



The Grove Junior School
Charging and Remissions Policy

Date adopted by the Governing Body: July 2015

Date for next review: July 2016

Headteacher: Maggie Clifford

Chair of Governors: Sharon Wyper

Held by: Finance and Personnel Committee.

Status

Statutory

Purpose

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.

What was consulted?

The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors* and the DCSF guidance "*Planning and Funding Extended Schools*" and "*Charging for School Activities*" (January 2009).

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's equality policy, curriculum policy, Off-site visits policy and the teaching and learning policy.

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)
The school may ask for a contribution where it incurs additional costs eg. swimming lessons
- 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
- education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

2. Activities for which charges may be made

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

Board and lodging costs of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or groups of pupils.

d) Catering facilities

The school reserves the right to charge an amount to cover the cost of charges made to the school by Herts Catering Ltd for the provision of school meals and maintenance of the kitchen facilities. Any such charge will only be payable by those pupils who have school meals.

Charges will be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

The charges for all trips are very carefully calculated but if, after reconciling the income and expenditure for a trip, there should be an unexpected surplus of £1 or more per child, parents may request reimbursement of the surplus. Alternatively it will be treated as a contribution to school funds. The onus is on the parents to tell the school and each letter about a trip does advise them of this.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as “optional extras”. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Refunds

The calculation of costs for trips is made on the basis of the numbers of pupils in the relevant year or class group. It is therefore not possible to offer a refund of the trip cost if a child is unable to attend at short notice.

If an element of the cost is a specific charge on the day such as an entry fee, it may be possible to refund this proportion of the trip.

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them	For example, a clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay.	Yes
Charges will/may be made for music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils	Help may be available, otherwise no
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Remission for category A (see below)

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

- Any circumstance where the Headteacher considers that the pupil would be disadvantaged as a result of not having the charges waived.

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 a confirmation from either the School Business Manager or the Headteacher at each Finance and Personnel Committee that no profits have been made from completed trips outside of this policy. A list of any completed trips that have generated profits outside of this policy will be circulated at this meeting for the consideration of the Governors.