



**worcestershire**  
county council

**Catshill Middle School and  
Catshill First School & Nursery**

# **Charging & Remissions Policy**

**Reviewed: March 2016**

**Next Review: March 2017**

**Signature ..... Chair of Committee**

**Date .....**

## Education

School governing bodies and local authorities **cannot** charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school or academy;
- 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 a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, 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;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

School and local authorities **can** charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them;
- Optional extras;
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.

## Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) Part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In 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;
- Non-teaching staff;

- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must 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 visit.

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.

All three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours a week of free Early Years provision for 38 weeks of the year. Schools receive funding to cover the cost of making this provision from the local authority through the Early Years single funding formula. A school's governing body can make additional provision available to its pupils (and other children) as part of the community services and facilities it provides under Section 27 of the Education Act 2002 (for further information see Section 22 Control and Community Use of School Premises).

### **Voluntary Contributions**

It is the policy of the Governors to request voluntary contributions to support additional activities. Taking into account the full range of planned activities requests will be made in two ways:

- A yearly request for a donation of £5.00 (£7.50 per family) which will be paid into School Fund.
- Specific requests to cover individual activities (This includes materials, equipment, transport etc.)

However, if an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Executive Headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset and make parents aware that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still

be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for 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 for contributions.

## **Residential Visits**

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- 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, 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; and
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- Board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Inland Revenue and Customs rules;
- State Pension Credit, where the parent is in receipt of the guaranteed credit; and
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance

## **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into

force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing during school hours, if it is provided at the request of the parent. No charge may be made in respect of a looked after pupil. Guidance about charging for music tuition can be viewed on the DfE website.

Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

## **Transport**

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority 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; and
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Guidance on school travel is available on the DfE website.

## **School Minibus**

Schools may charge for transport in their minibus only if they hold a permit issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. In some cases, the permit exempts the school from Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator and driver licensing requirements. A permit is not required if no charge is made in cash or kind.

Any charges made may be used to recover some or all of the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value. But the service may not make a profit, either directly through the fares charged or incidentally as part of a profit-making activity, even if any profit would go into the school's other running costs or for charitable purposes. A charge is any payment made in cash or kind by or on behalf of a person that gives them a right to be carried.