Charging and Remissions Policy

DRYBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Owner	TH
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Approver	Local Governing Board
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Statement of intent

Drybrook Primary 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.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

The school will:

- Never charge for education provided during school hours.
- Inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of school visits.
- Drybrook Primary School does not operate automatic remissions. Any financial support offered will be discretionary and based on individual circumstances.
- Activities Drybrook charges for include: Breakfast Club, After-School Clubs, Wraparound Care provision, and any other optional paid activities offered through MCAS.
- Charges will never exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. No pupil will be charged a higher amount to subsidise others, and the school will not make a profit from any charged activity.
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This policy follows the DfE's guidance 'Charging for school activities' (2018, updated).

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- In some cases, the school may charge for providing certain information, in line with our Freedom of Information Policy.
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- Trust's Funding Agreement
- ESFA 'Academy trust handbook' (ATH)

Charging for education

The school will not charge for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books,
- instruments or other equipment.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a

- syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the
- school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless provided at
- the request of the pupil's parents.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.

The school may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.

Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

Optional extras

The school may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
    - Part of the national curriculum
    - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Part of RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the
- school
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where
- the LA has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where
- the trust board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Residential visits that take place outside of school hours
- Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff, including TAs
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is 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. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

All payments are managed via MCAS within Bromcom.
The school may charge when responding to requests under the Freedom of Information Act, in line with our FOI Policy.

Voluntary contributions
No parent/carer will be made to feel pressured into making a voluntary contribution. The school will not use practices such as colour-coded letters, standing order requests, or targeted reminders to highlight those who have not contributed.

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions or donations towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions or donations, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressured into making voluntary contributions.

Music tuition

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Transport

The school 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.
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

Education partly during school hours

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.

Drybrook Primary School does not offer automatic remissions for board or lodging costs. Any financial support will be discretionary and based on individual circumstances.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

Residential visits

The school will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

Any charges will not exceed the actual cost of the visit but where the residential takes place outside of school hours or over weekends and is not part of the national curriculum, the cost of transport to and from the site will also be charged.

Damaged or lost items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost of the item (or equivalent). The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

Assistance and Remissions

The school wants all opportunities to be open to all pupils, particularly those in financial difficulty. There is no guarantee that all requests for support can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis.

To request assistance, parents should contact the school office.

School trip refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Income generation

In line with the ESFA's ATH, the trust will set fees for chargeable services at full cost, and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

Complaints:

Any complaints regarding the operation of this policy will be considered under the school's Complaints Policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and reviewed bi-annually by the Local Governing Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board is responsible for approving and monitoring this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring it is implemented consistently. Staff must follow the policy when administering charges or voluntary contributions. Parents/carers are responsible for making payments through MCAS where applicable.