



Charges & Remissions Policy

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Approved By:	Mrs. S Lawson – Chair of Governors
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This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools in England.

This policy is based upon the document below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

All schools are required to have a policy towards Charging and Remission for activities that take place in and out of school hours, which is reviewed on an annual basis. This policy sets out:

- what charges will be made for activities,
- what remissions will be implemented
- the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will reasonably be requested by the school from parents/carers.
- those activities for which charges will not be made

Our school aims to:

- have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and can be made

Definitions

Charge: A fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: A cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining the content of this policy and the Head Teacher for its implementation.

Individual instances and situations may occasionally be referred to the Governors Finance Committee if appropriate.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- * Voluntary contributions
- * Permitted charges

Contributions and Charges

When activities take place during school hours parents will be invited to make voluntary contributions towards the total costs. Such activities may include:

- Class outings and educational visits
- Groups of visiting actors, musicians etc.

A pupil will never be stopped from taking part in these activities, because parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. However, the activity may not take place if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to cover the costs of the planned activity. In such instances the voluntary contributions received will be refunded.

The educational visits policy has been updated to allow for set timescales so that decisions can be made as to the financial viability of educational outings and visits.

Parents/carers will be charged for the cost of some activities during school time.

These include:

Residential Visits

This is regarded as an 'optional extra'. A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment.

If parents can prove that they are in receipt of certain benefits the total cost of the residential may be reduced to take account of charges associated with board and lodging.

The list of benefits to which this applies are:

- 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).

Please see remissions section later in this policy for further information.

Materials

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. In the case of food technology, the school will provide the ingredients and a proportional charge per pupil will be made to help cover costs. Parents should be informed before the items are made if there will be a charge.

Music Tuition

Instrumental music tuition during school hours is delivered by the Durham Music Service. Payments for tuition and the hire of instruments are made by parents directly to the Music Service and not to the school. The charge made will not exceed the cost of provision.

No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(I) of the Children Act 1989).

Extra-Curricular Activities and School Clubs

When clubs/activities are provided by outside agencies or third parties, it is reasonable that a small nominal charge is made to cover costs incurred by commissioning outside providers. This allows us as a school to offer a much wider range of activities. If children sign up to such clubs and activities then it is expected that a financial commitment is made for the specified duration of the club/activity.

The school will not profit financially from commissioning outside providers.

If children are absent for a particular session/sessions proportional charges will not be refunded.

If the school has to cancel a club or if the supplier does not turn up, charges for that session will be refunded.

After school clubs delivered by the SSP (Schools Sport Partnership) coaches will be provided free of charge.

After school clubs delivered by school staff are provided free of charge, although parents will be asked to pay a small amount towards provisions (e.g. Cookery Club) or materials (e.g. Art/Craft Clubs).

After-School Swimming Lessons

Pupils accessing after school swimming lessons provided by the school swimming instructor will be charged to cover energy and pool running costs. This charge will be annually reviewed by the Governing Body and the outcomes communicated to parents.

Swimming lessons will be paid for in advance of an identified block of lessons (half a term). No refunds will be given unless the lesson is cancelled by the school.

Sporting Events Organised by the SSP (Schools Sport Partnership)

Transport provided to enable attendance at sporting events which have been organised by the SSP (Schools Sport Partnership) will be provided free of charge.

When children are representing the school for example as part of a team either sporting or non-sporting, transport will be provided free of charge.

Peterlee Partnership Festival

It has been agreed by Governors that the cost of transport for children to attend the annual Peterlee Partnership Festival will not be passed on to parents.

Voluntary Contributions

On some occasions we no longer cap the amount that parents can contribute voluntarily e.g. school pantomimes at Christmas. We appreciate that some of our parents may be in a position to make a larger contribution than others and may wish to do so.

Extended Services

The school provides childcare services at Breakfast Club and at After School Childcare. Parents are charged for these services and are provided with the current costs in our 'Breakfast Club Information for Parents' and 'After School Childcare Information for Parents' documents and via the school website.

Children who are not collected at the allotted pickup times will be taken to afterschool. A nominal charge for childcare will be made, unless with agreement of the School Business Manager and Head Teacher.

If children are not collected at the allotted pickup time from Afterschool a nominal charge will be added for extra childcare.

Charges for these services are reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis and the outcomes communicated to parents.

Milk

Cartons of milk are provided to children under the age of 5 free of charge. Children who are entitled to free school meals will be provided with milk at break time if it is requested by the parent. All other children over the age of 5 years old are charged for milk through Cool Milk. Parents must liaise with Cool Milk regarding registration and payment for any milk provided.

Breakage, Damage or Loss

As a school we recognise that accidental damage can occur. However, the school will seek to recover the costs incurred, as a result of any item of school property being damaged, broken or lost as a result of misbehaviour, thoughtless behaviour or carelessness.

Damage to books, equipment or the fabric of the building is unacceptable, and we expect that the cost of replacement is not the responsibility of the school, but of those involved in such instances. Parents will be charged for willful damage by their children to school property.

In the event of books being lost or damaged, parents/carers will be asked to replace or refund the total cost of each book.

Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities which includes associated costs such as heating, cleaning and key holding charges. The scale of charges is determined annually by the Finance Committee and forms part of our separate Lettings Policy: ***Please refer to this policy for specific detail.***

We no longer offer caretaking facilities outside of the normal school day (January 2024).

Fund Raising

We raise funds through the provision of community events and school activities for children. Staff and volunteers give freely of their time, but children are charged to attend evening discos or other such entertainment. Children usually attend in sufficient numbers to ensure that a profit is made for school funds, which is dedicated to providing additional resources for school, to the benefit of all pupils.

Remissions Policy

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Governing Body stipulates that no child should be treated differently because their parent/carer is unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution in respect to an educational activity.

Pupil Premium funding allows schools to utilise financial sources to enable all children to have equality of educational opportunity. Any use of Pupil Premium Funding is at the discretion of the Head Teacher and Governing Body and decisions are made in terms of whether the impact of using such funding to provide equality of educational opportunity is measurable.

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a pupil who is eligible for free school lunch the school shall liaise with the provider to seek either a partial or complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Refunds

Where possible, refunds for children who miss out on educational visits due to absence/illness will be given. Each case will be evaluated on an individual basis/case. However, this refund may only be a proportion of the voluntary contribution made. This is due to issues such as:

- Where transport has been provided costs have been calculated upon the total number of children.
- Providers e.g. theatres may still make a charge irrespective of whether a child has been able to attend.
- Insurance may not cover refunds.

