

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



Section 110 of the 1988 Education Reform Act requires each Governing Body to draw up and review its own policy in respect of charges and remissions arrangements, the policy for this school is written in line with the 1988 Act insofar as it is relevant to the requirements of a lower School.

1. Visits and Outings

The 1988 Education Act makes it illegal for schools to charge parents for any activities taking place during the school day. Parents can however be asked to make a voluntary contribution for the full cost of an activity e.g. educational outings, theatre visits. There is no obligation to contribute and pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution. However, if too many parents feel unable to make a contribution, the activity may not take place.

2. Subsidies

On occasion the school may elect to subsidise outings taking place in the school day from the schools budget or make a request to the PTA. The subsidy may:-

- Apply to all children equally.
- Enable particular children whose parents are known to be experiencing financial difficulty to participate.
- Enable an activity or outing which has been insufficiently funded from contributions and which would otherwise be cancelled, to take place

3. Design Technology

If the products of technology lessons are to be taken home then contributions may be asked for in advance, to cover the costs of the ingredients and/or materials used. Alternatively teachers may sometimes choose to ask for materials and/or ingredients to be brought into school.

4. Loss or damage to property

Charges may be made, at the school's discretion, to cover the replacement cost of lost or wilfully damaged items e.g. reading and library books

5. Music lessons and musical Instruments

- The LA Music Service offers individual/group music tuition during the school day. A fee is charged for these lessons, which includes the hire of the instrument.
- Fees for these services are set by and handled directly by the LA Music Service.
- Music lessons that are not handled directly by the LA are paid for privately by the parent to the music teacher concerned

6. Outside the school day. - After school activity clubs

- A range of short after school clubs are organised and run by members of the school's teaching staff. No charge is made for pupils attending these clubs. Pupils learning the recorder are expected to purchase their own recorder and book.
- Where a club takes place in the school but is run by an outside instructor / organisation, then a charge will be made and pupils will not be subsidised by the school to attend.

7. Kids' Club – before and after school care club

Financial management

- Before and after school care is organised by 'Kids Club' (KC) on behalf of the school. Fees are set by the school in order to meet the cost of providing the service.
- Financial Regulations do not permit the school to subsidise this in any way.

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



- The school operates an online payment system “Parentpay” and fees must be settled this way. Payment through Childcare Vouchers and the Government Tax Free Child Vouchers Scheme is also possible. KC will not accept cash or cheques.

Booking KC

- Kids’ club will give parents / carers the opportunity to complete a registration form to make Kids’ Club bookings, prior to the start of the school year for children newly joining the school. For existing Kids’ Club users (with the exception of year 4 leavers) existing bookings will continue into the new school year unless we are informed otherwise.
- If they would like to amend the booking after they have completed the annual registration, they will need to notify Kids’ club via email prior to the monthly invoice being issued. If no amendments are made, KC will continue to invoice for the sessions requested on the registration form.
- In cases where an emergency arises or a parent/carer realises the need for care of their child after this point, they can book by contacting Kids’ Club by email. This will however be subject to availability. A £2 administrative charge per session will be applied to these ad-hoc emergency bookings.
- The setting relies on a regular income to continue operating. It is in the best interests of every child that fees are paid promptly and fully, so they can benefit from consistency of care and routine. Fees are reviewed by The Firs Lower School Senior Leadership Team and school governors on a regular basis. Parents/carers are advised of any increase to fees in advance of implementation.
- Invoices are issued two weeks in advance at the start of the month that care has been booked, with payment due before the 1st of the month.
- Payment will still be required, even if a child is absent from a session, this may be due to sickness or any other reason resulting in the session booked no longer being needed.
- If Kids’ club has to close for any reason, money will be fully refunded.
- If you will be collecting your child from Kids’ Club later than the session that you have booked, please inform us as soon as possible. If you have booked until 5pm but collect after this time you will be charged for the additional 5pm - 6pm session. Late charges may be applied beyond 6pm per child as follows:

Collection between 6 pm - 6:20 pm £10

Collection beyond 6:20 - 6:30 pm £20

Collection beyond 6:30 pm £30

Late charges are in place to cover the cost of overtime payments accrued due to staff staying beyond their normal working hours. Staff staying late without notice will also have an impact on their personal lives so we ask that you please collect on time. If you are late collecting your child on a number of occasions your Kids Club booking may be withdrawn.

Payment of KC Fees:

- Payment of fees is required to be made by the date due on the invoice.
- We understand that occasionally parents/carers may experience genuine difficulty in paying fees. Any parent/carer who is aware at the outset that this may be the case, must make immediate contact with Kids’ Club via kids.club@firslower.org or The Firs Lower School Business Manager via Jennie.Bredenkamp@firslower.org

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



- A payment plan may be suggested to the parent/carer at the discretion of the Headteacher. This will be put in writing and sent by Kids' Club via recorded delivery to the home address.
- Any agreement must be signed by the parent/carer and the Headteacher and returned to the Business Manager.
- Where possible we will support parents/carers that may be experiencing financial barriers that lead to their child not being able to attend an activity outside of school. The school will always seek to support children in receipt of pupil premium where possible, to ensure equality of access to provision offered. For pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding, charges will be reviewed upon parental request to the headteacher.
- We will give consideration to parents wishing to use the Childcare Grant Payment Service, please contact The Firs Lower School Business Manager via Jennie.Bredenkamp@FirsLower.org if you wish to use this grant.
- For children turning 3 years old, changes to charging tariffs will be reflected in the next period's invoice.

