

LANGDON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charging and Remissions Policy

Created Spring 2018

Agreed by the Governing Body 14.3.18

Due for review Spring 2020

CHARGING POLICY

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 pupils. The government has set out the law on charges for school activities in Sections 449-462 and of the Education Act 1996. DFE Circular 2/89 explains and provides guidance on those sections. 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.

Aims

The aims of the charging policy are to:

- Maintain the right to free school education
- Enable all pupils to take full advantage of the activities provided by the school

Objectives

The objectives of the charging 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
- identify those activities for which charges may be levied
- determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship
- invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organized by the school either during or outside school hours
- ensure that the responsibilities for the charging policy are clearly and appropriately allocated
- to ensure that the operation of the policy charging and remissions policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.

During school hours

School Governing Bodies cannot charge for education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, except in limited circumstances detailed later in this policy.

It is the policy of the governing body to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to support activities which enhance or support the basic entitlement to the National Curriculum, where an additional cost may be incurred. The governing body will also levy a charge for the provision of private music tuition to pupils delivered by peripatetic music specialists or teachers employed by the school according to safer recruitment procedures, where parents request such provision.

Schools are permitted to ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or for any school activities. Parents are not under any obligation to pay voluntary contributions for any activity that is provided during school hours according to the guidance. However, if an activity cannot be funded without sufficient voluntary contributions then it may be cancelled and this will always be made clear to parents in initial letters detailing the activity sent home.

No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to contribute payment. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay then their child will still be given an equal chance to go on a visit. No parent will be pressurized by the Governing Body or school staff into contributing.

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 unless provided under free access music teaching to Key Stage 2 or where a child is looked after by the Local Authority.

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, on condition that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

Outside school hours

Charges may be made for 'optional extras' defined as falling wholly or mainly outside of school hours provided that the activities are not:

- To specifically to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
- To specifically fulfill statutory duties relating to religious education.

Participation in the optional extra activity is on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

The charges may include an element for items such as:

- a pupil's transport costs
- a pupil's board and lodging costs eg. when on a residential visit
- extended day services such as Breakfast Club or After School Care Club
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment required for the running of extended services or optional extra activities
- additional teaching and non-staffing costs incurred in order to provide extra or extended services
- additional costs incurred for visits eg. to museums, castles, theatres, etc

Charges for individual pupils may not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of individuals willing to participate
- include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parents wish them to participate but are unwilling or unable to pay
- include the cost of alternative provision for pupils who do not wish to participate.

Remission

It is the policy of the governing body to:

- delegate decision making powers to the Head Teacher in respect of waiving any charges for any activity for families in financial difficulties, including the statutory aspect of waiving the cost of any residential or visit if part of the child's National Curriculum basic entitlement
- delegate to the chair of the Resource Committee and the Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of the policy.

Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits have the right to claim free board and lodging and will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging in relation to school organised residential visits:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed published amounts;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Resources

The governing body will agree funds within the budget to support this policy, including the Pupil Premium funding for those who are eligible.

Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of the fund will be devolved to the 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 Head Teacher for consideration and approval.

Monitoring & evaluation

The Head Teacher has the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.

The 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 two years the implementation of the policy will be evaluated.

Appendix

Suggested wording for a request for financial waiver consideration for school trips and residential visits:

A member of the school Governing Body Resource Team and the Head Teacher will give full and fair consideration to waiving all or part of the cost of an activity, school trip or residential visit if a request is received in writing. Below is a suggested letter template to support parents in that request. Further details about charging for school activities, trips or residential visits can be found in our Charging and Remissions Policy which is available through the school office or on our school website at www.langdonprimaryschool.co.uk

Dear

I/We have received the information about the _____ activity/school trip/residential visit which my child would like to be part of. Due to my/our current financial circumstances I/we am/are unable to meet the full cost of this activity and would ask that you consider waiving the contribution or cost on this occasion.

I am currently eligible for (please choose the most relevant statement):

- Universal credit
- 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 and the family's income – as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs – does not exceed published amounts)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

My child is/is not entitled to Free School Meals.

Many thanks for your consideration of my request. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely