



Charging and Remissions Policy

Rationale

Our school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

Purposes

We are committed to adhering to all legal requirements regarding charging for school activities; we understand that the DfE guidance is advisory, and that having a policy is statutory. Our policy may differ from that of the Local Authority.

This policy outlines the school's policies and procedures on both *charging* and asking for *Voluntary Contributions* from parents/carers.

Charging

We cannot charge for education provided during school hours.

We can charge parents/carers for the following:

- Materials or equipment, where a parent/carer would like their child to own them
- Optional extras: Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental/carer agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. We will not charge for alternative provision during school hours for those not taking part. In calculating the costs, we may consider the costs of any materials, books, equipment, buildings, employing non-teaching staff, teaching staff employed purely to provide optional extras. We will inform parents/carers how the charge has been calculated.
- Use of community facilities

Voluntary Contributions

The school can ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions for any activity, whether in or out of school time, and for school equipment and school funds towards the benefit of the school or school activities. On the occasions when a voluntary contribution is requested it is emphasised that there is no obligation to contribute. No pupil will be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have made a contribution. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents/carers to make a contribution, and notify parents/carers whether assistance is available. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the

activity will be cancelled. We will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

When arranging a chargeable activity the school invites parents/carers to apply in confidence for the waiving of charges in full or in part. Authorisation of waived charges will be made by the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors. When asking for voluntary contributions, the school will inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them.

Guidelines

Transport

We will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

Visits and trips in school time

These activities are very valuable educationally and although we will not charge for these, parents/carers will usually be asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover the costs.

Cooking activities

The school may ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of materials/ingredients for cooking where parents/carers have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

After School Club

This is categorised as an extended day service and is additional to what the school offers. Funding for this is available via Short Breaks / grants. If parents/carers do not receive funding, we will charge them a daily rate, and in any event they will be charged a top up charge to make up the difference between funding and cost. Participation in this activity will be on the basis of parental/carer choice and paying in advance the full amount or apply for funding and pay the top up. Parents/carers have to agree to charges for club otherwise the children are sent home.

Holiday playscheme

The school provides a holiday playscheme, for which we charge. Funding for this is available via Short Breaks or grants, or parents/carers can pay in full.

Other Charges/voluntary contributions

Specialist visitors to the school, including drama and dance groups, make a significant contribution to the education of pupils. On some occasions requests for voluntary contributions to the costs of arranging these visits will be made.

Damaged or lost items

Under legislation, the school is permitted to charge parents/carers for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour, however some children at Oakleigh have challenging behaviours and all have severe learning difficulties so damage is unlikely to be considered wilful.

Payment method

Parents/carers will be asked to make payments / voluntary contributions via the website Tucasi ScoPay

This policy will be reviewed annually.