

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Committee Responsible: Finance & Personnel

Purpose of the Policy:

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge. The policy has been informed by the DfE guidance (2014) and compliments the school's Lettings Policy.

The Governing Body of Cranmere Primary School is committed to the principle of free education but also recognise that voluntary contributions by parents make a significant contribution to the provision of optional activities. This policy therefore sets out the circumstances in which charges and remission will be made and the kinds of activities for which voluntary contributions may be requested.

During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example, visits out and visitors in. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.

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 cannot or will not pay. Thus parents will not be asked to subsidise the cost of other pupils.

Support for cases of hardship will come through School Funds. Parents who would qualify for support are those who are currently or have ever been in receipt of Free School Meals. Parents who are in receipt of Free School Meals or qualify for pupil Premium may be entitled to support for some of the charges.

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

Charges for individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

The circumstances where charging is permitted can be divided into the following categories:

- individual instrumental music tuition;
- board and lodging on residential trips;
- Ingredients/materials if the pupil keeps the finished product;
- educational clubs outside normal school hours.
- private school reports
- damage/loss of school property
- additional Nursery sessions, over and above the free entitlement
- requests for copies of information held by the school (refer to Freedom of Information Policy)
- optional extras

Individual Instrumental Music Tuition - Charging

Peripatetic staff visit the school to provide individual and group tuition in a range of musical instruments. The 1999 Education Act permits parents to be charged for this tuition, and the current arrangement is that this charge is made by Surrey County Arts, by whom all peripatetic music staff are employed. The school, therefore, is not directly involved in making the charge.

Board and Lodging on Residential Visits

The board and lodging element of residential visits may be charged for whether or not the visit takes place within school time.

The charges for board and lodging will not exceed the actual cost for that pupil.

The Governing Body may remit any charges for board and lodging in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support or Child Tax Credit etc. where the activity is deemed to take place in school hours.

Education clubs outside normal School Hours

In most cases After School Club charges are administered by the outside agency running the club. In exceptional circumstances, the school may make a charge for an after school club, but this will not exceed the cost to the school of providing the club.

Additional Nursery Sessions/Lunch Club

Cranmere Primary School offers top-up childcare for pupils in our nursery class. These sessions are over and above the pupil's free entitlement and there is a cost to providing them. In the event of a non-payment of the fees the school reserves the right to stop the extra sessions.

Swimming

Swimming forms part of the National Curriculum for PE in Key Stage 2 and therefore cannot be charged for. However, given the high costs of providing tuition, pool hire and transport, the school will seek a voluntary contribution from parents to contribute to the costs.

Requests for Evaluation of Pupils by Independent and non-Maintained Schools -

The Governing Body will levy a charge on each completed request from a private school for written evidence of a pupil's performance, aptitude and attainment and other relevant information in respect of each application. The school incurs costs in producing such materials (principally the cost of supply cover) as these reports are:

- a) produced outside of the normal schedule for report-writing; and
- b) written to a format other than the usual transfer documentation.

The charge will be as determined by the Governing Body, and is currently set at £30 per request. However, a copy of the most recent school report for a child will be provided free of charge.

Voluntary Contributions

The restrictions on charging for school activities do not in any way prohibit the school from seeking voluntary contributions in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential. The school therefore requests a voluntary contribution of £25 per year per child, which is paid into the School Fund and is used to support the provision of a wide range of activities to enhance the curriculum in its broadest sense. Such activities shall include educational visits (e.g. to museums), visits to the school by storytellers, artists etc. Where an additional voluntary contribution is requested for a specific activity, this will usually be where the activity is for a particular year group and / or where the funding required to run the activity would exceed the amount available.

The terms of any request for a voluntary contribution will make it clear that:

- a) there is no obligation to contribute;
- b) pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution;
- c) the school reserves the right to cancel a proposed activity if the level of voluntary contributions received is insufficient to fund the activity.