



# Charging & Remissions Policy

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This policy will be reviewed annually.

## Introduction

At Cookham Rise Primary School we believe the children benefit from educational visits, journeys, visitors to the school as well as extra-curricular activities in sport and the creative arts.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, trips and residential experiences can make to pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. The Governors will support all off-site activities which the Headteacher considers to be of good educational value and complementary to the curriculum.

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be made for activities, what remissions will be implemented, and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents. We follow government regulations on charging as set out in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act.

## Chargeable Activities

School governing bodies and local authorities, **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school,
- 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 a syllabus or 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 school.

Government regulations say that schools **can** charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the parent wishes the child to own them,
- Music and vocal tuition that is requested by a pupil's parent as set out in 'Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007',
- Board and lodging costs associated with any residential visit,
- Optional extras (see below).

## Optional Extras

The school can charge for activities known as optional extras. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - the national curriculum,
  - a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupils is being prepared for at the school, or
  - 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 (such as breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount **can** 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 including 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. Charges will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on 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

If a trip or activity takes place during school time, no charge will be made. However, a voluntary contribution may be requested to cover the full cost of providing the trip or activity.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to contribute. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to fund a visit or activity or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then there is the likelihood that it will be cancelled. When making requests for voluntary contributions, no parent will be made to feel

pressurised into paying, as payments are voluntary and not compulsory, although reminders may be sent regarding payment.

### **Residential Visits**

In Year 6, children go on a residential visit, spending nights away during the school week. Government regulations allow us to charge the cost of board and lodging for children, except for those families eligible for certain benefits (see 'Exception of Charges'). A voluntary contribution will also be requested towards the activities undertaken whilst there and the cost of travel to and from the venue.

### **Damage and Loss of Property**

In cases of willful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of books or equipment on loan to pupils the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

Students are not allowed to bring personal items of value to the school such as mobile phones. If mobile phones are needed for children to get to and from school safely, they must be handed into the school office on arrival at school and collected at the end of the day. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged articles of clothing or any personal belongings.

### **Extended Day Provision**

The provision of extended day care, both before and after school, will be charged for by the school. Charges will be made to cover staffing costs, lettings of required space, utility costs, and any equipment required to effectively run the provision.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular activities organised directly by the school and run by school staff are offered free of charge to children. However, the school may on occasion request a small charge for some clubs i.e. clubs requiring the purchase of equipment or materials where a parent requests the finished product to be brought home with the child.

All extra-curricular activities organised by external providers are chargeable directly by them.

### **Remissions: Cancellation or exception of Charges**

Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging on residential trips (see following paragraph). For all other activities that take place within school time no charge will be made however a voluntary contribution will be requested.

Exception of Charges apply to parents in receipt of:

- Universal Credit,
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or

- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
- Since 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. The school must be notified that a family is in receipt of these benefits to ensure that parents are aware of the right to claim free board and lodging. For those families who currently receive Free School Meals, the Headteacher will inform you of your right to claim free board and lodging.

Any subsidy relating to pupil charging is solely at the discretion of the Headteacher. If a need arises and this action is taken, this will be documented and held on file as appropriate.

Families eligible for benefits, and others the Headteacher believes are experiencing financial hardship, are not pressured to pay. We keep such information confidential and handle situations discreetly.

### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

The Headteacher monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.