



## **Houghton Conquest Lower School and Pre-School**

### **Charging Policy**

Education is provided at the school without compulsory charges to parents. The vast majority of activities are financed by the school with funds received from the Local Authority (LA) and an on-going agreement with the Friends of Houghton Conquest Lower School that funds they raise will be targeted at an agreed project between the school and parents. Pre-school places are paid for by parents or are covered fully or partly by government funding schemes.

There are some valuable educational activities which the school cannot provide without seeking some financial support from parents eg educational visits. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme currently provided for 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. The Governing Body of Houghton Conquest Lower School has decided that, until further notice, its policy will be as outlined in this document.

#### **Voluntary contributions**

For visits occurring during school time, the school will invite a voluntary contribution from parents to meet costs.

For visits outside school time, parents will be charged for all allowable costs\*. Charges may be reduced/removed for pupils whose parents make an application to the Headteacher because of financial hardship eg pupil entitled to free school meals in KS2\*\* and/or meet the Pupil Premium eligibility criteria (see school meal section).

\*Allowable costs include:

- a. the pupil's travel and subsistence costs
- b. specialist materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- c. non-teaching staff
- d. costs of teaching staff where separately engaged under a contract for services for the visit or activity eg museum curator
- e. entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.
- f. insurance costs

#### **Residential visits**

The school may organise a residential visit in school time for Key Stage 2 children. This visit relies on the voluntary contributions from parents. The school makes a decision about this activity each academic year and gives parents enough notice to budget for these activities.

*\*\* As KS1/FS pupils have FSM (UiFSM) as part of the Government Universal Free school meals initiative.*

For certain practical activities, Technology, Cookery, etc., parents may be invited to provide materials or ingredients on a voluntary basis. Where parents would like to keep the finished product, the school reserves the right to charge the cost to supply the necessary materials.

If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include pupils whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the pupil to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes, the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums, farms etc.
- visits to or by a theatre company
- musical events

### **Music tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. The LA makes a charge for these lessons and parents are invoiced direct, but parents in receipt of state benefits are eligible for reduced payments (currently a 50% reduction). We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

### **Swimming**

The school endeavours to organise swimming lessons for all pupils in Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4). These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We ask for a voluntary contribution towards transport. However, if voluntary contributions are insufficient, this will impact on the school's ability to offer this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part.

### **Pupil Premium**

A pupil in receipt of free school meals could be funded through the Pupil Premium budget for an educational trip, if the parent has requested financial assistance for any school charged activities in writing to the Headteacher. This would be discussed and agreed with the Governing Body. (***Pupil Premium Policy***) Pupil Premium eligibility can be found in the school meals section.

### **School Meals**

All children in year R, 1 and 2 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals – UIFSM. Parents of children in years 3 and 4 and who are in receipt of one of the following are entitled to claim Free School Meals for their child/children:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit, and your annual gross income does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (during the initial roll-out of this benefit)

Parents who are not entitled to claim Free School Meals for their child/children will be required to pay for school meals. Payment is to be made each Monday, if you select to pay weekly; or on the first day of term, if you wish to pay termly.

### **Breakfast Club and After-School Care (school children)**

The school provides a before school and after school care service. Bookings and payments are made through our Wise Pay facility – see *Appendix 1* for more information.

### **Pre-school**

We provide sessional day care for children from the term after their 2nd birthday. Up to 15 hours of free early years provision is available for 2yr olds where they are in receipt of certain benefits. Applications for 2yr old funding should be made to the local authority. Confirmation of eligibility for free funding will be required before commencement for 2 year old funded places.

Houghton Conquest Pre-school supports the entitlement to free 15 hours early years provision for 3 and 4 year olds. Universal free 15 hours provision is available from the term following a child's third birthday up until they reach compulsory school age, for every child, irrespective of background or family circumstances.

Up to 30 hours of free early years provision is available for families in receipt of certain benefits. We offer 10 30hr funded places at any one time. Applications for 30hrs of funding are made by the parent through HMRC. An 11 digit eligibility code must be presented to the school, and validated, to claim the free hours.

Regulations prescribe that children become eligible for free early years provision on the dates set out below;

#### **Period child born**

1st April to 31st August

1st September to 31st December

1st January to 31st March

#### **Date free place eligible from**

1st September following child's 3rd birthday (Autumn school term)

1st January following child's 3rd birthday (Spring school Term)

1st April following child's 3rd birthday (Summer school Term)

The half hour hot dinner lunch club is chargeable and cannot be used as a funded session. Additional care is chargeable in line with our charging policy.

