



"Where children come first"

Charging & Remissions Policy

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APPROVAL & ADOPTION

This policy was formally agreed and adopted at a Full Governing Body Meeting held on:

11th July 2018

UPDATE SCHEDULE

Version	Date	Reason for Update
1.00	12/07/17	First Version post de-Federation
1.01	15/05/18	Full Review and Update

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Purpose	4
What was consulted?	4
Relationship to other school policies	4
Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher, other staff, and Governors	5
School Governing Bodies and local authorities cannot charge for:	5
Activities for which charges will be made:	5
Optional Extra's	6
Charges for Optional Extra's	6
Voluntary Contributions	7
Music Tuition	7
Transport	7
Residential Visits	8
Education partly during school hours	9
Support Benefits	10
Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Data Protection Act 1998	10
Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation	10
CHARGING & REMISSIONS SCHEDULE	11

Charging & Remissions Policy

Introduction

- No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.
- The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the local authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.
- If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents.
- The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school proposes to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.
- School governing bodies, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 10 of this document of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum and sets out the charges and remissions for activities.

The school day is defined as:

Term-time, Monday-Friday 08.50 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

What was consulted?

This policy has been informed by sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by Local Authorities in England.

Relationship to other school policies

This policy complements the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Educational Visits Policy. All complaints will be dealt with according to the schools Complaints Policy.

Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher, other staff, and Governors

The Headteacher will ensure that this policy is adhered to.

School Governing Bodies and local authorities cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum¹, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, 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;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

Activities for which charges will be made:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them
- Optional Extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below)
- Certain Early Years provision.³
- Community Facilities.⁴

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

³ The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

⁴ The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act

Optional Extra's

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;
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- 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).

Charges for Optional Extra's

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 must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must 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.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. 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. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

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.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now 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.

The regulations make clear that 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. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- 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 that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;⁵
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;⁶
- 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; and

⁵ See section 452 of the Education Act 1996 for guidance as what counts as during school hours

⁶ The government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal Credit is fully rolled out.

Education 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. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school 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.

Non-Residential Activities

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.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Support Benefits

Remissions will be made as above for pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Data Protection Act 1998

The school has a FOIA Publication Scheme and Data Protection Policy both clearly detailing the charging structure for any information requested.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Governing Body via the approved 'Finance Team' will monitor the impact of this policy regularly by receiving a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.

CHARGING & REMISSIONS SCHEDULE		
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	CHARGING POLICY	REMISSIONS POLICY
Contributions towards School Day Trips (Curriculum related – DURING or OUTSIDE of school hours)	Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards school trips that take place outside of school hours. However, it will be made clear that they are not obligated to make a contribution and if insufficient contributions are raised then the trip will be cancelled.	Parents will be chased to determine if they are able to make a contribution but will not be pressed to do so.
Contributions towards School Day Trips (Non-Curriculum related – DURING or OUTSIDE of school hours)	Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards school trips that take place outside of school hours. However, it will be made clear that they are not obligated to make a contribution and if insufficient contributions are raised then the trip will be cancelled.	Parents will be chased to determine if they are able to make a contribution but will not be pressed to do so.
Contributions towards Residential Trips (During School Hours and therefore deemed as being part of the National Curriculum)	The school will request a voluntary contribution from parents for the board/lodging and travel costs only.	Parents who are in receipt of certain benefits (see Page 10) will not be charged for the board and lodging element of a school residential trip.
Contributions towards Residential Trips (Outside of School Hours)	The school will request a voluntary contribution from parents for the board/lodging and travel costs only.	Every effort will be made to raise funds (including the PTFA Committee, if applicable) if the school budget cannot provide enough support in order to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to take part in a residential.
Contributions towards Swimming Lessons	The school will request a voluntary contribution from parents towards the travel costs for transporting pupils to the venue of all swimming lessons.	Parents will be chased to determine if they are able to make a contribution but will not be pressed to do so.
Music: Contributions towards Music Lessons	The school will use its 'Music Standards Grant' to support the cost of some group music sessions. Parents who opt for their child to have individual instrument lessons, e.g. via Kent Music School or Your Music School should ensure that they pay the provider directly.	
Breakfast Club Charges	The cost for a pupil to attend Breakfast Club sessions is £2.20 per day.	

CHARGING & REMISSIONS SCHEDULE		
DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	CHARGING POLICY	REMISSIONS POLICY
After School Clubs	The school will request a voluntary contribution from parents towards the cost of attending some After School Clubs.	Parents will be chased to determine if they are able to make a contribution but will not be pressed to do so.
	If the school decides to use additional funding e.g. PE/Sports Grant to waive the cost of After-School Clubs, parents should be aware that this may not be the case indefinitely.	
Charges for the cost of repairs to School Property (Deliberate Vandalism / Malicious Damage)	In cases where pupils have deliberately caused damage to school property, the school will at its' discretion (and dependent on the extent of the damage), call the Police and report the pupil concerned for criminal damage. The school will send parents an invoice for the FULL cost of the repair to rectify the damage.	
Charges / Contributions for the cost of repairs to School Property (Accidental Damage)	In cases where pupils have accidentally caused damage to school property, the school will send parents an invoice for the FULL cost of the repair to rectify the damage but will expect, at the very minimum, a contribution towards the cost of repairing the damage. This contribution will be agreed mutually between the Headteacher and the parent.	
Freedom Of Information Act 2000 - Publication Scheme Request	The school will publish as much information as it can on its website. Hard copies of documents will be charged based on the current 'per copy' photocopying charges to the school and the standard postal charges.	Administration charges for information requested will not be applicable.
GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018 - Subject Access Requests	The school will not charge any fees to process a Data Protection Subject Access Request (SAR).	