

Charging & Remissions Policy

Author: Lillian Leedham (SBM). Amendments by Sarah Hawker
Reviewed by: Sarah Hawker Headteacher; 06/05/2020)
Approved by: Finance & Resources Committee 17/06/2020
Date: 10/07/2019
Version: 2.0

Why do we have this policy?

Under certain circumstances the school is permitted to charge parents/carers for activities undertaken by their child(ren) or to ask for a voluntary contribution.

The Education Act 1996 requires that, before making such charges, the governing body must explain, in its charging policy, what services and activities it charges for and how the charges will be calculated.

Chargeable Activities and Services

Activities during school hours (except music)

The school recognises the huge benefit that a range of activities can have in enriching the curriculum and we are fortunate that our location enables us to take advantage of the wide range of museums, churches and outdoor spaces within and around Cambridge. We also place great importance on arranging for experts, specialist teachers and theatrical groups and to visit the school to enrich the children's education.

Where activities take place wholly during the school day (9:00 am till 3:20pm) and are designed to meet or complement the national curriculum the school may not charge for the activity, even where there is a cost to the school of providing that activity.

The school benefits from the support of The Church Schools of Cambridge, Ely Diocese and the PTA who contribute, wholly or in part, to the cost of some of these activities. However, in some cases the school will need to ask for a voluntary contribution from parents.

The amount of the contribution will usually be calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of children participating. Costs could include, but not be limited to:

- Transport to and from the venue
- Entry fees
- Costs of ingredients, materials and other resources
- Fees for specialist teachers
- Cost of additional staff hours

The contributions requested will not exceed the total cost of the activity.

It is important to stress that the contribution is voluntary and no child will be excluded from an activity because their parent is unable or unwilling to pay.

However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the school reserves the right to cancel the activity.

Individual and small group music lessons during school hours

Music lessons which constitute part of the KS2 curriculum are, of course, delivered free of charge.

However, where the school provides the opportunity for children to have individual or small group instrumental or vocal tuition this is in addition to the national curriculum requirements and therefore is chargeable.

When lessons are offered, it will be made clear what charges will be made and whether they are payable directly to the tutor or to the school.

If the school provides instruments, CDs or books and you wish your child(ren) to own their instrument or copy, these too may be charged for on a case by case basis.

Optional activities outside school hours: Before School Club

The school operates a breakfast club from 08:00 – 08:50. As an optional activity outside of school hours, this is chargeable.

Fees are reviewed annually during the summer term for the following academic year.

Fees will be calculated based on the anticipated costs of running the club and the anticipated level of attendance. The fees charged will be designed to cover, but not exceed, the cost of:

- staff to run the club
- administration
- resources

In the event that the fees collected during a financial year (April to March) are less than the cost of running the club no additional charges will be made, but the governing body may consider increasing fees the following September or closing the club.

In the event that the fees collected during a financial year exceed the actual cost of running the club, the surplus will be retained by the school and re-invested in the club.

Optional activities outside school hours: after-school clubs

The school provides a range of after-school clubs which run on a weekly basis during term time. Unless otherwise stated, these are run by third party organisations which set and collect their own fees for each club. Occasionally clubs are run on a voluntary basis by members of staff, in which case no charge is made for the club, although a charge may be made for materials used.

The governing body reserves the right to charge for after school clubs run by members of the school staff should the need arise, but any such change would be communicated in advance.

Optional activities outside school hours: holiday clubs

Unless otherwise stated, these are run by third party organisations which set and collect their own fees for each club.

Optional activities outside school hours: ad-hoc after-school activities

Occasionally the school will arrange for the children to participate in or attend events after school (e.g. sports competitions), which are in addition to the curriculum and are optional. Where possible the school will endeavour to provide these activities free of charge. However, if necessary the school may charge for participation. The charge will be calculated based on the anticipated total cost of the activity divided by the number of children expected to participate. The costs may include but not be limited to:

- entry fees
- transport to and from the venue
- cost of staff
- materials used

Residential Trips

The school aims for all children to have the opportunity to participate a residential trip in either year 5 or year 6. Residential Trips are not part of the school's delivery of the National Curriculum, cost in excess of £200 per child and need to be booked up to two years in advance to secure dates that fit into the rest of the academic year's programme. By virtue of the costs and timescales involved, residential trips are a special case.

The school may charge for board and lodgings, but can only ask for a voluntary contribution to all other costs associated with the trip including transport, activities, materials and staff time.

The school endeavours not to exclude any child from a residential trip, but reserves the right to refuse to take a child if the board and lodgings charge has not been paid. Parents who wish their child to attend a residential trip and have genuine difficulty paying the board & lodgings charge are urged to discuss the matter in confidence with the Headteacher or the Senior Administration Officer at the earliest opportunity.