Information about eligibility criteria can be found on the Central Bedfordshire website.

### **Collection of Unpaid Fees/Debt**

Information regarding our Policy and Procedure for the collection of unpaid fees can be found on our website: <http://www.houghtonconquest.beds.sch.uk/node/17>

### **Monitoring of School Policy and Practice**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, staff and Governors.

## **Wise Pay Payment Procedure and The Payment of Goods and Services**

*Including the Out of School Care Booking Procedure, Terms and Conditions*

**This Payment Procedure applies to all payments made for goods and services from  
Houghton Conquest Lower School and Houghton Conquest Pre-school.**

Wise Pay is an online booking and payment system for school goods and services.

All parents will be allocated a Wise Pay user name and receive an invitation by email to log into Wise Pay. They will be prompted to reset their password. Parents can log into their account and see all historical orders and payments made through Wise Pay.

Card details are **not** visible or shared with the school at any time. Passwords are **not** shared with the school.

The school adds products for the parent to choose and add to their basket. Several items can be added to the basket at any one time. When the selection of products is complete one payment can be made for all of the products in one payment.

### **Out of School Hours Care - Booking**

You will be sent an email to the registered email address at the school and invited to log into Wise Pay and reset your password. Once registered your account is ready to add products that the school have loaded.

The number of spaces available at any one session will be clearly visible. When you select a place you will be prompted to add it to your basket. You may book the Breakfast Club up to 6 hours before the start of the session and you may book After School Care up to 30 minutes before the start of the session.

You will be required to fill out a Child Registration Form before your child can access the Club. It includes crucial information regarding your child's welfare including allergies and emergency contact details. Please print this document off and bring it with you to the first session.

Before you can complete your transaction you will be required to agree to the terms and conditions of the booking which will be clearly shown online. Please see the detail in *Appendix A*.

Parents who do not have access to a PC or mobile device or to a banking card, an application for a session can be made to the school office. A cash or cheque payment can be made at the school office or alternatively a voucher payment. These places should be booked at least 24hrs in advance in order for the booking to be processed and

approved. Access cannot be guaranteed and care cannot be accessed until the approval has been received by the parent. A receipt will be issued for all payments over £5.00.

### **School Payments**

Where applicable the school will offer the Wise Pay facility for parents to book trips and events. It may also add sundries such as water bottles and library book replacement fees.

### **Monitoring of School Policy and Practice**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, staff and Governors.

**Terms and Conditions for booking After School and Breakfast Club Care**

- A child must not be brought to Houghton Conquest School Breakfast Club if unwell.
- A child will not have access to either Club if the parent has not completed a Child Registration Form.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to sign their child in at Breakfast Club by bringing their child to the dining hall. It is the responsibility of the Parent to sign out their child from the After School Club. The Location of other clubs will be provided at the time of booking.
- Any Special Dietary requirements (for example due to allergic reaction or cultural or religious beliefs) must be notified on the Breakfast Club Registration Form
- All accidents, that staff are made aware of, are documented in an accident book. Should the need arise, the parents/carers hereby give their consent for first aid to be administered and or the emergency services to be contacted. The emergency contact details will be those detailed in the Child Registration Pack.
- Houghton Conquest School will not be liable for loss of property brought onto the premises by parent/carer or child during any out of hours care.
- No partial refund will be given if a child attends too late to receive breakfast or does not require breakfast. Breakfast will be served until 8.30am.
- In the event of school closure, for example due to weather, a full refund will be given.
- No refunds will be given for non-attendance due to sickness or any other absence or for sessions only part attended.
- A child will leave Houghton Conquest School out of school clubs when he/she leaves Houghton Conquest School.
- If your child is to be collected by another adult other than the parent please send the request in writing to the school office or by ringing the main school number.
- Staff will follow the Uncollected Child procedure if a parent fails to collect a child on time. If you know that you are going to be late please call the school immediately to inform staff.
- The parents/carers hereby confirm that they accept the authority of the out of school care Manager and staff to take all reasonable disciplinary or preventative action necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of each child and the Houghton Conquest School Breakfast Club community. All clubs will follow the schools Golden Rules.

- Parents may be required to remove the child temporarily or permanently if the conduct of the child is unacceptable and it appears to the supervisor that the continued presence of the child is incompatible with the interests of Houghton Conquest School Breakfast Club. There would be no refund of fees in these circumstances.
- Any debt will be passed to the Central Bedfordshire Council Debt Recovery Department at the discretion of the headteacher.