

Merton Junior School

Charging and Remissions Policy



'Be wise, together we succeed'

Date reviewed: July 2024		
Next review date: July 2026		
Headteacher	Signed:	Date: July 2024
Chair of Governors	Signed:	Date: July 2024
Date written: July 2018		
Date reviewed: July 2019 - staff details amended and policy updated inline with Hampshire's guidance and model policy.		
Reviewed: July 2020 (review date changed two 2 x yearly)		
Date reviewed: July 2022 Information regarding School Resource Committee deleted as this is now covered in FGB. Qualifying criteria for Universal Credit has been updated.		
Reviewed: July 2024		

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Introduction

All education during school hours is free. The School and the Governing Body, recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. Together we aim 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. The school and the Governors also recognise that many of these activities could not take place, without the expectation, that they will be funded by parents/guardians. This policy is monitored by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed 2 yearly or earlier if necessary.

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools in England.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions Policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions Policy has been delegated to the Full Governing Board.

4.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Charging and Remissions Policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions Policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Charges will not be made for any activities which form part of the National Curriculum requirements. No charge can be made for education during school hours.

Below we set out what the school cannot charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - 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
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

The school organises swimming lessons for all children during Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents and carers when these lessons are to take place, and we seek the written permission of parents or carers for their children to take part.

5.2 Transport

- 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
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Deposits for residential trips are non-refundable. Interim payments must be adhered to, dates for these are specified in the initial letter. If there has been no prior arrangement with school and payment deadlines have not been met then the child's place on the residential trip is likely to be withdrawn. Refunds are not likely to be given if the place cannot be sold on to another child. The coach will be non-refundable.

6. Where charges can be made

The following are the activities which the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge:

- (a) Board and lodgings on residential visits (not to exceed the costs)
- (b) The proportionate costs for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:
 - (i) Travel

- (ii) Materials and equipment
- (iii) Non-teaching staff costs
- (iv) Entrance fees
- (v) Insurance costs

(c) Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument. (All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum - we do not charge for this).

(d) Breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils

(e) Extra-curricular activities and school clubs.

(f) Lettings -The school where practical and applicable may make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The school currently does not let out any of the school building or site

(g) In certain practical subjects parents will be invited to pay for or to supply ingredients/materials on the basis that the finished product will be the property of the pupil.

The Governors' policy on charging for school activities is based on, and consistent with, statutory requirements and guidance from the DfE.

Below we set out what the school can charge for.

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, the school can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When 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 buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- 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 will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

School reserves the right to charge for some school clubs but these are not to make the school profit in any way with the exception of the Breakfast and After School Care club run by the infant school on our site.

If a child incorrectly orders a school dinner then they will be charged. If school provides a school dinner for a child who has forgotten their lunch then there will be a charge.

6.3 Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

We give parents and carers information about additional music tuition whenever it is available.

The school can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, 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 giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost.

All contributions are voluntary.

If insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the trip or visit may be cancelled.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'.

This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- musical events.

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- workshops
- school trips
- the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher signing passports

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. Any event or trip will be cancelled if the school do not receive enough voluntary contributions by the given date stated in the initial letter.

8. Activities this school charges for

The school will charge for the following activities, if the school has purchased the resources and equipment and this is then to go home with the child:

- Food which has been baked, cooked or prepared at school
- Objects made during Science investigations
- Items created during Design & Technology sessions

9. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits. An application will need to be made directly to the school with the relevant proof:

- Universal Credit – for those applying on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they get)
- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit

Any residential trip will be cancelled if the school do not receive enough bookings by the given date stated in the initial letter.

Refunds for both residential and day trips will be considered, however are not always possible.

If a child is removed from a trip due to issues with their behaviour then a refund will not be received. An initial warning will be given to the child and parent. In the case of a child leaving the school, a refund will be dependent on whether bookings can be adjusted for the venue. The coach will be non-refundable. If the trip is a residential trip then the initial deposit will be non-refundable and the other interim payment will depend on whether the place can be sold on.

If a child is ill on the day of the trip then any payments made are non-refundable unless the venue only charges based upon numbers that day. The coach will be non-refundable.

Deposits for residential trips are non-refundable. Interim payments must be adhered to, dates for these are specified in the initial letter. If there has been no prior arrangement with school and payment deadlines have not been met then the child's place on the residential trip is likely to be withdrawn. Refunds are not likely to be given if the place cannot be sold on to another child. The coach will be non-refundable.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Senior Administrative Officer, Mrs Helen Hooley, monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Senior Administrative Officer every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Body.