

Charging and Remissions Policy



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1. Aims

All education during normal school hours is provided free of charge. Gastrells Community Primary School does not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

However, the school believes that educational visits, enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular activities provide valuable experiences for pupils. In some cases, the school may ask parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these activities.

This policy outlines when charges may be made and when voluntary contributions may be requested.

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

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 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.

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.
- Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Resources Committee.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Resources Committee

4.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies
- The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents/carers

- Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we cannot charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we can charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA or governing board has 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 (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)
- When 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 extra
 - 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 engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
 - The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

The school may organise residential visits for pupils, usually in Years 4 and 6. We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- School Trips, visits and practical activities that enhance pupils' learning and broaden their knowledge and experience.
- Optional extras that we consider will be of high value to our pupils but may not necessarily fit in with our curriculum at that time. Such activities may include: a Christmas pantomime or touring theatre show, a 'hands on' session or a travelling road show.
- Swimming lessons take place in school time. This activity relates to the National Curriculum.

Voluntary contributions are requested towards the cost of transport for swimming.

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

With the exception of swimming, if the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- **School Clubs**

Gastrells Community Primary School offers a range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. A small charge may be made for some activities to cover administration and running costs.

Specialist clubs delivered by external providers (for example judo, music tuition or sewing) will be fully funded by parents/carers. This charge will usually represent the charge suggested by the agency or organisation offering the club. We will not make a profit.

Occasionally Arts and Craft Clubs may involve a small charge to cover the cost of materials, thus ensuring high quality finished products that can be kept. Sports clubs may charge for the cost of medals.

- **Breakfast and After School Clubs (Wraparound Care)**

We have a very successful Breakfast and After School childcare facilities which charge for all attendances.

Each child is charged to attend the clubs. All places booked are expected to be paid for regardless of whether they are attended. This is to ensure all bookings are of genuine need and not holding places that could exclude other places needed.

All sessions are paid in advance via Schoolmoney. If payment is not made, or you have a credit on the child's Schoolmoney account, the booking will not be processed. If a debt has incurred you will receive a reminder and bookings will be suspended until payment is cleared.

Breakfast Club sessions are paid either in advance by a term, by a half term, by month, by a week or on the day. Any sessions owed are chased by the office. Failure to pay for owed sessions will result in the child no longer being able to attend Breakfast Club until

- a) payment is cleared and
- b) all future payments are paid in advance.

The charges for Breakfast Club and After School Club are based on actual costs of the overheads, including staff costs and provision of food and drink as applicable.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

All payments for residential visits are to be paid for by ParentPay. Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits may receive support for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit – (with a household income below the government threshold)

10. Monitoring arrangements

The School's Finance Officer monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board.