

Castle Hill Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy



Last reviewed: February 2024

Next Review date: February 2024

Reviewed by: Head Teacher & SBM

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Su Broadhurst

Review frequency: Annually

Introduction

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head Teacher and Governing Body aims to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided until voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extracurricular activities.

Statement:

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

Where 'parent' is referred to, this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income.
- To encourage and promote external activities, which give added value to the curriculum.
- To provide a process, which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school.
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Legislation – Educational During School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that 'education provided during school hours must be free'. The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. It goes on to advise that 'although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)'.

When additional costs are incurred by Castle Hill Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions.

However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. However, without sufficient income to meet the full cost, such activities may have to be cancelled.

Education Outside School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that 'parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agreed to pay'. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities which can be charged for as 'optional extras'.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Castle Hill Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of education activities for their children.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Data Protection of pupils and families

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

A letter seeking interest, for an activity, from the parents will be issued prior to requesting any contributions. Those that agree to pay a contribution will be expected to pay. If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.

If a child is absent on the day of the trip/activity the school reserves the right to only refund the cost of the entry fee, where the school has not already paid. The cost of the coach, however, will not be refunded.

The 'Friends' fundraising supports £3 per child per year towards the cost of trips (this may be reviewed).

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for activities and items detailed below.

Residential Trips in school time	Parents are asked to meet the full cost of the residential visit, this amount being a voluntary contribution for activities in school hours and a full charge for all costs outside of school hours, e.g board and lodging, coach etc. Children with EHCP's and children eligible for free school meals may be supported by the school fund, by prior agreement with the Head Teacher. If the income for each activity does not meet the overall cost, such activities may have to be cancelled.
Activities outside of school hours not within the National Curriculum	Parents are asked to meet the full cost. Children with EHCP's and children eligible for free school meals may be supported from the school funds, by prior agreement with the Head Teacher. If income for each activity does not meet the overall cost, such activities may have to be cancelled.
Individual Instrumental Music Tuition	Where the school provides an 'outside' tutor, parents will be charged for the tuition. 'Outside' tuition fees are reduced where parents receive free school meal entitlement.

Ingredients/materials for practical subjects	Parents are encouraged to provide materials for practical subjects, but no child will be disadvantaged because of parents' inability/reluctance to pay. Where necessary, school will pay the cost of this.
Lost school equipment, books etc	Parents may be requested to replace school equipment, books etc, which have been lost by a child.
Breakages and damages to school buildings, furniture or property	Wilful damage to school buildings or property by a pupil may be charged to parents by the school.