



Providing the keys to success for every child

Whole School Policy on:

Charges & Remissions

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Kent County Council

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Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Rationale	1
1.2	Aims	1
1.3	Objectives	1
1.4	Principles of the Policy	2
2	Policy Statement for Activities.....	2
2.1	Charging.....	2
2.1.1	During School Hours	2
2.1.2	For Activities Outside School Hours	3
2.2	Voluntary Contributions and Donations	4
2.3	Remission.....	5
3	Resources.....	6
4	Responsibilities.....	6
5	Monitoring and Evaluation	6
6	Policy Review.....	6



1 Introduction

This policy has been compiled by the Acting Head Teacher on behalf of the Governing Body.

1.1 Rationale

The law regarding what may, and may not, be charged in respect of activities provided by the school within and outside the school day has always been difficult to interpret and apply fairly to all. In accordance with the requirement of the 1996 Act Governors are required to state their policy with regard to charges and their policy in respect of any circumstances in which their purpose to remit (in whole, or in part) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging and remissions policy that apply in the school.

1.2 Aims

The aims of the charging and remissions policy are to:

- maintain the right to free school education for all;
- ensure that a wide range of activities, provided by the school to enhance the children's education, are rendered possible by an effective charging policy;
- enable all pupils to take full advantage of the activities provided by the school; and
- ensure that the school is able to continue to provide such activities.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the charging and remissions policy are:

- to ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parent's ability or willingness to help meet the cost;
- to identify those activities or types of activities for which charges may be levied;
- to determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship;
- to determine where it is appropriate to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school either during or outside school hours;
- to ensure that the responsibilities for the charging policy are clearly and appropriately allocated;
- to ensure that the operation of the charging and remissions policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.



1.4 Principles of the Policy

- Where a charge is to be levied the school will do its best to ensure that it is kept to a minimum. In some cases the school takes part in the setting of the fee and any future increases. The school will endeavour to ensure that the parent/carer is assured value for money.
- The policy will facilitate the remission, in full or in part, of charges for parents/carers suffering genuine hardship wherever possible.
- Where a voluntary donation or contribution is requested, no child will be prevented from taking part in an activity or from taking home items made at school on the grounds of non-payment whether it arises from the parent/carer's inability to pay, refusal to pay or failure to pay.
- There will be no profit made intentionally by the school as a result of any charges levied by the school or from voluntary donations made by the parents/carers.
- No member of staff or member of the Governing Body may make personal financial gain from charges levied on the school or on parents/carers or children for any activities or the sale of any items related to the work of the school.
- The decision to charge for an activity or to request a voluntary donation will be based on the concept of fairness to all children and equitable treatment of all children.

2 Policy Statement for Activities

2.1 Charging

2.1.1 During School Hours

It is the policy of the Governing Body to:

- retain the right to charge for the ingredients or materials used in the making of items directly related to the requirements of the National Curriculum; to delegate to the Head Teacher/Acting Head Teacher the decision as to when a charge will be levied;
- levy a charge for the provision of music tuition to pupils, either individually or in groups of four or less except where it is provided specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum;
- levy a charge for the board and lodging element of all residential trips and visits; and
- levy a charge for all other elements of a residential visit.



2.1.2 For Activities Outside School Hours

It is the policy of the Governing Body to retain the right to levy a charge for all activities provided outside school with the following exceptions:

- no charge will be made if the activity is an essential part of the basic curriculum.

Charges will, if necessary (i.e. if costs are incurred), be made for 'optional extras' defined as falling wholly or mainly outside of school hours provided that the activities are not:

- specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum; and / or
- specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.

Education outside school hours other than education which is an essential part of the curriculum is defined in the Education Act as an 'optional extra' and participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. The agreement of the parent(s)/carer(s) is therefore an essential prerequisite for the provision of optional extras for which charges are made.

The terms above do not prohibit charging for board and lodging and all other elements of a residential visit except where parents are in receipt of income support or family credit, when remissions may be considered.

