



Calow Church of England (V.C.) Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

At Calow Church of England (VC) Primary School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced education for all our children, full of rich and varied experiences both within and outside the National Curriculum. Everything we do is for the benefit of our children and our local community.

Almost all of our activities and equipment are provided completely free of charge. On the rare occasions when we need to charge for activities or equipment, we do so strictly according to the current law and guidance issued by the Department for Education (Charging for School Activities, May 2018).

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

School charging

Education School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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, 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. It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills);
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 6);
- certain early years provision (The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012);
- community facilities (under s.27(1) of the Education Act).

Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not: a) part of the national curriculum; b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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

Voluntary contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

Schools cannot charge for:

- 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 authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Charging and remissions policies

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.

The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the local authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents.

The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school or local authority propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

Residential visits

Schools cannot 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 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.

Schools can charge for:

- board and lodging, and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found [here](#).

Guidance on school policies for Learning Outside the Classroom, including charging, is available [here](#).

Education partly during school hours Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

See section 452 of the Education Act 1996 for guidance as what counts as during school hours.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours.

School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, 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 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Decisions specific to Calow C of E (VC) Primary School

We operate our charging and remissions based on the law and guidance from DfE above. However, within that guidance there is some leeway for schools to set their own policies. Below are the decisions that we have taken in this respect:

- Parents/carers will normally be asked to make a voluntary contribution for off-site visits. In 2017/18 and 2018/19 this will be limited wherever practical to £15 per day visit. This means that the school may subsidise the cost of visits, to make up the shortfall, on the basis that there is an educational benefit to each child.
- We will allow for a small number of families in each group who cannot or will not contribute to the cost of educational visits. If lots of families cannot or choose not to pay, the Headteacher will decide whether the cost to the school is too great for the visit to take place. If this is the case, the whole visit will be cancelled.
- In some circumstances, parents/carers may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to special events taking place on the school site. In such cases, the procedures outlined above will be followed.
- Parents/carers will be required to meet the full cost of board and lodging for residential courses in school time.
- Parents/carers of children in receipt of pupil premium will not be asked for a contribution for day visits or special events.
- Parents/carers may be required to replace or pay for lost or wilfully damaged items of school property, or wilful damage to school buildings. The amount charged will be the current cost of replacement.
- Music tuition will be charged by the tutor directly to the parents/carers.
- The cost of after-school sports clubs run by outside providers will be calculated on a term-by-term basis, based on actual cost to the school of the coaches and the projected number of pupils. This will

then be charged by school to parents/carers and payment must be made termly. In some circumstances, outside providers may be given permission by the Headteacher to charge parents directly for their services.

- The cost of breakfast club will be reviewed annually, based on actual costs incurred and numbers of pupils. This will be charged termly, and any children in receipt of pupil premium will not be expected to pay.
- