

Charging & Remissions Policy

Knotty Ash Primary School

2022-2024



The Governing Body recognises that as a result of the 1996 Education Act there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity and that charging is prohibited except in certain circumstances at the discretion of the LA or Governing Body.

The governing body also recognises that the curriculum as it exists at present cannot continue without asking for voluntary contributions from parents in certain circumstances.

1. Education Activities taking place during school hours

1.1 'School hours' are defined as being those hours during which the school is in session, but excluding the mid-day break

1.2 No charges will be made for any activity or materials, books, instruments or other equipment which are essential to fulfil the statutory curriculum

1.3 Voluntary contributions may be asked for to enable extra activities, which are deemed educationally desirable, to take place. It may also be stated that such an activity will not be able to take place unless enough contributions are received to finance that activity. The contributions requested will reflect the cost of that activity (including any consequential costs such as supply cover, transport, refreshments) less any subsidy from funds available to the school.

1.4 Materials required which would result in a finished product, may be charged for as long as parents have been asked in advance if they wish to own that finished product.

1.5 Parents will be expected to provide items of clothing such as aprons and football boots. The L.A. scheme of assistance continues to apply. The school will continue to provide essential protective equipment such as safety goggles.

2. Educational Activities taking place outside school hours

2.1 Charges for activities may be made except where the activities are required either:

(a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or

(b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education in which case no charge may be made with the exception of board and lodging charges for a residential visit (see sections 3.1 to 3.3)

2.2 The costs incurred by teachers providing the activity may be included in the costs to pupils.

2.3 Where charges are made the cost may not exceed the cost to the pupil and cannot subsidise any other pupils participating. The cost of those pupils remitted from charging will be met by funds available to the school.

2.4 A pupil's participation in such an activity will be a matter for parental choice and on the basis of a willingness to meet any charges applicable. Thus such an agreement is a pre-requisite to a pupil's inclusion.

2.5 Such charges will take into full account any subsidy provided by the L.A. and reduced accordingly.

3. Definitions by the Act

3.1 Day visits and non-residential activities are deemed to take place during school hours if 50% or more of the time spent on the activity, including any connected travel, occurs during school hours. (See Section 1.1) The Charging Policy for such an activity will therefore follow 1.1 – 1.5.

3.2 Residential activity is defined as being one which involves pupils spending one or more nights away from home. Such an activity is deemed to take place during school hours if the number of school sessions taken up by the activity is 50 % or more of the number of half days (12 hours) involved (in this connection a 'half day' is defined as any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight of any day).

The charging policy for such an activity will therefore follow 1.1 – 1.5 except that:-

(a) the full actual costs per pupil for board and lodging may be charged to the parent

and

(b) such a cost must be fully remitted if the pupil is in receipt of Free School Meals, and must be met by funds available to the school

3.3 A residential activity is deemed to take place outside of school hours if the number of school sessions taken up by the activity is less than 50% of the number of half days (12 hours) involved. An appropriate charge may be made to parents unless the activity is required either:

(a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or

(b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education in which case only board and lodging costs can be charged and these must be wholly remitted if the child is in receipt of Free School Meals.

4. Activities arranged by a third party

It would not be appropriate in any way to arrange or help to arrange an activity for which the LA has no legal liability. Nor is it anticipated that teachers would be granted leave of absence to participate in such an activity.

5. Entry for Public Examinations

5.1 No charge will be made for a pupil's first entry to any prescribed public examination for which the pupil has been prepared at the school, whether during or outside school hours. Resit examinations will be charged unless the pupils is in receipt of Free School Meals or has suffered illness or a 'life event' that caused the pupil to perform worse in the examination than would normally have been expected.

5.2 Parents and pupils will not be required to provide or pay for any materials (excluding clothing) necessary for the purposes of examination entry.

5.3 No charge will be made for transport provided to enable a pupils to take such an examination.

5.4 Pupils will be entered for each examination in a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil has been prepared for entry by the school except where;

(a) in the opinion of the Headteacher there are education reasons for not doing so; or

(b) where the pupil's parents request in writing that the pupil should not be entered.

5.5 Parents will be informed in writing as soon as it has been decided for which examinations pupils should be entered.

5.6 Where the preparation provided by the school would enable a pupil to take two or more prescribed public examinations in the same syllabus the requirement to enter a pupil applies to a single examination entry only. However, no charge will be made to the parents for an additional entry of a pupil if the school has prepared the pupil for the examination.

