



# **Charging and Remissions Policy**

# **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

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# CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

## Introduction

Sections 440-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities, in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This policy accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996.

No charges can be made to parents unless the governors have drawn up a charging policy.

## Education

Schools cannot charge for:

- 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 Curriculum or part of religious education;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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.

Schools can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them;
- Optional Extras; (See page 4)
- Music Tuition, in certain circumstances (see page 5)

## Voluntary Contributions

*Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contribution to benefit the school for any activities. 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 should also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation on them to make a contribution. It is also important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip, then it must be cancelled if the governing body are unwilling to meet the cost.*

### **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:
  - a) Part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) Part of religious education
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local education authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip;
- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- 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;
- The cost or a proportion of the cost for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of pupils may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, and the charge should be divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It may not therefore include any 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 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 trip.

The charge cannot exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra or the board and lodging.

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.

## **Residential Trips**

Schools cannot charge for:

- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

Schools can charge for:

- Board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming trip, 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:

- 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 families income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (FY 11/12);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

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 trips will be.

## **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. A charge may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, for either an individual pupil or groups of up to four, provided that the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the pupil is being prepared for by the school. This is a permitted optional extra.

## **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 education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip although schools may ask for a voluntary contribution.

Schools can charge for:

- Any other transport. This is a permitted optional extra.

## **Education partly inside or outside of school hours**

A charge can be made for an activity if it is not part of the National Curriculum and not part of religious education.

The school will fund essential extra learning activities that embed National Curriculum learning but it will continue to ask for voluntary contribution for activities that will enhance the learning. If insufficient contributions are collected an activity will be cancelled.

Wherever possible, information about all such activities will be advertised on the school website and within school newsletters.

## **Remissions Policy**

The school places great importance in providing a full and varied range of curricular activities which support children in their learning. It is recognised that trips, visits and visitors can create costs for parents and the school will ensure that trips can be either fully or partially subsidised from Pupil Premium allocation for parents unable to contribute fully to these costs; individual circumstances are to be discussed with the Head teacher so an informed decision can be made. The school will provide a price for all activities, the school will advise whether the amount is voluntary or not. The school does not ask parents for an annual donation towards funding such activities at the start of the academic year.