Procedure for KC payment issues

- a. If no payment has been received by the date due a reminder email will be sent from Parentpay to remind parents/carers of the outstanding fees.
- b. If no payments are received a week after they were due, a letter will be sent out stating that the child's place is at risk if fees are not paid.
- c. A letter will be sent two weeks after the 2nd reminder stating your child can no longer attend Kids' Club until the fees have been paid in full.
- d. Failure to pay on time could result in a £5 administration fee for each letter sent being applied to the amount due.
- e. Refusal or failure to pay a debt will result in a child's place being withdrawn completely and may also result in a small claims court proceeding.

8. Residential Trips

Residential trips are outside the scope of 1988 Education Reform Act and if a parent wishes their child to take part in a residential trip, then the school can require payment for a child to attend.

The school is not in a position to subsidise residential trips for pupils who wish to attend, so all parents who would like their child to attend, will be required to pay. If a pupil is in receipt of pupil premium, the school may consider contributing up to 50% of the cost of the trip, depending on the individual family circumstances.

9. The Saplings

The charging and funding arrangements concerning Saplings are set out in Appendix C to this policy - '*Saplings Funding and Fee Payment Protocol*'. This protocol will be reviewed alongside this policy.

10. Lettings

1. Applications for all bookings of the school buildings and grounds should be made in writing. (Using Lettings form – Appendix A)
2. Regular and continuous bookings should confirm arrangements at the beginning of each academic year (September).
3. For regular/continuous bookings, written notification is required for variations once the initial request has been granted.

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



4. The Head teacher and Bursar will judge each application for suitability. The Site Agent will be consulted about his availability before a commitment is made.
5. For all bookings the Central Bedfordshire Guidelines will be followed.
6. Hirers must provide evidence of current Public Liability Insurance. (Ideally a photocopy of the Certificate of Insurance approving cover up to £5 million).
7. Hirers must provide evidence of their Child Protection Policy, if applicable.
8. Hirers will be made aware of the rule and regulations covering use of the school premises.
9. The attached Scale of Charges will apply. The Head teacher and Bursar will make a judgement about any hiring that falls outside these bands.
10. The Scale of Charges will be reviewed and agreed by the Governors each summer term to take effect from the 1st September each year. Charges will reflect the Premises Manager's time, heating, lighting and other consumable costs.
11. If hirers require food to be provided the school can provide details of local caterers at various prices but hirers are responsible for booking and payment directly.
12. Lettings made by the PTA will be conducted following the agreed protocols (Appendix B)

The Senior Leadership Team and School Governors have made the decision not to increase school hire rates, Saplings Pre School or Kids' Club fees for the academic year beginning September 2023.

11. School Hire Rates

There will be a minimum charge of £26.25 per hour and all bookings of more than 2 hours will be charged at £21 per hour.

1 hour = £26.25

1.5 hours = £39.38

2 hours + = £21

Sundays £26.25 per hour

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



12. Session charges for Saplings Pre School

| Fees and session times | Times | 2 year old | 3 or 4 year olds |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| AM Session (3 hours) | 9.10am - 12.10pm | £22.05 | £16.54 |
| PM Session (3 hours) | 12.10pm - 3.10pm | £22.05 | £16.54 |
| All Day (6 hours) | 9.10am - 3.10pm | £44.10 | £33.08 |

For any new ad hoc bookings there will be an additional charge of £2 on top of the session fee.

13. Kids' Club Charges Saplings and Pupils YR-Y4

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|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Breakfast Club | 2 Year Olds | 8.45 - 9.10am | £2.99 |
| | 3 - 4 Year olds | 7.50 - 9.10am | £7.35 |
| | 3 - 4 Year olds | 8.45 - 9.10am | £2.31 |

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



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| | YR-Y4 pupils | 7.50-8.45 am | £5.04 |
| | Breakfast | | £1.50 |

For any new ad hoc bookings there will be an additional charge of £2 on top of the session fee.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| After School Club | 2 Year Olds | 3.10 - 3.30pm | £2.36 |
| | 3 - 4 Year Olds | 3.10 - 3.30pm | £1.84 |
| | 3 - 4 Year olds | 3.10 - 5.00pm | £10.13 |
| | 3 - 4 Year olds | 3.10 - 6.00pm | £15.65 |
| | YR-Y4 pupils | 3.30 – 5.00pm | £7.56 |
| | YR-Y4 pupils | 3.30 – 6.00pm | £12.60 |

The Firs Lower School
Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy



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| An optional light tea is available for all children staying past 5pm | £2 |
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For any new ad hoc bookings there will be an additional charge of £2 on top of the session fee.