5.7 Where it is agreed to enter a pupil for a prescribed examination for which the pupil has not been prepared by the school, the full cost of the entry may be charged to the pupil or parents.

5.8 Where a pupil has, with parental agreement, been entered for a non-prescribed public examination a charge may be made for:-

(a) entry fee

(b) actual cost of any preparation provided by the school outside school hours.

(c) costs relating to the school's teaching staff if the staff have been specifically engaged under a contract for services for the purpose of providing the optional extra.

5.9 Examination entry fees may be recovered from parents if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements for any public examination for which fees have been paid by the school.

Requirements may include coursework or the sitting of final examinations.

6. Music Provision

6.1. Charges will not be made for class music tuition during school hours.

6.2. Music tuition, whether group or individual, will also be free, whether it is provided during or outside school hours, if it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum.

6.3. No charge will be made for group activities e.g. school orchestras, which take place during school hours.

6.4. A charge may be made for individual and small group music tuition not forming part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum, provided parental agreement is obtained before a pupil is given the tuition. The charge can include:

☐ the cost of the teacher,

☐ the costs of sheet music, and

☐ the hire and insurance of a musical instrument.

6.5. Serious consideration will be given to requests for tuition from parents suffering financial hardship or whose child is in receipt of Free School Meals, with each case being judged independently and given at the school's own discretion.

6.6. Parents are asked to make a term's commitment in advance to tuition. Parents will be invoiced termly.

6.7. Parents will be required to terminate music tuition at least one term in advance and in writing to the Head of Music. Should a pupil decide not to attend tuition at any time during a term period, no reimbursement of fees will be given.

6.8. Tuition will be cancelled if payment is not received in advance. However, parents will still be liable for settling any outstanding amounts.

6.9. School reserves the right to terminate tuition if it does not consider groups to be viable, or if progress/commitment is unsatisfactory. This will always be done after consultation with the instrumental teachers and parents.

6.10. School insurance will cover loaned instruments in school and on the journey to and from school. Parents' own insurance must cover the cost of replace/repair, should damage occur outside these times. Advice will be given by the instrumental and music teacher. Insurance should be taken out for pupils' own instruments.

7. Voluntary Contributions

7.1 Any such contributions must be genuinely voluntary and it will be made clear to parents if contributions are requested that;

- (a) there is no obligation to contribute
- (b) pupils will be treated the same whether or not their parents have contributed
- (c) there is support for low income families, in which case the child is in receipt of Free School Meals, and this is the criterion used to assess whether support is needed.

7.2 If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents in an initial letter indicating

- (a) the nature of the proposed activity and its education value;
- (b) the contribution per pupil which would be required if the activity were to take place; and
- (c) the activity would not take place if insufficient contribution were forthcoming.

8. Breakages and Fines

8.1 Parents may be asked to pay for the cost of any damage resulting from a pupil's misbehaviour.

8.2 Parents may be asked to pay for the replacement of any lost or damaged material in the care of the pupil.

APPENDIX 1

Regular Voluntary contributions or contributions not linked to a specified activity

When the school requests voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying, as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour-coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds. Schools should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Q. Can a school ask for a direct debit or standing order to the school fund?

A. No. A school may ask for voluntary contributions, as long as it is clear that they are voluntary, but with reference to direct debits and standing orders DCSF guidance states: "We are clear that state education should be free and we have no intention of changing this policy. We will not tolerate this when it is brought to our notice. No contributions may be sought as part of the admissions process."

APPENDIX 2

Communications to parents re: Charging and Remissions Policy

1. For activities which must take place to fulfil the curriculum the following form of words could be used:

'In order to cover the cost ofa voluntary contribution ofper pupil is requested. There is no obligation to contribute and pupils will be treated the same whether or not a contribution has been received. Unfortunately, however, if insufficient contributions are received, this could adversely affect other activities within the subject.

2. For activities which are deemed educationally desirable but are dependent on funds entirely from parent contributions, the following form of words could be used:

'This activity has been organised because (reason)

If this activity is to take place, a voluntary contribution ofper pupil is necessary. Unless sufficient contributions are forthcoming, the activity will not be able to take place and any contributions made will be refunded in full'.