

Cragside Church of England Primary School



Charging and Remission Policy

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**(This document is available in an alternative format and in
an alternative language on request**

Cragside Church of England Primary School **Charging and Remissions Policy**

Introduction

In accordance with Sections 449– 462 of the Education Act 1996, the Governing Body makes no charge for education or educational activities provided during school hours as part of the published curriculum. The objectives of the charging and remissions provision set out in legislation are to:

- Maintain the right to free school education.
- Establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parent's ability or willingness to meet the costs.
- Emphasise that governing bodies may charge for activities which are optional and take place wholly or mainly out of school hours. The lunch hour is not considered to be within school hours.
- Confirm the right of schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

Links with other school policies

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with all other school policies, and in particular the Special Educational Needs Policy, Education of Looked After Children Policy and Equalities Statement

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities offered by school can make towards the personal and social education of pupils. The Governing Body therefore reserves the right to levy charges, or request voluntary contributions, for the activities listed below. Charges will not however exceed the actual cost of the activity.

1. Visits in support of the curriculum which are desirable but not essential

The Governing Body recognises that the school may wish to offer opportunities for pupils to broaden the range of experience in connection with certain curriculum areas during school hours. Such opportunities might comprise an educational visit to an historic site, a theatre visit, work in an art gallery or museum, or use of swimming pools.

The Governing Body's policy is to encourage the school to work jointly with parents in this respect, and invite voluntary contributions from parents, either generally to school funds or specifically for certain activities, in accordance with section 460 of the 1996 Act.

In encouraging such co-operation the Governing Body is anxious to ensure that parents are made aware that any such contributions are voluntary and that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution.

The Governing Body recognises that the viability of visits in support of the curriculum, which are desirable but not essential, depends upon the level of voluntary financial support received from parents and delegates to the Head Teacher responsibility for decisions in relation to the viability of such visits.

2. Out of school hours learning

Out of school hours learning (OSHL) is defined as learning activity outside normal lessons which pupils take part in voluntarily. OSHL activities may take place before the start of the day, at lunch times, after school, at the weekends or during school holidays. They may be provided by the school or independently by an outside provider and may include such activities as cookery club, sports clubs, French club, craft clubs etc. This list is not exhaustive but is there as a guide. Whilst OSHL activities can be closely linked to the school curriculum, they are not a 'necessary part', and as such charging is permitted. Where this occurs, the charge levied will not exceed the cost of the provision. For places that have been booked a charge will be levied if attendance is cancelled within 24 hours as resources will have been purchased and arranged in anticipation of attendance, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the HT. All absences should be notified to the school office or in the case of 'Fun Club' to the club itself in writing or by phone. In the event of closure due to unforeseen circumstances i.e. bad weather, heating failure etc no charge will be levied.

3. "Optional extra" activities outside school hours.

"Optional extras" wholly or mainly outside school hours include such activities as residential visits, educational visits, sports participation and theatre excursions. This includes Fun Club and the same terms and conditions apply as stated in section 2. The full cost of these activities may be charged to parents provided that they are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum, an examination syllabus, or religious education where no charge will be made. Prior written agreement to the charge will be obtained from parents of pupils involved in an optional extra. In fixing the charge the school may take account of:

- The cost of pupils' travel, board and lodging, materials, books, instruments and other equipment, entrance fees etc.
- Teaching/supervisory staff costs.
- Insurance costs.

4. Remissions

Remission of charges will be applied to pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following benefits in respect of board and lodging costs for activities taking place wholly or partly in school hours:

- Income Support.
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income does not exceed the amount determined for the purposes of Section 7(1)(a) of the Tax Credits Act 2002.
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

The school may also offer remission for other costs associated with activities to pupils whose parents are in receipt of the above benefits. Where activities are organised and charged by a third party e.g. an independent tour operator, the school may provide for full or partial remission of charges.

Letters to parents giving information and costs of an activity will invite parents to make school aware of a situation where assistance might be needed.

5. Music tuition within school hours

A charge will be made to parents of pupils receiving vocal tuition or tuition in the playing of any musical instrument, except where it is provided to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum or a public examination. The charge will include the cost of the teacher providing the tuition, the hire and insurance of the instrument and may include the cost of sheet music. A charge may also be levied for music instruction and vocal tuition in relation to orchestral and choral activities run by the Authority outside defined school hours.

Charges will be levied in accordance with the County Council's published scale of charges and parents will be asked to indicate their written agreement in advance of provision of tuition. Parents will also be asked for written confirmation, a term in advance, if their child(ren) wishes to cease tuition. Families in receipt of free school meals may be entitled to a reduction in tuition charges per term and free use of a musical instrument.

6. Breakages and fines

Accidental breakages and damage are unavoidable and no charge will be requested by the school. A request for the recovery of costs may occur if it is felt that damage or breakage has been caused through willful or deliberate action.

7. Materials/equipment for practical lessons and charging for ‘finished products’

Voluntary contributions or provision of goods in kind may be requested from parents for materials for practical lessons (Design Technology, Food Technology or other subject areas as the Governing Body may from time to time determine), if parents indicate in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Although legislation states that no charge can be made for equipment in connection with education provided during school hours it specifically excludes clothing. Parents can therefore be asked to provide their children with appropriate clothing items such as cooking aprons or football boots.

8. Late Payment

All payments should be made within 30 days of the receipt of an invoice or reminder. A reminder will be issued after 14 days. In the event of non-payment then we reserve the right to withdraw the service until the invoice is paid.

The Governing Body will review this policy every annually and may review and amend the categories of activity for which charges can be made.