The charges may, dependent upon the nature of the activity, include an element for:

- a pupil's travel costs;
- a pupil's board and lodging costs, except where the parents/carers are in receipt of income support or family credit;
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- non-teaching staff costs;
- entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.;
- insurance costs; and / or
- the engagement of teaching staff specifically for providing the activity and supplying such staff with travel, board and lodging, providing that if they are employed by the LEA or Governors, they are employed to provide individual music tuition and engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra. The contract may take the form of a letter inviting the teacher to provide certain services for a specific activity taking place at a specified time, in return for payment of expenses and, where appropriate, a fee.

Charges for individual pupils will not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of pupils willing to participate;



- include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parents/carers wish them to participate but are unwilling or unable to apply;
- include the cost of alternative provision for more pupils who do not wish to participate, where a small part of the activity takes place in school hours.

Charges may be levied by outside agencies for:

- the provision of coaching, training or tuition. The activities take place on the school premises and typically include:
 - music tuition;
 - football coaching;
 - cycling proficiency training;
 - gymnastics coaching; and
 - swimming training.

The charges are levied to meet professional fees and to meet the costs of running the clubs and associated activities.

2.2 Voluntary Contributions and Donations

The school frequently sees the need to seek parental financial support for the funding of activities organised by the school or on behalf of the school by outside agencies. Without such support, many of the activities would not be able to take place. Most frequently parents/carers are asked to make a voluntary donation.

It is the policy of the Governing Body to request voluntary contributions from all parents for school activities in or out of school time which can only be provided if there is sufficient voluntary funding. Such activities may not go ahead unless there is sufficient interest and a willingness to contribute financially on the part of parents/carers to the extent where a significant part of the overall costs can be met.

A **voluntary contribution or donation** may be requested by the school to:

- support or enable activities which take place partly or wholly in school time - school trips, swimming lessons etc.;
- offset the cost of some curricular or extra-curricular activities that involve the use of consumable materials provided by the school, e.g. art, craft and cooking activities. This includes materials used in after-school clubs;
- to support a nominated charity;
- to provide gifts on special occasions, e.g. a teacher leaving;
- The school may seek voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities from parents/carers, but, such contributions are genuinely voluntary and there is no obligation on a parent to make any contribution;



- pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not parents/carers have made a contribution; and
- parents/carers will be informed of the level of contribution and whether the activity could take place if parents/carers were reluctant to support it.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contributions sought for anyone activity. Parents/carers are invited to make a contribution towards the costs of the activity. To assist the parents/carers, the school most frequently suggests a sum that it feels would be suitable and enable the activity to take place. This sum will not intentionally seek to make a profit for the school except in the case of donations to the school fund.

2.3 Remission

The statutory minimum remissions policy must provide for remission of board and lodging charges to pupils whose parents/carers receive income support or family credit if an activity takes place during school hours; or is out of school hours but covered by requirements related to the National Curriculum or duties relating to Religious Education.

It is the policy of the Governing Body to:

- remit charges for board and lodging to parents/carers in receipt of income support and family credit;
- delegate to the chairman and the Head Teacher/Acting Head Teacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of the policy;
- remit in full or in part the charge for individual or small group music tuition in respect of parents/carers experiencing hardship. The percentage of the total cost remitted will be determined in the light of available funds and the number of children wishing to take part. It is the policy of the Governing Body to make music lessons available to as many children who would like them;
- consider the remission of charges for other activities set out above, for parents/carers facing genuine hardship and/or who are on Income Support and in receipt of Family Credit.

The remissions policy will be kept under review by the Governing Body.



3 Resources

The Governing Body will agree a fund within the budget to support this policy.

4 Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of the fund will be devolved to the Head Teacher/Acting Head Teacher, who will determine the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds. Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans, at the draft stage, should be submitted to the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval.

5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher/Acting Head Teacher will monitor the implementation of the policy and provide the Governing Body with a financial report as part of the normal termly reconciliation of the school budget.

Every three years the implementation of the policy will be evaluated and the views sought of parents/carers, pupils, teachers and Governors.

6 Policy Review

This policy will be kept under regular review but will be the focus of review by the Governing Body in Term 1, annually. A review will take place earlier if there are statutory changes to charging and remissions.

This policy is next due for review: Term 1, 2015.