

Charging & Remissions Policy

LYON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



Approved by:

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Chair of Governors

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LYON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Charging and Remission Policy in respect of School Activities

1. Introduction

The law on charging in connection with education in maintained schools is set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. Section 457 requires the Governing body to determine and keep under review a policy in respect of both charging and remission arrangements. No charge may be made by the school unless it has drawn up a statement of its policy.

As the school is responsible for its budget in accordance with financial delegation, charging and remission is in the main a matter for the Governing body, subject to compliance with the statutory requirements.

2. Individual music tuition within school hours

2.1 Charges

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

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. Under this Act, charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of an appropriate size (providing that the size of the group is based on sound teaching principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing.

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.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff that provide the tuition.

At Lyon Park, it has been agreed that a charge will be made to parents of pupils receiving tuition either individually or within small tuition groups.

3. Optional Extras

3.1 Charges

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 equipments. **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.

(note: this could include before and after school clubs)

- 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;
- the cost of the buildings and accommodation
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, 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 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 a 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.

4. Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher **must** also make this clear to parents 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 contribution to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**.

Lyon Park Primary School will adhere to the DFE guidance outlined in section 4 above and will ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school time activities and trips to assist with the funding subject to the following conditions;

- any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently;

- where there are insufficient contributions to make the activity viable then the activity will be cancelled.

5. Residential Visits

5.1 Charging

School **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit 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.

5.2 Remission statement

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

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances (NB - as at Nov 2013 – advice by DfE – the government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal credit is fully rolled out)
- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.
- the guarantee element of the state Pension Credit; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

5.2.2 Each year, the potential costs for pupil that could meet the above criteria would need to be determined and a decision would need to be made as to whether the trip is affordable by the school if the additional costs are to be met from the school budget allocation.

5.2.3 Each residential trip will need to be reviewed and identified as to whether it is a trip for all pupils that forms part of the national curriculum.

If the residential trip is identified as being a voluntary trip that pupils may or may not take part in according to parental choice, then it would seem reasonable to charge for transport or any other costs associated with the trip, with the exception of board and lodging costs as has been outlined in paragraph 5.2.1 above.

This policy and guidance will be reviewed at least on an annual basis (or earlier if new guidance/directives are provided to schools) and the updated policy will be presented to the next available Finance/GB meeting held by the school.