

Ampney Crucis C of E Primary School



Charging and Remissions Policy

Together we live, learn and flourish

Approved by:
The Governing Body

Date: Feb 2024

Next review due by:

Date: Feb 2025

INTRODUCTION

The School conforms to the LA's charging policy and current statutory regulations.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. However, due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. We try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of opportunities.

NO CHARGES WILL BE MADE FOR:

- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip.

ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH CHARGES MAY BE MADE:

Charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

CHARGING FOR VISITS

a) All Visits

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- the total cost of the visit;
- how much of the cost will come from school or LA funds (as in the case of field trips);
- how much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit;
- how much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits?

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food, etc.

b) During Normal School Hours

In all schools, visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. The value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled - parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

The Governing Body may offer to remit the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which:

- takes place during school hours or;
- is not an optional extra (see following section for definition).

The decision to offer to remit board and lodging costs, as above, is subject to the parents of a pupil being in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance;
- Child tax credits;
- Working tax credits
- Disability Living Allowance.
- Employment and Support allowance

Parental permission should be obtained in one of two ways:

i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g.

I understand:

- that current legislation permits the school to ask for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved;
- that no pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay;
- that if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit may have to be cancelled.

ii) Signed Slip received back from parents:

A letter about the visit is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

"All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. Pupils who receive free School meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £___ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed."

c) Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras

The Headteacher can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a residential trip during the school holidays is an optional extra.
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education.

The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for pupils whose families do not meet the full charge. Parental permission should be obtained as follows:

i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g.

I understand:

- that current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- that current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit;
- that if insufficient numbers of pupils opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- that my child cannot attend this 'optional extra' visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.

INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

There will be a cost to the pupil for providing any instrumental tuition not part of normal LEA peripatetic provision.

INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'.

This is particularly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for Design & Technology.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

A charge may be made to parents for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student.

THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT & CHARGING

Members of the public have a statutory right to ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Naturally, no charge is made by the School for information sourced from the School's Website.

For parents of present or prospective pupils (including parents who wish information to help them decide if they wish their child to attend the School), single copies of all relevant and available information are provided free of charge. However, should a request for information involve a large amount of non-standard paperwork or duplication, the School reserves the right to charge 10p per sheet to cover duplication and administrative costs.

In all cases where a cost is to be levied the purchaser will be informed of the cost and requested to pay the correct amount in advance, (by cash paid or cheque or Parent Pay) before the work is undertaken.

REMISSIONS

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remission policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reviewed.

Parents in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance;
- Child tax credits;
- Working tax credits
- Disability Living Allowance.
- Employment and Support allowance

There may be other extenuating circumstances in which waiver of charges will be considered.

Application for remission along with supporting information should be made to the school administrator, and will be treated in confidence.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following:

- We will give parents as much notice as possible so that parents can plan ahead
- We have systems in place where parents can pay in instalments
- We will avoid the 'first pay, first served' method of selection as we acknowledge this discriminates against students from families on lower incomes.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Governing Body will monitor the impact of this policy through the ongoing reporting of the overall school budget.