

Offham Primary School



Charging & Remission Policy

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CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Introduction and Aims

Offham Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras. Our school aims to:

- Ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to meet the cost
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school, where appropriate
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging policy are clearly and appropriately allocated
- To ensure the regular review of operations of the Charging and Remissions Policy.

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 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools 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.

4.2 The headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently, including making decisions on remissions.

4.3 Staff

Our 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 senior leadership team 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. Charges and Voluntarily 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.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs e.g. swimming lessons, school trips, special events, art and activity events. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because their parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently.

However, if a particular activity cannot take place without some financial help from parents, it will be explained at the planning stage that the activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected. Policy is that where it is necessary to cancel a school trip due to insufficient voluntary contributions being received, a full refund of payments received will be made. A voluntary contribution will not be refunded where a pupil is no longer able to attend.

Optional activities outside of the school day

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

Charges for the Extended Services (Clubs) are on the website.

Residential

Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home, the school is allowed to charge for board and lodging and transport plus any activities. The charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music lessons are 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. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made 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. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

6. Calculating charges

When charges are made for an activity (excluding the optional activities), 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. Pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to support those who cannot or are unwilling to pay the full charge.

7. Remissions

It is at the Headteachers' discretion to agree to waive or remit charges following consideration of a parent's particular circumstances at the time if they are known to be suffering temporary hardship or economic difficulties. Parents / carers are invited to apply in confidence to the Headteacher, for the remission of charges in part or in full. Support may be available to children who are in receipt of FSM or are a pupil premium child.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

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

The governors may monitor the impact of this policy by requesting a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded and the source of those subsidies