

The Reddings Primary & Nursery School



Charging & Remissions Policy

1. Statement of Principle

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.

2. Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, day trips and residential experiences can make towards the children's personal and social education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of the school and as additional optional activities. Therefore the Governors wish to ensure that all children have access to all areas of the life of the school regardless of the parents'/carers' ability to pay and have therefore determined their policy and remission of fees in accordance with the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

3. Purpose

This policy statement is set out below and should be understood that the associated guidance constitutes an integral part of this policy. It is the policy of the Governors of The Reddings Primary and Nursery School to charge pupils at full cost for all activities which are deemed under the Act to take place outside hours unless that activity is required to fulfil:

- Any requirement specified in the programmes of study as prescribed in the National Curriculum
- Any statutory duties relating to the afore mentioned requirement
- Any statutory duties relating to the agreed syllabus for Religious Education

Remission of these charges will be made in accordance with the Act.

4. Charges

a. During School Hours

In the event of activities organised by the school during school hours, parents may be expected to pay and the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for activities organised by the school.

b. School Journeys and Residential Trips

The board and lodging element of residential activities deemed to take place within school hours.

c. Activities outside school hours

The full cost to each child of activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours, such as theatre and concert visits.

d. Extended School Charges for Breakfast Club

The Governors have agreed that the following charges will apply for the academic year 2015/2016 & 2016/17

Breakfast Club: £2.50 for individual child

These charges cover the costs of food (breakfast club), staffing and equipment purchased for sole use within these sessions.

The Governors have also agreed to provide a free Breakfast Club for Year 6 pupils during SATs week in May. This is reviewed on an annual basis.

e. Instrumental Tuition

The cost for providing individual or group instrumental tuition. The Reddings Primary and Nursery School is currently participating within the 'Wider Opportunities in Music' scheme which provides whole class drumming lessons for an allocated year group(s) free of charge. This is subject to change at the end of each Academic Year.

f. Charging in kind

The Governing Body may charge for ingredients and materials or require them to be provided if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product. The Governing Body may also charge for the cost of repair and/or replacement of items wilfully damaged or loaned and subsequently damaged or lost.

g. Outside School Hours

Charges may be made for optional courses or activities which fall wholly or mainly outside school hours. This may not include any activity which is required by the National Curriculum or to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.

Charges made for such activities may include an element for:

- Pupil travel costs
- Pupil, board and lodging costs
- Materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- Staffing costs (teachers / TAs / specialist staff)
- Entrance fees for museums, theatres etc
- Insurance costs

5. Voluntary Contributions

Legislation does not prevent the school, or it's PTA, from asking parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of a given activity or visit falling outside those described where charges may be made. This contribution, however, must be optional and with prior parental agreement. Parents are asked, therefore, to contribute voluntarily towards the cost of:

- Educational visits to museums, theatres and other sites of interest, which support the children's learning
- Visits by authors, poets, environmentalists, puppeteers, theatre groups and other experts who come into school to extend the children's knowledge and experience
- Musical activities
- For swimming tuition
- School equipment

- Travel costs (hire of coaches/transport on trains, etc)
- School funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

6. 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:

- We shall publish notification of school trips and their approximate cost as far in advance as possible 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.

7. Public Examinations

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in Regulations. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school
- the examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it (for example LAMDA examinations / Instrumental examinations)
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in Regulations.

8. Refunds

Monies paid in advance are non-refundable where the school has committed funds to pay for the activity and no refund would be payable to the school. Refunds will only be given at the Governors' discretion for exceptional circumstances.

If a child is unable to attend a trip due to bad behaviour no refund will be made if funds have been committed by the school for the trip

A refund will be offered to parents when a trip makes a profit of 5% on the total cost per person or £5 (whichever is the greater).

School journeys and day trips etc, therefore only operate if parents provide the voluntary contributions suggested by the school.

If only some were to do this and it was considered that insufficient funds were available to make the proposed activity viable, then in the interest of fairness amongst all the children the school journey, day trip or visit may be cancelled.

The following paragraph may be included in all letters to parents when excursions are being planned and voluntary contributions are applicable:

It is necessary to ask for voluntary contributions for this visit to take place. There is no obligation to contribute but it will be necessary to have substantial voluntary contributions in order that the trip may take place. However, if we do not have sufficient voluntary contributions, in fairness to all, the visit will not go ahead for any of the children.

9. Remission

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.

Charges may be waived if 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

The Governors will consider sympathetically cases of genuine need seeking help with these charges and will endeavour to remit those they feel are necessary from the school's budget or an alternative source. Consequently the school will aim to provide assistance for children from families in financial need and parents are advised to contact the Head Teacher in confidence.

The school looks forward to the support, understanding and generosity of parents. The Governing Body may from time to time, amend the categories of activities for which a voluntary contribution or charge is made.

10. Monitoring & Evaluation

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. At The Reddings Primary & Nursery School, the Resources Committee, to whom this review is delegated, will review this policy on a bi-annual basis.

The Resources Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a termly 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.