LANGDON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charging and Remissions Policy

Created Spring 2025

Agreed by the Governing Body 18.3.25

Due for review Spring 2027

CHARGING POLICY

Rationale

The government has set out the law on charges for school activities in Sections 449-462 and of the Education Act 1996. 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 and remissions 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 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 on low income and in receipt of benefits or 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 policy are clearly and appropriately allocated
- to ensure that the operation of the charging and remissions policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.

During school hours

School governing bodies **cannot** charge for:

- an admissions application
- education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- instrumental or vocal tuition unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- education for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at school
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit

It is the policy of the governing body to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to support any school activities, including transport in connection with an educational visit, which staff believe may enhance or support the basic entitlement to the National Curriculum. 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.

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 be made clear to parents in initial letters we send home detailing the activity.

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.

Optional extras are:

- education provided out of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum or religious education
- examination entry fee if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examinations in school
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to other premises where the Governing Body have 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 eg. Breakfast Club, after school clubs

In 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 extras
- 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)
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Charges for individual pupils may not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of individuals participating
- 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, including the cost of supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school to accompany pupils eg. on a residential visit.

Education partly during school hours

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours (minus the break in the middle of the day), it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls in school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging; the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

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 a named representative of the Governing Body 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.

Remission of charges requests can only be made in advance of the trip taking place. No remissions will be made after the trip has taken place including where a child is unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances. This safeguards the school's financial position with providers and ensures sound financial management of the school budget.

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 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 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 which result in hardship, 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 or add relevant benefit):

- Universal credit
- Income support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Income based employment and support allowance
- Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- 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 £30 000)

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