



# **Charging and Remissions Policy**

**Person responsible: Business Manager**

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## 1. Introduction

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' or carers' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items:

- which will be provided free of charge;
- where there may be a charge;
- where charges may be waived.

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. This is also explained in this Charging and Remissions policy. This policy has been informed by DfE guidance.

## 2. Definition

The definition of school day is 8.50am – 3.30pm. The midday break does not form part of the school day.

## 3. Responsibilities

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with, and correctly apply the policy. The Governors will review the policy at least every 3 years.

## 4. Chargeable and non-chargeable activities

No charge will be made for the following:

- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.
- swimming lessons that take place during school hours as part of the national curriculum

A charge will be made for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);

- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 7);
- community facilities

## 5. Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not part of the national curriculum or part of religious education.
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## 6. Activities partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school

hours. A charge can only be made if the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours and if it is not part of the national curriculum and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

## **7. Music Tuition**

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

Charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

## **8. Residential visits**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, or religious education or that forms an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination, no charge is made for the education element of the trip. However, a charge will be made to cover the costs of board and lodging. Parents and carers who are in receipt of certain benefits (see below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

## **9. Voluntary contributions**

The Headteacher or governing bodies may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment;
- school funds generally.

However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or Headteacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. The school will make it clear that if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.

## **10. Calculating charges**

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy for those who can pay to support those who can't or won't pay. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents. The Headteacher, Resources Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **11. Damage/Loss to Property**

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to a school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

## **12. Other charges**

The Headteacher, the Resource Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

## **13. Remissions**

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits, where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived

## **14. Families qualifying for full remission of charges**

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will qualify for full remission of charges:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

## **15. Families who may claim help with some of the charges**

The Headteacher, Resource Committee or Governing Body may remit in full, or part, charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances. If parents are experiencing financial difficulty they are invited to write in confidence to the Headteacher. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fund raising.

## **16. General Considerations**

We recognise our responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following:

1. We shall advise parents at the earliest opportunity of visits and their approximate cost
2. We shall have a system for parents to pay in instalments
3. When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip