



Statutory Policy

Charging & Remissions Policy

Policy last ratified and adopted by Full Governing Board	October 2020
Policy due for review	October 2021

Charging & Remissions Policy

Background

This policy reflects the 'Charging for School Activities' DfE Guidance issued in October 2014.

Colindale Primary School supports the principle that the school curriculum be available to every child and that charges should not limit any child's access to the curriculum.

Any school visits or activities will be planned with a view to making them accessible to as many pupils as possible. Where charges are levied they will be fair and easy to understand. As much notice as possible will be given to parents when identifying a cost for a school visit.

Items that will not be charged for:

- An admission application - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;

Items which will be charged for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- Optional extras which are education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum;
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - Part of religious education;
 - Extended day services offered to pupils- for example breakfast club or after-school clubs.
 - Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);

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

Day Trips and other Visits

The cost of school trips will be kept to a minimum and cause the least disruption for parents by:-

- Using public transport wherever possible;
- Inviting visitors and speakers into school;
- Looking for activities and trips which do not incur a high cost;
- Giving parents forward notice;
- Allowing parents to pay by instalments;

Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards day trips or special activities

where costs are incurred. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Headteacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will 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 will be cancelled. This will be made clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Only in a family's special circumstances of financial hardship, and only within an annual financial limit that has been agreed by the Governing Board, the school may subsidise in part or in full parental contributions for trips. Priority will be given to families who have more than one child going on any trip.

The Headteacher's decision is final about which families are eligible for support.

Nursery Fees

Fees for the three-year-old nursery class, to those children who attend for a full day, will be charged on a half termly basis and cover the costs for lunchtime staff. All fees will be charged to the parent's ParentPay account and failure to clear the charges will result in a child losing their place.

Fees for the two-year-old (Little Rainbows) nursery, will be set at a half day rate and a full day rate. Parents who qualify for 30 free hours will be charged a cost to cover lunchtime staff. All fees will be charged to the parent's ParentPay account on a half termly basis and failure to clear the charges will result in a child losing their place.

Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging on residential trips whether they are deemed to fall inside or out of school hours. Children's entitlement to the National Curriculum is not affected by not participating in the activity. Remission of charges for board and lodging is possible for families on family credit.

After School Clubs

Charges will be made for visits or activities that are wholly or mainly outside school hours. This might include activities linked to any after school clubs operated by the school.

Other Voluntary Contributions

At Colindale Primary School we will not ask parents for voluntary contributions to school or maintenance funds.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that 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. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum.

They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Cookery Lessons

Ingredients will be paid for out of the school's main budget.

Damage to School Property

Charges will be made if a school book is lost or damaged while in the care of the child (e.g. at home). Charges will also be made for school property (e.g. rulers, books etc) which is deliberately damaged or destroyed. The charge is based on the replacement cost.

Transport

Governors will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;

Procedures for Charging

Outside-of-class activities

Teachers plan visits and out-of class activities which will extend the children's experiences. The procedures for planning a trip are set out in the school's Educational Visits Procedures Guidance. The costs for the trip are worked out and a charge agreed. The charge will never be altered after this point. Where the cost is deemed to be high correspondence is sent to parents to see if enough are willing to pay the amount. In the event of little interest being shown the trip may be cancelled.

A letter/email is sent to parents which requests the voluntary contribution and in which the parents give their permission for the child to join in the activity. An opportunity is given to parents in this letter to approach the school for assistance. This is another point at which the trip may be cancelled, if it is deemed that not enough adults would be available on the day to assist with the trip.

If the trip goes ahead, no child will be excluded because of inability to pay.

School based activities

We try to keep charges to a minimum. Letters/emails are sent to parents explaining the event and contributions are requested. In the event of the contributions not covering the full cost the school will fund the difference.

No child will be excluded because of an inability to pay.

Requests for Assistance/Remission of Charges

The standard school letter refers to the right of parents to seek assistance in cases of genuine hardship – see page 3 for more details. Parents may arrange a meeting with the Headteacher; all requests are dealt with sympathetically, sensitively and confidentially. The Headteacher will consider such requests to remit charges in cases of families in financial hardship and is authorised to do so by the Governing Board. The Headteacher's decision is final.