



Charging Policy

Bitterne Park Primary School
Mansel Park Primary & Nursery School
Sinclair Primary & Nursery School

Our vision is to empower children to become architects of a better world.

We therefore continuously seek to evolve our holistic understanding and application of learning.

We hold a shared belief that this requires knowledge, effort, empathy, passion, and innovation.

This is our mission.

1. Rationale and Aim

The aim of this policy is to outline charges to pupils for supplies or services. It also outlines eligibility for remission of charges.

2. Legal Requirements

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This advice has been written to provide at-a-glance information and complements the information given in section 7.5 of the Governors Handbook. This advice accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996 but is not a substitute for those terms. This policy has been based on the guidance provided by the Department for Education 'Charging for School Activities', May 2018.

School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to limited exceptions referred to in this advice, **cannot** charge 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 pupils 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/student's parent.

School governing bodies and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them.
- optional extras (listed in section below 'Optional Extras').
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section below 'Music Tuition').
- certain early years provision according to The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012.
- community facilities (the powers to provide community facilities are under S.27(1) of the Education Act 2002).

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'.

Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras 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/student is being prepared for at the school; or
- part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil/student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.

- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil/student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil/student to be provided with education).
- board and lodging for a pupil/student on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea, and supervised homework sessions)

In 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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- 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 must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not include a compulsory element of subsidy for any other pupils/students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

If the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils/students 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 visit.

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all of the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions, however, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the trip organiser will make this clear to parents at the outset. The trip organiser will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. School will ensure that 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, or the school cannot fund it from some other source then it must be cancelled. School will make this clear to parents. For pupils entitled to the pupil premium, schools may use that money to support them in trips, equipment and so on. However, this will depend on individual circumstances and is at the discretion of staff with responsibility for pupil premium at each school.

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all of the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

Visiting Groups and Individuals

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of a particular activity within the school such as a visiting theatre group. Where an activity cannot take place unless sufficient parents make a voluntary contribution, this will be made clear to the parents at the time of asking for financial support. No child will be excluded from this type of activity because their parents are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution.

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. Charges may 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 will 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 or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. 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(1) of the Children Act 1989).

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all of the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

Design and Technology

No charge will be made for materials for design and technology activities. However, when a parent has indicated in advance that they wish to own a finished product, a charge may be levied to cover the cost of the items that could otherwise be reused.

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parent makes, having due regard to the family's financial situation. No charge will be made for ingredients for cookery.

Transport

School **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

3. Charging and Remissions Policy

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy, giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that school intends to charge for, and a remissions policy.

The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the local authorities, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when the charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example, optional extras, school will inform parents of how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information will be made available to parents.

The remissions policy sets out circumstances in which the school or local authority propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

Residential Visits

School **cannot** charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or as part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

School may charge for board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

We would not seek to exclude any child whose parents are unable to fund the costs of the visit due to genuine financial hardship. In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

Educational Visits

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of an educational visit which occurs either wholly or mainly during school hours. Where a visit cannot take place unless sufficient parents make a voluntary contribution, this will be made clear to parents at the time of asking for permission to take their child on the visit. No child will be excluded from a visit because their parents are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution.

In cases of genuine financial difficulty, parents will be invited to see the headteacher who may remit part or all of the charges. The headteacher will agree to the contribution the parents make, having due regard to the family's financial situation.

The headteacher will decide if an educational visit is financially viable.

Education partly during school hours

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50% of the time spent on an activity fall during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

School will only charge for an activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education. Examples of this can be found in the Department for Education guidance document 'Charging for School Activities'.

Community facilities

School may allow the community to use site facilities out of school hours. Schools may charge for the use of these facilities. Any profit generated will be used for the purposes of the school and/or on community facilities and to pay charges arising.

Damage to School Property

There is no reference to breakages or fines in the Act's charging provisions. In accordance with our behaviour policy, where a child has wilfully damaged school property the headteacher will decide, after carefully considering the context in which the damage took place, whether parents should be asked to contribute to all or part of the cost of replacing the damaged item.

Clubs and Activities

There will be no charge for extra-curricular clubs and activities held by teachers outside school hours. The headteacher will decide if a one-off visit is financially viable.

Value for Money

We believe that we should always seek to maximise the value for money we obtain from any activity. We are committed to keeping costs as low as possible whilst maximising the educational or social benefit of any of the above activities. This statement should be borne in mind by any member of staff seeking financial contributions from parents.

Informing Parents of this Policy

This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, and published on the school's website. Copies are also available upon request from the school office. This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required.

4. Monitoring this Policy

The headteacher will monitor all letters which go out seeking financial contributions to ensure they meet the statements of principle set out in this policy. The local approving body will monitor the activities arranged and approve as appropriate, taking into consideration the timing during the school year, the category of trip it falls under and the cost to the school. The executive headteacher will ensure that their budgets allow for the cost of school activities and the trip organiser will monitor the cost of each activity.

Date approved: Spring 2022

Date of next review: Spring 2023