



ALL SAINTS C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

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SCHOOL 212

Charging & Remissions Policy

Last Reviewed: October 2016 by Resources Committee
Next Review Due: October 2018

It is a legal requirement that the School has a formal policy dealing with charging for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum. This policy must be reviewed and approved by the full Board of Governors on a biennial basis.

It is emphasised that education provided wholly or mainly during school hours, must be free of charge and therefore forms no part of this policy. In addition, education provided outside school hours will be free of charge 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.

Purpose

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular or extracurricular) 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.

Background and Relationship to other school policies

This policy complements the school's equality policy.

Activities for which charges may be made

- a) Activities outside school hours.
Non-residential activities which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).
- b) Residential activities
Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision. Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see page 2, section 'Remission or Aid', sub-section 'Families qualifying for remission or help with charges', paragraph 2 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs. However, the school cannot charge for the educational or travel elements, but can request a voluntary contribution.

When any trip is arranged parents or carers will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

c) Music tuition

A charge is permitted for teaching an individual pupil or groups of appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing in school hours, unless tuition forms part of the national curriculum or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Actual Charging Guidelines

Charges may be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as “optional extras”. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them	For example, a clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay.	Materials not re-usable may be charged for at the teacher’s discretion if the item is taken home. Materials that could be re-used will be charged for if the item is taken home.
Charges may be made for music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils.	Where families are claiming remission of fees, or paying for lessons but approach us for help, if funds are available we will meet the cost of exams or books on a case to case basis.
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	See section ‘Remission or Aid’, sub-section ‘Families qualifying for remission or help with charges’, paragraph 2 below
Voluntary contributions may be made to cover the cost of a residential trip	Parents are aware of number limitations and how children will be selected. Parents understand if costs cannot be met the trip will have to be cancelled.	The school uses grants available to them at the time or may offer some contribution from school on a case by case basis.

Remission or aid

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

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 remission policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Parents in receipt of:

- Income support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.

- Guaranteed State Pension

Additional categories of parents/carers may be claim help with some costs in some circumstances. The Head teacher should advise all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits.

Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place during school hours;
- School equipment;
- Covering staff who are attending a school residential trip;
- School funds generally.

Generally, activities inviting voluntary contributions are:

- Swimming lessons;
- School trips;
- Some visits by theatre companies / musicians
- Cooking and craft
- Occasional loss or damage of school equipment
- Offsite activities insurance.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, **then it will be cancelled**. From the outset parents will be made aware of a possible cancellation to the activity or trip if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.

Where a parent/carer has indicated in writing that a voluntary payment will be made, then that payment will be chased until the school is advised otherwise by the parent/carer or the head teacher decides to write off that cost.

Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its 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 guidelines:

- We have an established system for parents to pay in instalments
- 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
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

Arrangement for monitoring and evaluation

The Resources Finance Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a termly basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.