



The Eliot Bank and Gordonbrock Schools Federation



Charging & Remissions Policy

Policy Agreed: May 2016

1. Introduction

Our Federation believes 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

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. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

This policy has been formulated in accordance with current legislation:

- Sections 449 to 462 of The Education Act 1996
- DfE Guidance Revised Jan09, updated October 2014
- Section 7.5 of the School Governors Handbook.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy will:

- set out what the Federation will not charge for, what it will make a charge for or request a voluntary contribution from parents/carers;
- clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and carers understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities.

3. Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Heads of School for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered by the Heads of School and reported confidentially to the Governing Body.

4. Publication of Information

This policy will be included on the school's website. It will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents.

5. Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the Federation recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- education provided during school hours¹ (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- 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 religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments 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, or part of religious education;
- 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 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 religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit;
- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

6. Charges

6.1.1 Residential Visits

The Governing Body has agreed to make a charge for the following board and lodging on residential visits (not to exceed the costs) as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a residential trip during the school holidays is an optional extra
- does not form part of the national Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education.

¹8.55 am – 3.15 pm Monday to Friday, term time

6.1.2 Activities Outside School Hours¹

The Governing Body has agreed to make a charge for proportionate costs for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours¹ ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:

- travel;
- materials and equipment;
- coaches / tutors;
- non-teaching staff costs;
- entrance fees; and
- insurance costs.

6.1.3 Music Tuition

The Governing Body has agreed to make a charge for individual or group tuition in the playing of a musical instrument.

6.1.4 Other Charges

The Governing Body has agreed to make a charge for any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited.

6.1.5 Breakages and Replacements

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils.

6.1.6 Extra-Curricular Activities and School Clubs

The Governing Body has agreed to make a charge for extra-curricular activities and after school clubs.

6.1.7 Ingredients, Materials or Equipment.

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment if the parent/carers have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is particularly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for Design and Technology

6.1.8 Late collection of a pupil by their parent/guardian

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge parents/guardians, if their child is collected late on more than three occasions during one school term. The Governing Body has deemed a charge of £5 for every 15 minutes or part of 15 minutes for each child as reasonable. This charge includes the late collection from clubs or Nursery.

¹ 8.55 am – 3.15 pm Monday to Friday, term time

6.2 Calculating Charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

6.3 Visits in School Time

In all schools, except Independent Schools, visits which occur during school hours¹ must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. If insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled - parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

Parental permission will be obtained through a signed slip received back from parents.

A letter about the visit will be sent out to parents. It will contain a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

"All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. Pupils who receive free School meals or who are eligible for universal infant free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £___ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed."

7. Remissions

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseeker's 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.

- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

8. Additional Considerations

As an inclusive school it is our wish not to allow financial issues to prevent a child whose family is facing genuine hardship from participating in a residential or after school activity. In such cases the Head of School will discuss with the family ways of reducing the burden.

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 at the beginning of the term 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;
- some clubs have allocated places for pupils from lower income families. For all other Extra Curricular Activities we allocate places on a 'first pay, first served' basis. The Governing Body has agreed that for pupils from lower income families or in exceptional circumstances, the school will consider subsidising the cost of the activity at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher / Head of School.

9. Charges For Outside Providers Using Our Site & Building

These will be categorised as either

- Category 1: After school clubs – educational or well-being activities that are led by outside providers for our children. These are charged at a rate to cover costs (including staff time, utilities, cleaning).
- Category 2: Community Use educational or well-being activities that are led by the Local Authority e.g. Lewisham music service. These are charged at a rate to cover costs (including staff time, utilities, cleaning) +10%.
- Category 3: Community Use meetings etc. run by Local Authority. These are charged at a rate to cover costs (including staff time, utilities, cleaning) + 10%.
- Category 4: Community Use – Outside Provider. Groups that wish to hire school facilities should seek details from the school office about the charges that apply. Each letting will be charged at the rate published by the school on an annual basis. Charges will vary depending on the facilities hired, the time of day and year. A Lettings / Service Provider Contract will be issued for each Outside Provider.

The Executive Headteacher / Head of School will determine which category each application for use of the premises falls into.

More information regarding charges for outside provider can be found in our lettings policy.