



Millhouse Primary School

CHARGES AND REMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES 2016

This document is a statement of the aims and principles of the school for ensuring that all pupils receive a free school education and that any charges or voluntary contributions administered are within the current legislation and are fair to all children and their families.

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social 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.

Charging Policy

Any charges made by the school must meet the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1996. The governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges.

This policy has been formulated in accordance with Authority's guidance on: Charging for School Activities.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation. The Headteacher and Governing Body will consider any determinations with respect to individual parents jointly.

Publication of Information

This policy is published on the school website. Copies are available in school if requested.

Allowable Charges

- (a) Board and lodging on residential visits (not to exceed the costs)
- (b) The costs for activities wholly or mainly outside school hours, which are classed as optional extras - eg visiting the theatre at the weekend - which could include:
 - (i) Travel
 - (ii) Materials and equipment

- (iii) Entrance fees
- (iv) Ticket fees
- (v) Insurance

- (c) Music tuition provided as an optional extra by Barnsley Music Services

- (d) Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited

- (e) In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of schoolbooks or equipment on loan to pupils, the Headteacher - in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body - may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion

- (f) Extra-curricular activities and before and after school clubs.

Prohibited Charges

The Governing Body of the School recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- a) Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- e) Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.
- f) Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.
- g) Education provided on any trip 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.
- h) Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- i) Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- j) Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- k) Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- l) Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Remissions

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of state benefits, which would entitle their child to receive Scheme of Aid funding, the following will apply:

- Music Tuition
A partial reduction of the music tuition costs (not instrumental hire) will be applied by the school.
- Residential Visits
At the Headteacher's discretion a full or partial waiver may be applied to the payable part of residential costs.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents will be invited to make a voluntary contribution for the following:

- a) Educational class visits
- b) Educational sporting activities
- c) Residential visits that take place mainly in school time – costs for travel, entrance fees, insurance and any materials or equipment necessary (but please note the cost of board and lodgings is a charge)

However, should there be insufficient contributions made, then the trip or residential visit may be cancelled.

Letters sent to parents regarding school visits or residential, and educational sporting activities, that fall under voluntary contributions will include a summary of what the contributions will be used for, and will also specify the following:

Class Visits:

- a) The suggested level of voluntary contribution
- b) That the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay - but within the letter notifying parents of any proposed visit there would be a section for the parent to confirm they were willing to make this voluntary contribution. This would then enable the Headteacher to assess whether or not the proposed visit remained viable.
- c) 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.
- d) That if insufficient parents were unwilling to make the voluntary contribution to the visit, then the visit could be cancelled. The decision whether to cancel or not would be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Residential:

- a) The initial letter to parents would clearly state what the chargeable amount for the residential visit would be - ie the cost of board and lodgings - and also the suggested level of voluntary contribution required.
- b) That the contribution element is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay.

- c) 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.
- d) Parents will be asked to sign an authorisation slip indicating that they are willing and able to make the voluntary contribution. This commitment by parents (via the authorisation slip) will be used as the basis to book the relevant places on the residential and collect parents' **non-refundable** deposits. This process has been put in place to reduce the risk of the residential being cancelled due to insufficient parental support.
- e) That if any parent was unwilling to make the voluntary contribution, the residential could be cancelled. The decision whether to cancel or not would be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Sporting Activities within School Hours:

- a) The suggested level of voluntary contribution to cover travel costs only when using an external company to provide transport. In cases where parents are asked to transport their child to an event (ie if the event was for say just 4/5 pupils) then no costs would be applicable. Where sporting activities occur outside of school hours again parents are asked to transport their child to the event and no costs are applicable.
- b) That the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay.
- c) 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.
- d) Parents will be asked to sign an authorisation slip indicating that they are willing and able to make the voluntary contribution. This commitment by parents (via the authorisation slip) will be used as the basis to book the relevant coach or mini-bus.
- e) That if insufficient parents were unwilling to make the voluntary contribution to the sporting activity, then the activity could be cancelled. The decision whether to cancel or not would be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Voluntary contributions will be used to:

Class Visits:

- a) Cover the cost of transport to and from a venue
- b) Entrance fees to the venue, if applicable
- c) Tickets, if applicable, for any part of the visit – ie if visiting the seaside might include tickets for a ride, museum, etc
- d) Cost of any materials or equipment for the visit – ie if visiting a pottery might include the cost of making a clay pot or if visiting an adventure park might cover cost of specialist equipment
- e) Insurance costs

Residentials:

- a) Cover the cost of transport to and from the venue, and if applicable, during the stay
- b) Cost of specialist tuition and necessary equipment
- c) Entrance fees to organised events, if applicable

(Board and Lodgings would be a charge not a voluntary contribution)

Sporting Activities:

- a) Cover the cost of transport to and from the venue, if applicable

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Headteacher.

ACTIVITIES NOT ORGANISED BY THE AUTHORITY OR SCHOOL

When an organisation acting independently of a school or Barnsley Local Authority arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then complete a leave of absence form seeking permission from the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their children out of school for any other reason. However, where an activity is organised by a third party, and is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the view of the DfE that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school, and no charge should be made to the parents, or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises is an “approved educational activity”.

In this situation a request for a voluntary contribution from the parents can be made.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside of school hours when these activities:

- a) Are not a part of the National Curriculum
- b) Are not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- c) Are not part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education

Education outside of school hours is defined in the legislation as an “optional extra” and charging is at the discretion of the body which would otherwise meet the cost of the optional extra. **An activity which takes place during school hours cannot, by definition, be an optional extra.** (Musical instrument tuition is an exception but not part of this guidance).

Participation in any optional extra will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. The agreement of parents is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra for which charges are to be made.

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

Where it is not permissible to charge parents, any subsidy must come from the School Budget Account, School Fund Account, voluntary fund raising or voluntary parental contribution.

The cost can include an appropriate element for:

- a) Pupils' travel cost
- b) Pupils' board and lodging
- c) Materials and equipment
- d) Non-teaching staff costs
- e) Entrance fees to museums, theatres, etc
- f) Insurance costs

Any charge may also take account of the costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for the purpose of providing the activity and supplying such staff with travel, board and lodgings. If any of the teaching staff are already employed by Barnsley Authority or the Governing Body of Millhouse Primary School, their costs may not be included in the costs passed onto the pupils unless they are engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra.

There is no requirement to charge for optional extras. The body funding the activity is free to determine whether any charge should be made for it and, if so, how much should be charged to whom, subject to the charge not exceeding the actual cost.

Where the Governing Body has funded an activity from its own funds it alone will decide whether the cost should be passed on in full or in part to the parents. The school's delegated budget cannot be used to subsidise extra-curricular activities.