

Charging and Remissions Policy

CODE: S9

Adopted by Whitchurch Primary School Governing Body	Date: 6 th July 2017	Signed:
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Version Number	Date Created	Changes or Reason for Update	Date Approved
V1	May 2014	Updated copying charges	May 2014
V2	June 2016	No Changes	27.6.16
V3	July 2017	Minor changes	6.7.17

Whitchurch Primary School & Nursery wishes to provide, for all pupils, the best possible educational opportunities available within the funds allocated by the Education Authority. The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents. The school warmly endorses that principle and is committed to upholding the legal requirements.

It is recognised, however, that many educationally valuable activities have been, and will continue to be, dependent on financial contributions, in whole or in part, from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite difficult to provide the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for its pupils. The school's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure, as far as possible, that all children are able to take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

The Governing Body *will not* charge for: -

- Admissions
- School meals for those children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount *per term* decided by the *Governing Body of the school*.
- Activities which are provided specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or Religious Education, with the exception of Music tuition.

The Governing Body *will* levy charges for: -

- Materials used in those subjects such as Design & Technology including ingredients used in food preparation, where the finished product will be taken home by the pupils (providing parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to keep the product)
- The cost of board and lodging in relation to residential trips taking place during school hours
- All costs for non-residential trips taking place outside school hours
- Optional music tuition and the hire of school instruments
- The cost of replacing items lost or damaged, for example: - books or broken windows

Optional Extras

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. The level of charge will be set in the term pertaining to that activity. The finance administrator taking into account transport and tutor/workshops (as applicable) will calculate all costs. Parents will be notified once the charges have been determined.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

When calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- 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, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra

- The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Parental contributions

For other activities which take place during school time, in particular day-trips, swimming lessons and visits by theatre companies to school, the Governing Body may ask parents to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost incurred, such as transport, admission and insurance. For planning purposes we would seek a general commitment from parents to provide these voluntary contributions. If not enough parents were prepared to make this commitment, or to then support the planned activities, they could not take place.

Miscellaneous

There may be occasions when an activity has a limited number of available places. In this situation a decision, regarding which pupils may participate, will be made without reference to parents' willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the 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:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year or term so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a 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

Private fees

Any report or data that is requested on a child for the purpose of a third party private assessment request by a parent/carer (eg Mid year pupil progress report for solicitors, private schools, private psychologist reports or solicitor reports) will be charged at an agreed rate of £15. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information, as well as photocopying charges (not less than 10p per sheet) and postage.

Any letters requested by parent/carers for proof of a child's attendance at school (e.g. letters for the UK Border Agency, Foreign Embassies etc) or passport applications will be charged for at a cost of £10 per letter.

Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student *or parent* the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement. Where a pupil has damaged property belonging to a third party, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

The Headteacher will decide whether or not these charges will be made dependent on the situation.

Remissions and concessions

The governors will make every effort to remit all or part of costs for activities, visits and journeys for those pupils who, in the opinion of the Headteacher and upon evidence of need, are deemed necessitous cases.

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance

Voluntary contributions

- The *Governing Body /Headteacher* may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.
- In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.
- There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

Inability or unwillingness to pay

- *Whitchurch Primary School & Nursery* is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled. The school /Governing body may decide to subsidise a trip.
- We will not ask other parents to subsidise children who have financial difficulties.
- The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

This policy is in line with the statutory guidelines as set out in DES circular 2/89 and Harrow Education Authority's Charging and Remissions policy.