# POLICY: REDUCED FEES AND CONCESSIONS

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| Policy basis | |

## VERSION CONTROL

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## Introduction

Reduced fees may be available to children attending or applying to attend Norwich Steiner School where financial need is demonstrated, and subject to the school having financial capacity to do so.

The ongoing right to a concession on full fees is at least annually reviewed, and may be removed, or varied upwards or downwards depending on circumstances. Factors such as a family's savings, investments and/or realizable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them, as well as compassionate or other pertinent considerations are taken into account.

As a charity that is dependent upon receiving full fees for the majority of children, the school can only offer limited numbers of concessions and must always be sure that it is rigorous in ensuring reduced fees are necessary.

## The Case for Assistance

A number of factors will be considered when making the assessment of the requirement for support.

These are as follows:

- Whether the school has capacity to offer new concessions

  Classes that are full or for which there is a demand for places, will offer new places only on the basis of full fees. The exception to this rule is if there were less than 10% of children in the class who are on reduced fees, and if the other reasons stated below warranted consideration for a place.

- Suitability of the child

  in terms of the child and the class they are joining. Factors considered include:

  - The educational and behavioural needs of the child – if a family is offered a concession in principle, but then at a trial it is found the child has needs that require more support than the school can reasonably provide, any 'in principle' offer of reduced fees may be withdrawn.

  - Where the pupil is already attending the school, and a family's financial circumstances change in a way that is unavoidable and unforeseen way, such as through redundancy, ill health, or bereavement. Any decision to offer a concession to a family with children already in the school, will take account of the child/children's behaviour record.

  - Where behaviour is consistently poor, the concession offered to the family is likely to be withdrawn at the annual review or before if a child's behaviour is particularly unacceptable.

  - Attendance and punctuality must be very good. Reduced fee places are privileged and limited and must be put to excellent use, or they will be withdrawn. Therefore, if attendance in any half term drops below 90% without very good reason, a warning will be issued and if attendance stays below 90% in the following half term, the

concession will be withdrawn completely. Likewise with punctuality, if a child arrives after 9.10 on more than 5 occasions in one half term, a warning will be issued and unless the punctuality issues are remedied, the concession will be removed.

- Families who take children out of school for a term-time holiday is likely to automatically lose the right to a concession.

- Financial limitations

  the percentage reduction in fees that may be offered is determined by need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly, subject to the school's ability to fund these within the overall School finances. It is recognized that judgments about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal to that family. However, the School has a duty to ensure that it can afford to offer a concession, and that it is not subsidizing a family's life choices for lifestyle.

Accordingly, a number of factors will be considered in determining the level of any reduction in fees. These will include (but are not limited to):

- The ability to improve the financial position or earning capacity of the family.
- The opportunities available to release any capital to fund school fees. Possession of any significant capital savings and/or investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would the equity value in property.
- In cases of separation, any contribution made by the absent parent; there is a general presumption that both parents should contribute.
- Possible contributions by other relations, for example grandparents, who have a family interest in the future and wellbeing of a child.
- Where fees are being paid to other schools or universities or for out-of-school activities

Please note that in assessing the application, the school may request a home visit and will also expect to be provided with evidence concerning a family's finance, such as bank and mortgage/rent statements for the previous 6 – 12 months.

## NON-FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

For the school to run sustainably we require parents to pay the full fee wherever possible and voluntary help is also much welcomed from any parent who can offer it, whether they pay full fees or whether they are on a concession.

However, for families on a reduced fee, once an amount has been agreed, we will specifically ask whether there are additional voluntary contributions you can make, in terms of skills or time that might support the school and ease pressures on resources elsewhere in the school.

We will always take into account your personal circumstances in our request for your help. So, for example, if the reason you are struggling to pay fees is because your health is poor or you are caring for an elderly or sick relative at home, we appreciate your time and energy will be at a premium and

would not wish to create additional strain in your family.

## Annual Review

All reduced fees are subject to a review of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances.

For those already in receipt of a concession, the finance team has the discretion to reduce or withdraw an award where a pupil's attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory, particularly in circumstances where the school is of the view that there has been insufficient parental support or backing to address the behaviour or attitude.

## Confidentiality

The School respects the confidentiality of families on concessions and we ask families that receive reduced fees to reciprocate this confidentiality over any agreement we reach.

Important: Communication and Responsibility

**The school considers it to be the responsibility of the family** seeking or benefitting from a concession to ensure that they are proactive in communicating with the school.

A family's right to a concession will be forfeited if the parents fail:

- To complete and submit, within a given timeframe, a new concessions application form when requested to do so;
- To inform the school about any improvement or change in income or other aspects of their financial circumstances;
- To pay the agreed amount;
- To arrange a meeting with the concessions officer in a timely manner at the time of review

In any of the above circumstances and at any point in the academic year, the school will terminate any existing agreement and issue an invoice for full fees.

## Monitoring, Audit and Governance

This policy belongs to Norwich Steiner School, which is the operational name for the Charity the Norfolk Initiative Steiner School, registered charity number 1099377, company number 4815492

Compliance is monitored through internal audits, policy review as part of self-evaluation, and annual reporting to Trustees on concessions awarded, value, and any compliance issues.