



## Charging and Remissions Policy

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# Charging for School Activities

## Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities, in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This policy accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996.

## The School Day

The school day is:

- 9.00am – 3.15pm (1 hour for lunch)

## Schools cannot charge for:

- 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 or part of religious education
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

## Schools can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them
- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum/religious education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- The cost of teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- The cost of an Instructor employed to provide a coaching service in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- The cost of an Instructor employed to provide a coaching service or School Club outside School hours
- School lunches for children in Key Stage 2
- School lunches for visiting parents /siblings
- Provision of breakfast / snacks
- School performances
- Charges in line with Freedom of Information Requests

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore 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.

Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be 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.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip or activity/event, then it may be cancelled.

When organising school trips or visits that enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to make a voluntary contribution to the cost of the trip. In the event of the trip organiser, in consultation with the headteacher, having to cancel the trip because of insufficient contributions there needs to be a clear understanding of the cancellation charges which would be incurred. If a parent wishes his/her child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. The school will subsidise any additional costs in order to support the visit provided the trip is considered viable. Under the Freedom of Information Act parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which may require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums, theatres, animal parks, stately homes, musical events
- sporting activities including swimming which require transport to and from the venue
- outdoor adventure activities
- visits to the beach or other location for fieldwork
- residential school trips
- themed days
- holiday clubs
- club resources
- out of school use of electronic equipment i.e. ipads

## **Eligible benefits**

Parents of pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals and/or qualify for Pupil Premium or LAC (Looked After Child) funding may be entitled to support for some of the charges. You could qualify for Free School Meals if you meet the following criteria:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance – Income Related
- Pension credit guaranteed
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual gross income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190.

All discussions relating to family circumstances will be treated as confidential. Application forms are available from the school website. LAC applications should be made via the Virtual Head.

## **Residential Trips**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly during school time, which provides education directly related to the National Curriculum, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the instruction, equipment and travel. All contributions are voluntary.

If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may have to cancel a trip. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

A charge is made to cover the cost of board and lodgings. Parents whose children receive free school meals are entitled to a remission of costs associated with the instruction and use of equipment during the residential visit. No child should be excluded because their parents cannot or will not pay.

Schools cannot charge for residential trips for:

- Education provided on any trip which takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any trip which takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

Schools can charge for:

- Board and lodging, provided the charge does not exceed the actual cost.

Parents in receipt of the Pupil Premium are entitled to a remission of up to 100%.

## **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, for either an individual pupil or groups of up to four, provided that the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.

Parents whose children are eligible for the Pupil Premium can apply for financial assistance with payment for

tuition for one instrument per academic year. Usually the school will meet the cost up to 100%. Currently, extra-curricular music tuition is provided by external tutors who charge parents directly. Their details can be found on our website.

## **Swimming**

Children from year 3 have the opportunity for a series of swimming sessions at St Ives Leisure indoor pool. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity but in order to cover transport costs we ask for a voluntary contribution per child per session. The costs for the use of the pool and the cost of any swimming tuition are met by the school.

## **Lost / Damaged Books and other Resources**

In the event of books or other key resources being lost or damaged parents/carers will be asked to reimburse the school to the value of the item to enable a replacement to be provided by school.

## **Breakages/ Damage (wilful or accidental)**

The cost relating to breakages/damage are recoverable from parents and can be pursued in a civil court. A charge will also apply for loss of damage to school property which is placed under the responsibility of the pupil and permission is granted to take off the premises.

## **Other Charges**

The school may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services i.e photocopying, use of phone or hire of resources including lettings.

## **Remissions Policy**

The school places great importance in providing a full range of curricular activities which support children in their learning. It is recognised that in organising such a regular programme of trips, visits and visitors, some parents may find it difficult to meet a charge or make a voluntary contribution. In its budget planning the school has provided limited resources to help offset the costs of day visits and residential trips. These activities would otherwise be payable by parents in accordance with the Charging Policy.

Through the application of the Pupil Premium charges will be remitted or assisted for pupils whose parents have been awarded the Pupil Premium. Applications for assistance should be made via the school office ([office@swavesey.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@swavesey.cambs.sch.uk))