

Charging and Remission Policy

January 2016

Aims

We recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Voluntary Contributions

In order to enhance and extend the learning experience the children have at Sharrow School the school will often seek "voluntary contributions" to cover the cost of an activity. The school will give reasonable notice of the request for voluntary contributions and especially for residential trips. Such contributions must be "genuinely voluntary" and any such request to parents/carers or other parties must make clear that there is no obligation to contribute. Pupils at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed.

Where an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be explained to parents/carers at the outset. Parents/carers will be advised in writing about a proposed activity, and it will be clear that there is no obligation to contribute and that no pupil would be omitted from the activity because their parents/carers did not contribute.

Education during school hours

Charges will not be made for:

- any education provided during school hours – including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of the syllabus requirements of a prescribed public examination or part of religious education

If the number of places available for a particular activity is limited, the school will decide which pupils should be given the opportunity to participate without regard to parents' willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

Transport

Governors will note the LA's charging policy in respect of transport provided during school hours.

Costs may be offset wholly or in part by voluntary contributions.

Educational Visits

Governors will note that charges cannot be levied for visits deemed to take place wholly or mainly in school hours. Costs including incidental costs could be met from voluntary contributions

Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to sing or play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition programme.

Education Outside School Hours

No charge may be made for education provided, wholly or mainly, outside school hours for registered pupils where the provision is made to fulfil any of the statutory requirements listed above.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for education provided for registered pupils at maintained schools, wholly or mainly outside school hours, which does not fall within categories above. Such provision is deemed an “optional extra” – i.e. an activity which does not take place during school hours. Students will opt for a particular optional extra on the basis that parents are willing to pay.

NB: The agreement of parents is therefore a necessary prior condition for providing an optional extra which will attract charges.

It should be noted that there is no requirement to charge for optional extras but where charges are levied they must not exceed the actual cost.

Education partly during school hours

Charges may be made for activities that take place partly during schools hours provided that the majority of the activity takes place during sessions deemed half-days out of school hours and provided that the activity is not undertaken to fulfil any of the statutory requirements .

(i) Day-Time, Non-Residential Activity

A non-residential activity is deemed to take place during school hours if 50 per cent or more time spent on the activity occurs during school hours. Travel time counts in this calculation only if the travelling actually takes place during school hours. Where less than 50 per cent of time spent on a non-residential activity falls during school hours then the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours. School may ask for voluntary contributions to cover the costs of such visits.

(ii) Residential Visits/Activities

The Governing body may levy charges for other residential visits they approve except where they are provided to meet the statutory requirements as listed. Such arrangements must, of course, be subject to the statutory remissions policy.

A charge for board and lodgings may be made in any circumstances (subject to the remissions policy applying) A charge for transport and other costs may be made except where the activity is either: deemed “in school hours” or is provided to meet the statutory requirements listed above.

The Governing body may levy charges for the residential activities which they organise, so far as the law allows.

Where school does not make a charge voluntary contributions may be requested to help cover the costs. Regard will be taken for families on low incomes.

Breakages or Damage to School Premises/Equipment

School may ask parents to pay for damage to school property or equipment where this is the result of the pupil's behaviour.

Early Years Provision and out of hours Childcare

The School does charge for Early Years provision for parents/carers wishing to buy additional hours beyond those provided by the government as outlined in the Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012.

The school does charge for After School Club childcare out of school hours. Any charges made do not exceed the actual cost of providing the childcare.