



# The Forest Federation

of Soudley, Steam Mills and Woodside

## Charging Policy

**Date: May 2025**

**Review Date: May 2026**

*Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.*

*Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)*

*Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*

*Article 27 (adequate standard of living) Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development.*

The schools wish to provide all its pupils with the best possible education 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 and the schools warmly endorse 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, dependent on financial support. The schools would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme it provides for its pupils without this. The schools concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure, as far as possible, that all children are able to participate in all activities, irrespective of their circumstances.

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances provided that the schools have 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 has decided that until further notice its policy will be as follows:

**1 Day Visits**

For educational visits occurring during school time the school will invite a voluntary contribution from parents to meet costs. Whilst contributions are voluntary, visits can only go ahead with sufficient funds. The minimum parental contribution amount is £15 (for trips over £15) although we appreciate that the majority of parents will want to pay the full amount. For visits outside school times parents will be charged for all allowable costs.\* Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head Teacher.

**2 Residential Visits outside school time**

Parents will be charged for the full cost of the visit, including all allowable costs\* and board and lodgings. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head teacher, but trips may not go ahead unless there is sufficient interest and contribution.

**\* Allowable Costs include**

- i) The pupil's travel and subsistence costs
- ii) Materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- iii) Non-teaching staff
- iv) Costs of teaching staff where separately engaged under a contract for services for the visit or activity
- v) Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc
- vi) Insurance costs

**3 Instrumental Music on an individual basis**

Any child receiving tuition by a peripatetic music teacher will pay for their lessons and the hire of the musical instruments. Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium qualify for financial support from the school for both instrument hire and music lessons. Any other music activities during the day are currently free of charge to parents unless outside providers are employed.

**4 Classroom Materials**

No charge will be made for materials or equipment used for activities within the classroom. However, for certain practical activities, (technology, cookery etc) parents may be invited to provide materials or ingredients or make small financial contributions. Where parents would like to possess the finished product, the school reserves the right to charge the cost or require the supply of the necessary materials.

**5 School Meals**

ParentPay is the current portal for the ordering and payment of school meals; those on Free School Meals appear on the portal register, but are not charged. Parents are encouraged to keep their ParentPay accounts up to date. School Meals are currently charged at the cost from the caterers (£2.54 per meal) per meal (due to increase to £2.75). It has been agreed by governors that:

- The school has adopted a No Debt Policy where you must pay for your child's meals up front and their account must be in credit at all times.

**6 Breakfast Club**

Breakfast Club is charged for with relevance to time and the schools' charges will be aligned in the future. Current charges are as follows:

At Soudley Primary the cost of Breakfast Club from 8am is £2.50 and breakfast is available 8-8:30am.

At Steam Mills Primary, the early session starts at 7:45 am and is charged at £4 and from 8:00 am or after it is £3.00. Children will be provided with a choice of cereals, toast and juice and activities until 8.50am when they will go to their classrooms.

Woodside Primary School breakfast club starts at 7.45 and is charged at £4.00 and from 8.30am is £2.00. Breakfast is available until 8.25 am.

Payment will be made at the beginning of the week or on the day of using the facility. Attendance is logged onto ParentPay at the end of the week or daily at Woodside and if debts are outstanding then the Breakfast Club facility cannot be accessed until the account is cleared, unless a clear payment plan has been agreed. Childcare vouchers can also be used to pay for Breakfast Club by mutual agreement with the schools.

- The school has adopted a No Debt Policy where you must pay for breakfast up front and the account must be in credit at all times.

## **7      After School Clubs**

Where after school clubs are external providers, the school will apply an appropriate charge. Where after school clubs are provided by staff, the school reserves the right to charge for materials and equipment.

The schools also run a daily After School Club to provide care for those parents that need this extended service.

Steam Mills Primary run After School Club from 3:15 pm until 5:30 pm. There are 3 available charges:

3:15 pm – 4:15 pm   £4.00

4:15 pm – 5:30 pm   £5.00    (this is used for care after other payable Clubs)

3:15 pm – 5:30 pm   £9.00

Woodside Primary run After School Club from 3pm until 4pm and there is a charge of £4.00. This includes Sports club and themed sessions.

.....

The schools have introduced a late fee of an extra £5 for parents who are delayed by more than 5 minutes, for any reason, from collecting their child at 5:30 pm (Steam Mills) or £2.00 (Woodside). This fee will be added to the ParentPay account and is payable immediately.

Childcare vouchers can also be used to pay for After School Club by mutual agreement with the schools.

## **8      Nursery**

Our schools offer Government funded nursery places. We accept 15 hour funded places and 30 hour funded places. However, if extra hours are required, these can be purchased at the following rates:

3 year old unfunded or extra hours £5 (Soudley, Steam Mills and Woodside)

2 year old unfunded or extra hours £5.50 (Woodside only)

**9      Outside Providers**

Where external providers are employed by the school and paid either by the school or directly by parents/carers and a family wishes to cancel the provision, a notice period is applicable. This notice period is equivalent to four lessons.

**10     Policy Review**

The Governors of the schools are required to keep their policy under review.

**11     Pupil Premium**

The school receives additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils of all abilities perform better. 'It is for the school to decide how Pupil Premium is spent, since they are best placed to assess what additional provision should be made for the individual pupils' DFE.

For children in receipt of PP, the school will help fund school trips, including assisting with the bi-annual residential and funded Breakfast Club. Funding for trips does not include items such as 'Goody Bags'.

You can find details in the school's Pupil Premium Policy.

Reviewed in accordance with LA guidelines.