



'BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE!'

CHARGING & REMISSION Policy

Lead person responsible:
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Date: **November 2022**

Review Date: **Sept 2025**

Introduction

The law on charging in connection with education in maintained schools is set out in sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996. Section 457 requires the governing Board to determine and keep under review a policy in respect of both charging and remission arrangements. No charge may be made by the school unless it has drawn up a statement of its policy.

As Roe Green Junior School is now responsible for its budget in accordance with financial delegation, charging and remission is in the main a matter for the governing Board, subject to compliance with the statutory requirements.

Charges - Individual music tuition within school hours

A charge will be made to parents of pupils receiving tuition, either individually or in a group of up to four pupils in the playing of any musical instrument, except where the tuition is provided to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school may, however, ask for voluntary contributions for such tuition. Where a charge is made, it will include the cost of the teacher providing the tuition, the cost of sheet music and the hire and insurance of a musical instrument. When charges are to be levied, the parents will be asked to indicate their written agreement in advance.

No charges will be made for children in care.

Charges - Board and Lodging

Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home, the governing Board will make a charge for board and lodging whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours. The charge will not exceed the cost of the board and lodging provided for each pupil involved.

Where a trip is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and is not required for the purposes of the National Curriculum, charges not exceeding the cost will also be levied for travel.

Remission

Where a pupil participates in a residential trip deemed to take place in school hours, or is involved in a residential trip in or outside school hours which forms part of the syllabus under the National Curriculum, the governing Board will require voluntary contributions for any board and lodging charges for a pupil whose parents are in receipt of:

- Income support,
- Income-based job seekers 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 (assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £15,575,
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income-related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

No charges will be made for children in care.

Charges - Transport

In general, any transport provided by the Governing Board in school hours will be provided free of charge. However, where a pupil makes use of transport not provided by the school to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by the school, then parents will be expected to meet the costs of such travel. An example of this is travel direct from home to work experience – albeit this is more likely to happen at secondary level.

Charging for ‘finished products’

A charge may be levied to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

Optional extras (i.e. outside school hours)

A charge will normally be levied for an activity defined in section 455 of the Education Act 1996 as an “optional extra” which is provided wholly or mainly outside school hours - see section 3 below. Such charges made will not exceed the cost of providing the activity, divided equally among the pupils participating.

Prior written agreement will be obtained from the parents of pupils involved in an optional activity for which a charge is to be made.

There is a range of activities, which the school defines as “optional extras”. The majority of these will be self-supporting, unless the Governing Board wishes to meet the cost out of the school’s own funds. The charge made can include:

- the pupil’s travel costs;
- the pupil’s board and lodging costs;
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- non-teaching staff costs;
- entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.;
- insurance costs;
- the cost of engaging a teacher, who is already a school employee, on a contract for service, as distinct from a contract of employment, specifically for the activity.

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside the school day, section 452 of the Education Act 1996 lays down the basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place in or out of school hours. If the activity is deemed to take place during school hours then no charge is made, though parents can be invited to make voluntary contributions. If the activity takes place mainly outside school hours then charges may be made as set out above. The calculation to be used to determine the status of the activity will depend on whether the activity is residential or non-residential.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the period spent on the activity occurs during school hours then the activity is deemed to take place during school hours. Note that for the purposes of this calculation:

- “school hours” do not include the break in the middle of the day and
- travelling time is counted if it occurs during school hours but travelling time out of school hours is not counted.

Residential visits

In the case of visits involving overnight stays, the 50% test is based on the number of half days taken up by the activity - where a “half-day” is defined as any period of twelve hours ending at noon or midnight. If the number of school sessions amounts to 50% or more of the number of half days then the activity is deemed to take place in school hours. Numbers of half days, or of school sessions, are rounded as follows.

- where six or more hours in a half day is spent on the trip the whole of that half day is counted.
- where half or more of a school session is spent on the trip, the entire session counts.

Thus a school trip during term starting at noon on a Wednesday and ending at 7 p.m. on the following Sunday would be deemed to take place in school hours - i.e. 9 half days including 5 school sessions - whereas a trip from 9 a.m. on Friday till noon on the following Sunday would be deemed to take place out of school hours - i.e. 5 half days including 2 school sessions.

General notes - Clothing

Although no charge will be made for “equipment” for use in connection with education provided during school hours, clothing is specifically excluded from the definition of equipment. Parents can therefore be asked to provide their children with such things as cooking aprons, PE and sports kit, and football boots. If so, the school will determine its policy on this and the arrangements for assisting parents where financial hardship might result.

Voluntary contributions

Nothing in the Act, or in this policy, prevents parents being invited to make voluntary contributions towards the costs of providing activities both within and outside school hours, provided that such contributions are genuinely voluntary, and that any request for contributions makes it clear:

- that there is no obligation to contribute;
- that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make such a contribution; and
- children in care will not be required to contribute.