



Ashford Park Primary School
'Inspiring a love for lifelong learning'

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Agreed by staff	N/A
Agreed by governors	
Review	February 2024

Ashford Park Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

THIS DOCUMENT IS a statement of the aims, principles and strategies used for charging parents at Ashford Park Primary School.

The Governing Body and Headteacher of Ashford Park Primary School recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Governing Body and Headteacher aim to promote and provide such experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The intention is to apply this policy equally in order to promote fairness and every effort will be made to ensure that no child is prevented from participating because of financial circumstances.

The school day is defined as starting at 8.50 am and finishing at 3.15 pm.

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's equal opportunities policy, curriculum policy and learning and teaching policy.

School Visits

Parents/Carers will be asked to make a *Voluntary Contribution* towards the cost of school visits.

- There is no obligation to contribute and no child will be prevented from participating because their parent/carer has not made a contribution.
- It is made clear to parents/carers when activities cannot be funded without voluntary contributions.

During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for vocal or instrumental tuition for an individual pupil or a group. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example, swimming, special activities involving high cost materials, trips involving travelling to another venue or visitors to school who provide a service. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if the viability of the trip is dependent on voluntary contributions, parents will be informed of this from the outset.

School Activities & Visits During School Hours

Parents/Carers will be asked to make *Voluntary Contributions* towards some school activities, e.g. visiting theatre groups, cookery, etc.

- Charges levied for day trips will represent the actual cost of providing the trip. No profit will be made.
- Where the trip occurs during the school day, parents/carers will be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of their child's participation.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the voluntary contributions are made but, if insufficient funding is received, the school reserves the right to cancel the trip.
- Once a trip has been paid for, there will be no reimbursement for absentees on the day.
- Where a child may be prevented from participating in an outing because of financial hardship, consideration should be given to reducing the voluntary contribution expected. Any shortfall is to be met from the School Fund.
- Where sponsorship or donations have been received towards the cost of trips, it is for the school to decide how to use them. Contributions may be offset against the cost of the trip as a whole or used to reduce or remit the charge for individual children who would be unable to participate because of financial hardship.
- Children will be treated equally regardless of the amount of voluntary contribution made by their parents/carers.
- It is made clear to parents/carers when activities cannot be funded without voluntary contributions.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example extracurricular clubs. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

Activities out of School Hours (including Lunchtimes) and During School Hours Activities not part of the National Curriculum

Parents/Carers will be charged for activities where a cost is incurred to the school.

- Charges will not exceed the cost incurred, divided by the number of participants.
- Some assisted places may be available for some activities to families unable to meet the charges.

Education partly during the school day

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

School Residential Visits

- Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils who meet the current free school meals eligibility criteria. Other charges will be made to cover costs where necessary following guidance. In such cases parents will be told how the charges were calculated.
- Charges levied for residential trips will represent the actual cost of providing the trip. It is not expected that there will be any profit made.
- An initial deposit is usually requested for such residential trips with the remaining cost paid in instalments. This initial deposit is non-refundable should a child subsequently not participate in a trip. Payment of the initial deposit is an agreement and commitment to pay the cost of the trip in full.
- Once further payments have been made towards to cost of a trip, these are non-refundable if the place is subsequently cancelled.
- Where sponsorship or donations have been received towards the cost of the trips, it is for the school to decide how to use them. Contributions may be offset against the cost of the trips as a whole or used to reduce or remit the charge for individual children who would be unable to participate because of financial hardship.
- Children will be treated equally regardless of the amount of the payment made by their parents/carers.
- It is emphasised to parents/carers that without substantial voluntary contribution the activity may be cancelled.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents who would qualify for support are those who meet the free school meal eligibility criteria.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Musical Instrument Lessons

Parents/Carers will pay for the teaching of an individual pupil or a group of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument.

Lost School Equipment/Books etc

Parents/Carers will be expected to pay for lost items of school property.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Property and Furniture

Parents/Carers will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's behaviour.

Photocopying

Any photocopying that is requested by parents/carers relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act,' will be charged at 10p per sheet and 20p for any colour copies.

Private Fees

Any report or data that is requested on a child for the purpose of a third party private assessment requested by a parent/carers (e.g. reports for solicitors, private psychologists etc) will be charged at the following rate: £12 per hour for staff time to produce and collate the relevant information, plus photocopying charges, as outlined above, and postage.

Remission of Charges

Charges for board and lodging may not be made for any child whose parents/carers are in receipt of benefits as listed below, at the time the visit takes place. In such circumstances the governors will remit the cost of board and lodging for those pupils completely.

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent/carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the current limit (as advised annually by HRMC)
- The 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Equal Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' – the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

General principles established by the charging provisions of the 1996 Education Act and revised in the Education Act 2002:

Education within school hours

Education provided by a maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours. This means that neither the pupil nor his or her parents/carers may be required to pay for or to supply any materials, books, instruments or other equipment for use in connection with education provided within school hours.

Voluntary Contributions

The restrictions on charging for school activities do not in any way prohibit or restrict a school from seeking voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential, and including inviting parents/carers to supply or pay for materials used in craft and cookery lessons where they wish to own the finished product. Such contributions, however, must be genuinely voluntary. The terms of any request for any such contributions must make it clear

- That there is no obligation to contribute and
- That registered pupils at a school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have made any contribution in response to the request.

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contribution the governing body or headteacher should make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. At the same time it can be made equally clear that the activity will not take place if parents/carers are reluctant to support it.

Remission of Charges

Governing bodies may choose to remit charges in whole or part in certain circumstances. As a statutory minimum they must provide for complete remission of board and lodging charges to pupils whose parents/carers receive benefits as listed below, if the activity is deemed to take place during school hours or is out of school hours but curriculum related.

- Income Support
- Income Base Job Seeker's Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent/carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the current limit (as advised annually by HRMC)
- The 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Equal Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' – the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit