

WINDRUSH PRIMARY SCHOOL CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Date of review: January 2018

Date of next review: January 2019

Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. The key points from this are:

- That the governing body, subject to some limited exceptions, cannot charge for education provided during normal school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.
- That the school must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed in this policy of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

This policy has been written to comply with this legislation and the DfE publication “Charging for school activities” October 2014.

Basic Principles

The aim of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum and sets out the charges and remissions for activities.

The school day is defined as: 08:45 to 15:30. The lunch break does not form part of the school day.

This policy gives details of the circumstances in which the school will charge parents and in what circumstances it may ask for voluntary contributions. The policy will be placed on the school’s website and is available at the school office to ensure that all parents have access to it.

Responsibilities

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. Governors will review the policy every year (or earlier if there are legislative changes).

Policy statement

The school may not charge for:

- An admission application or admission to the school for children of compulsory school age;
- 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

Charges may be made for some activities known as “optional extras”. This includes:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum or part of religious education.
- Transport (other than transport to take the child to school or premises where the provision of education has been arranged).
- Board and lodging for a residential visit
- Breakages and replacements resulting from damages caused wilfully or neglectfully by pupils
- Extended day services offered to pupils (e.g. breakfast club, after school clubs)

The charge to an individual pupil must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. There will be no element of subsidy on those who can pay to support those who are unable or unwilling to pay the full charge. Support for cases of hardship will come through earmarked funding.

Participation in any optional extra will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement will be obtained for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which incur additional costs, for example museum trips or enrichment activities. Parents/carers will be notified at the outset if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, but there will no obligation for parents to make any contribution.

The school will not exclude any child from an activity simply because the parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions, and the school cannot fund the activity from any other source, then it will be cancelled.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside and partly outside of the school day there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the normal school day. Conversely if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged, parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer. Charges may not exceed the cost of provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The school cannot charge if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition programme. There will be no charges for Children Looked After by a local authority.

Residential Visits

The school can charge for board, lodging and transport costs (subject to statutory exceptions) for residential visits. The cost will not exceed the actual cost of provision. Parents in receipt of support payments will be entitled to the partial remission of these charges (see Remissions below).

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for key stage 2 pupils in line with the national curriculum, and these take place in school time. Therefore no charge is payable.

Extended Schools Provision

The school runs its own breakfast club and pupils participating are charged a daily fee. The club is run on a non-profit basis.

Where after school clubs are run by external agencies the agencies running the clubs will set the fees. Clubs run by school staff will generally have no cost attached to them except where materials/ingredients are purchased. In all instances, the school does not aim to make a profit from this provision.

The costs attached to extended day provision are clearly communicated to parents/carers when the extended day offer is made.

Breakages and damage

Where a pupil's behaviour results in damage to school property or equipment parent/carers may be asked to pay for the necessary repair or replacement. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the school's discretion.

School Uniform

Some items of school uniform carrying the school logo is purchased and sold by the school and operated through the School's non-restricted funds. These accounts are subject to an annual external audit. This system is not run on a profit making basis. Parents are able to purchase these items from retail suppliers ensuring that parents can obtain best value.

Remissions

Children whose parents can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received)

- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

The governing body may wish to remit in full or part, the cost of other activities for parents/carers in certain circumstances.