Parents will not be charged for board and lodgings if their child is eligible for Pupil Premium funding. However, the parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution, and to pay a deposit.

No child will be excluded from a trip simply because their parents are unable or unwilling to make the voluntary contribution. Between 18 months and 2 years before the trip is due to take place, the school will book appropriate dates and pay a non-refundable deposit.

In the event that parent contributions are insufficient to cover the cost of the residential visit, the school reserves the right to cancel the visit.

If a visit is cancelled, for whatever reason, the school will endeavour to refund any contributions made. However, if the school has already made non-refundable payments to the venue or coach company on behalf of parents or if the school has already become liable for 100% of the cost of the visit, the school reserves the right not to refund monies that it cannot recover.

Where a child is withdrawn from a trip at short notice (for example if they move to another school), the school will endeavour to refund the cost of the visit. However, if the school has already made non-refundable payments to the venue or the coach provider on the behalf of the parents/carer or if the school is already liable for 100% of the cost of the visit, the school reserves the right not to refund these monies unless the child's place can be taken by another child.

Reports and Letters

During the summer term, all children receive an annual report on their progress, for which no charge is made, and if children transfer to another school their files will be sent to their new school.

However, the school will charge if you request additional reports, letters or completion of forms such as in support of your child(ren)'s application to a private or non-UK school or application for a passport. This is to cover the cost of staff time to prepare such documents.

This is a fixed charge for each report or letter sent, regardless of the length of time it takes for staff to prepare the document. The charge is fixed for the academic year and is reviewed annually during the summer term. For details of current charges, please refer to the schedule of charges.

Uniform & Equipment

School uniform is sold directly by the manufacturer and prices are set by the manufacturer, not the school. Materials and equipment sold by the school, rather than directly by the manufacturer, will be sold to parents at cost.

School Dinners

The charge for school dinners is fixed for the academic year. For details of current charges, please refer to the schedule of charges.

School dinner money must be paid in advance. It can be paid weekly, half-termly or termly by cash, cheque or online at [SIMS Pay](#)

Notification of Charges

Charges which are fixed for the academic year will be included in the annual schedule of charges, which will be displayed in the school office.

Charges and voluntary contributions for events, activities and trips organised during the course of the year will be communicated in advance.

Remissions

As previously stated, children who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding are exempt (apart from a small deposit) from paying board and lodgings on residential trips.

In some cases, the governing body may choose to reduce or waive other charges for these children to enable them to participate in a range of activities.

If you are in receipt of one of the following benefits and the cost of an activity is preventing your child from taking part in it, you are encouraged to discuss the matter, in confidence, with the Head Teacher or one of the office staff:

- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190;
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; or
- Universal Credit

Payment of charges and voluntary contributions

All charges are payable in advance.

The school only accepts online payment for all charges and voluntary contributions, apart from the Before-School Club.

For reasons of cash security, please do not hand cash or cheques to staff and do not leave loose cash or cheques on desks in the office.

Our online payment provider is called SIMS Pay and the website is <https://www.sims-pay.co.uk/>. To access your child(ren)'s online account you will need a unique activation code. Please contact the Senior Administration Officer at finance@parkstreet.cambs.sch.uk if you have not received your activation code.

The school also accepts payment for Before School Club using childcare vouchers. Please contact the Senior Administration Officer at finance@parkstreet.cambs.sch.uk if you wish to use this facility.

The school will not pursue parents for the non-payment of voluntary contributions.

Non-payment of charges will be pursued. Children's accounts will be monitored weekly and letters sent to parents/carers advising them of any arrears.

Failure to respond to such communication and to settle the arrears may result in your child not being allowed to take school dinners or participate in chargeable activities.

Materials and equipment will not be issued until payment has been received.

If you are having difficulty in paying arrears you are strongly encouraged to discuss the matter, in confidence, with the Headteacher or one of the office staff.

Divorced and Separated Parents

Financial arrangements between divorced and separated parents are a private matter for the individuals concerned. To avoid unnecessary intrusion by the school into these private matters, all correspondence regarding permissions and charges will be addressed to the parent residing at the child's registered address as recorded in the school's SIMS database. It will be the responsibility of that parent to pay any charges to the school and, if they wish to do so, to seek a contribution from the other parent towards those charges. This applies to all chargeable activities, including school meals.

Should parents wish the school to deviate from this policy, for example if parents have been awarded joint custody, the parents should jointly make a written request to the Head Teacher proposing how they would like any charges to be split between them.