



Batchwood School

make every day count

Charging & Remissions Policy

Next Review: June 2018

Ratified: June 2016,2017

Signed: Chair of Governors

Purpose

At Batchwood School we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Policy Aims

- To make School activities accessible to pupils regardless of family income
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, students and school;
- Which acknowledges the cost of such activities to the School's budget

Main ECM outcome: Enjoy and achieve

What was consulted?

The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors*, the DfE, and "*Charging for School Activities*" (January 2014).

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's equality policy, curriculum policy, educational visits policy and the teaching and learning policy.

Context:

The law states that education provided during school hours must be free. This definition includes materials and equipment. No pupil may be left out of an activity because their parents cannot or will not make a financial contribution.

DfE GUIDANCE

"Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is important to note that no child should 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. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

At Batchwood School we set aside an enrichment Budget to fulfill our extra-curricular activities. For any other trip outside the curriculum, we apply to the voluntary fundraising group 'Friends At Batchwood '(FAB) to meet or contribute towards the cost. This minimizes the amount of voluntary contributions that we request from parents as many of our students families face financial and economical difficulties. The nominal donation we currently request is £5 per student. No student is excluded or discriminated from the trip if their parent/guardian is unable or unwilling to pay. The parents/guardians are made aware that funding from the trip is sourced from FAB. Families facing financial difficulty are invited to write in confidence to the Headteacher (also see Remissions policy section)

Our policy for School Trips is to always seek value for money, ensuring we pre-book travel and venue tickets in advance and we always state we are a SEMH school to obtain optimum discounts.

Roles and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff, Governors

The Headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

1. No charges will be made for

- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) 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
- 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
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

* If a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge will be made.

2. Activities for which charges may be made

The Governing Body reserves the right to make charges for the following:

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

b) Residential activities

For residential PGL Trips, a voluntary contribution of £20 is requested from parents/carers whilst the remainder of the trip is funded by FAB.

Charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

Activities which can be charged for are regarded as “optional extras”. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available
Voluntary contribution towards non-residential trips	£5 nominal fee is requested, with the remainder of the trip cost taken from the Enrichment budget	Remission for category A (see below)
A charge of £20 will be made towards the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost and the remainder of the trip cost will be provided by FAB	Remission for category A (see below)
Charges will be made for malicious damage to equipment and property by students	The charge will be to repair or replace the item, whichever is the cheaper option and will be levied in consultation Governing body & Headteacher	Terms of payment may also be negotiated with families
Lettings	The school will make facilities available to the community	See individual Lettings policy

Remissions:

3. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Category A

Parents in receipt of

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed State Pension

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances

Category B

4. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Finance Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a yearly basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.