

Park Primary School

Charging and Remissions

Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date	Review cycle	Next review
November 2024	Resources Committee	12.11.2024	Every year	November 2025

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Aim:

To follow the basic principle – that education should be free of charge if it takes place during school hours. The governors may authorise the collection of voluntary contributions for specific materials or events.

Main Points

- School Governing Bodies cannot charge for education provided during school hours.
- The school must inform parents in receipt of benefits that there is support available to them in providing voluntary contributions towards the cost of school visits

Musical Instrument Tuition

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or in small groups, to play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum.

Voluntary Contributions

Although the school does not charge for most of the school-time activities, parents are invited to make a contribution (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this is explained to parents during the planning stage. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. It may be necessary to state that the activity will not take place if parents are reluctant to support it.

Contributions must, however, be genuinely voluntary. The terms of any request for contributions must make clear:

- a) that there is no obligation to contribute; and
- b) that registered pupils at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contribution, which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is any restriction placed upon the use, which can be made of such contributions. A request for a contribution towards the cost of a particular activity could, for example, include the cost of subsidising pupils from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying adults. Alternatively, parents could be asked to contribute towards part of the cost at the time of the visit or activity, and the rest could be met from the proceeds of general fund-raising events.

Education Partly During School Hours

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge can be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours.) As an example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge. By contrast, a trip which involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place outside school time. Charges would then be allowed.

Out of Hours Activities

Where a cost is incurred by the school to provide an activity that takes out of school hours a contribution towards the cost may be sought.

Residential Activities

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time in the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24-hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and midnight. On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday, would last for nine half-days, including five school sessions, and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, including three school sessions, and would therefore be classified for charging as taking place outside school time.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances.

Remission

Parents who have contributed voluntarily may have a refund if their child is unable to take part in the trip through illness, unless otherwise stated.

Breakages and Losses

In cases of wilful, negligent or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books or equipment on loan to children, the head teacher will decide if it is right to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the head teacher's discretion.

Summary of changes

November 2024	Review. No changes made
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