask for voluntary contributions, we will make it clear that children of parents who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. No child will be excluded from the activity if their parents do not contribute.

If an activity cannot go ahead without sufficient voluntary contributions, this will be explained to parents when the contribution is requested. If the activity has to be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies received will be returned to parents.

**15. Early Years Centre (at Pheasey Park Farm Primary School)**

The Early Years Centre (EYC) provides full day child-care between the hours of 7:30am to 6:00pm for 48 weeks of the year. Charges will be determined and reviewed annually by the school's LGB.