

Wicklewood Primary School and Nursery



Charging and Refund Policy

Responsible Person

The person for the updating of this policy is: The Headteacher

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every year by the operational committee.

Reviewed:

Signed: Chris Wolstenholme (Chair)

Date: Spring 2021

Signed: Julia Brooks (Headteacher)

Date: Spring 2021

Next Review due: Spring 2022

Legislation allows schools to charge for certain activities which take place both inside and outside school hours. Norfolk County Council has adopted a policy, which it recommends to governors, but it is for governors of schools to decide whether or not to follow the policy. The School's charging policy must be described in its prospectus, which can be obtained from the school. It is also a requirement that the School's charging policy is provided on its' website. If your son or daughter's school governors follow the County Council's charging policy, these are the activities and materials for which you will be charged:

Music tuition

Vocal or Instrumental tuition, which is not part of the syllabus for an approved public examination, part of the National Curriculum or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

Charges may be made for tuition provided individually or to groups of any size, provided the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Fees are paid directly to the peripatetic teacher. No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority.

Ingredients and materials

Ingredients and materials for practical subjects where parents have indicated in advance that they wish to receive the finished articles.

Travel: Schools **cannot** charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where arrangements have been made for pupils to be educated.
- Transport enabling a pupil to meet an examination requirement where prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Board and lodging

Board and lodging will be charged in all cases where a school activity involves pupils in nights away from home. The charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Activities outside school hours

A charge can be made for all non-residential activities, which take place wholly, or more than 50% outside school hours, where the child's participation has been agreed in advance by the parents. The charge can include the cost of travel, entrance fees, insurance, books, equipment and any staff (teaching or non-teaching) engaged specifically for the activity.

Residential trips - a residential trip is deemed to take place outside school hours if the number of 'missed' school sessions is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the trip.

For example:

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a public examination the pupil is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools can ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- Any activity taking place during school hours
- School Equipment
- General School Funds

Children of parents unwilling or unable to contribute may not be discriminated against. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received, with no alternative method to make up the shortfall, the activity should be cancelled. It is advisable to make parents aware from the outset of the possible cancellation of an activity if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.

Public Examinations - charges are made for the entry of a pupil for a prescribed examination for which he/she has not been prepared by the school, or where the pupil entered for examinations in the same subject with two examination boards.

Remission of charges - only parents who are in receipt of Universal Credit, Income Support, Working Families' Credit, Disabled Person's Tax Credit or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance are eligible for remission of charges. Remission of charges only applies to board and lodgings charges, which are levied directly by the LA or the school and where they relate to activities, deemed to take place wholly or partly in school hours.

Remission will not apply to such charges when they relate to activities wholly outside school hours, except if the activity is prescribed in a syllabus for a public examination, if it is prescribed by the National Curriculum or fulfils duties relating to Religious Education.

Parents who have difficulty meeting any charges should discuss the matter in confidence with the Headteacher.

Useful Links:

Learning Outside the Classroom guidance:

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/GCharging-Policy-Updated-PDF-1APR09.pdf>

Latest DfE guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

Refunds

Monies paid to the school in respect of residential visits/other visits.

All initial deposits are non-refundable and this is stated in the initial letters to the parents informing them of details of the forthcoming visit.

If a child is unable to attend at the last moment through illness, then a refund of cost can be given upon receipt of a doctor's certificate. The initial deposit still remains non-refundable.

If a child/parent changes their mind or moves school and withdraws from the trip, no refund can be given. Charges are made by the providers upon receipt of the first deposit so the school will be charged in full for the place reserved.

Following the trip, if parental contributions have exceeded the costs incurred, a refund will be offered to parents. Parents are given the option of claiming the refund or donating the amount to the school. This will be communicated by a letter to all participants.

Monies paid for music tuition

Music invoices directly from the music tutor.

Dinner Monies

If monies have been paid in advance for school dinners, any unused payments will be refunded at the end of the school year.

Nursery

Each term, all parents/carers will be issued with a Nursery invoice. These will show a breakdown of the child's costs for the term. Fees are payable in either one instalment or 2 equal instalments (one for each half term).

All debts will be recorded and non-payment will be followed up by issuing reminders as outlined below.

- 3 weeks from date of invoice - 1st reminder
- 6 weeks from date of invoice - 2nd reminder
- 9 weeks from date of invoice - final reminder

Non-payment of fees may result in a withdrawal of the child's place.

If your child is leaving Wicklewood School Primary and Nursery, we ask for four weeks written notice which will be charged, unless your child is funded during this time and is attending the Nursery on headcount day.

Government funding covers the cost of delivering 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare only. It does not cover the cost of meals, consumables, additional hours or additional services.

Please note that if your child is entitled to funded sessions these will be shown on the invoice.

Where the local Authority does not fund claimed hours, we will charge these hours at our current session rate. Absences such as holidays cannot be claimed, please refer to the Parent Handbook sent out with the funding form for more information.

Additional hours and services will be charged at the current hourly rate where hours are not funded as Early Education by the Local Authority.

Charges for additional services such as trips will be agreed in advance with families.

There is no fee for consumables or any other additional charges apart from the cost of meals which is currently £2.50 – per cooked lunch. Alternatively, children are welcome to bring a packed lunch.

The free entitlements will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of the free entitlements will receive the same quality and access to provision. This is regardless of whether they opt to pay for optional hours, services, meals or consumables.

A deposit is not charged to secure a place.

The entitlement is offered free. Parents will not be charged a "top-up" fee to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority and the current hourly rate. There is no registration fee once a childcare place has been offered.

Extended School

Schoolmoney

The person making the booking accepts the booking conditions on behalf of the account holder.

All sessions must be paid for at the time of booking unless the Childcare Voucher option is selected.

To take advantage of the sibling discount all siblings must be booked into the same session at the time of the original booking.

Cancellation Notice and Charges

It is the account holder's responsibility to cancel sessions.

Booked sessions for all activities which are not attended will be charged, unless one calendar month notice of cancellation is given.

For Breakfast and After School Clubs it is not possible to swap sessions unless one calendar month notice is given.

Holiday Club day swaps can only be made subject to availability and with a minimum of 7 days' notice. This must be by email to the Extended School, extended@wicklewood.norfolk.sch.uk.

All bookings must be made prior to arriving onsite. If you arrive and have not pre-booked your child, he/she will not be accepted until a booking is made.

It is the parents' responsibility to let the school know of any late cancellations.

Payments and Overdue Balances

Types of payment available are Credit/Debit card or Childcare Voucher.

When paying by Childcare Vouchers, please use your child's full name and invoice reference number as the payment reference.

An overdue balance may lead to the termination of your child's place within the club.

Late Collection Fees

A charge of £8 per 15 minutes will be applied to all collections made after the advertised session end time.

Forced Closures

If Wicklewood Primary School and Nursery is forced to close due to an external factor such as bad weather, infectious or contagious disease outbreak, power cut, teacher strikes or other industrial action, by order of Local Authority or Environmental Health, customers will still be liable for fees incurred during the entire period of closure.

Annual Review of fees, costs and charges

The governing body will review these annually.

Please note refunds will only be offered in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if a school visit is cancelled and the venue and transport provider make no charge, or if the surplus collected for an activity exceeds the cost of that activity by an amount pre-determined by the governing board which is £5 per pupil.