Charging and remissions policy

Ballifield Primary School

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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

3. Definitions

- **Charge**: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission**: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the headteacher

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the resources committee.

4.2 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - 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
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours

  If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half-days spent on the visit, it's deemed to have taken place during school hours. A half-day is any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight. Time spent on travel counts towards this calculation if it occurs during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:

- The National Curriculum
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- Religious education

- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit fee costs can be recovered from the parent/carer if the pupil does not meet/attend the exam requirement without good reason.

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
    - The National Curriculum
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - 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 or governing board has 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 clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- 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)
- 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 will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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 wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition that a parent/carer has requested for their child, provided either individually or to groups of pupils. This charge must be equal to the cost of the provision, including the cost of music tutors.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities which would not otherwise be possible.

We are mindful of financial pressures on families and will communicate sensitively about all charges and voluntary contributions. We will always make it clear that voluntary contributions are entirely optional and that no child will be excluded from activities if their family cannot contribute.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- School visits and visitors
- Sporting activities/events
- Materials/books/equipment

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, for example school funds and/or fundraising activities, then the activity will be cancelled with notice.

Deposits for educational visits
We may request non-refundable deposits as part of voluntary contributions for educational visits. Where deposits are requested, we will make it clear that they are not compulsory and that pupils will not be treated differently if their parents/carers do not pay a deposit. The deposit amount and payment deadline will be communicated clearly to parents when the visit is announced.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

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. In the letter to parents concerning the visit or activity the costs for the components of the visit (travel, insurance, entry fees including adults attending, meals, etc.) must be made clear.

Surplus funds from educational visits

If there is surplus money remaining after an educational visit, we will refund large sums. For smaller amounts, we will retain surplus funds under £[5-10] per pupil (or 10% of the total funds if this is less) to contribute towards future educational visits. Parents will be informed of this arrangement when we request payment for trips. Any retained surplus will be used solely for the benefit of pupils' educational visits.

Activities for which the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

Educational visits	Which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day this may include transport, entry fees and activity costs, insurance costs (calculated per pupil), administration costs, meals and refreshments where applicable, costs for accompanying staff where necessary
Breakfast Club and After School Club	Breakfast Club and After School Club are optional services. Parents/carers who choose for their children to participate will be charged for these services. These charges reflect the actual cost per pupil of providing the service.
Music tuition	If it is not required for the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or for groups of pupils.
	Individual Music Tuition Charges may be made to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before the tuition is provided.
Damage to school property	Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of pupil's poor behaviour. This may include the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged books, other equipment, furniture.
Lost School Equipment	Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school property.
Visits to school by professionals	*e.g. Authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists, poets, sports coaches

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects	*The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product. Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc. needed for practical subjects such as Technology.
Residential Activity	The cost of board and lodging: the charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents in receipt of benefits listed in section 9.1 will be exempt from paying for board and lodging.
After School Optional Activities	*Range of classes which changes termly.
Photocopying	Parents requesting school documents to be photocopied will be charged for the staff time and number of copies made.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities from school funds and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher.

Costs may be supported for pupils in receipt of Free school Meals

Charging for Optional Activities

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. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in the term before.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit (household income less than £7,400 a year after tax)

If parents begin receiving any of these benefits after they have paid for their child to go on a residential visit, we will refund the costs paid.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The school 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 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.

The Headteacher and SBM monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and SBM annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the resources committee.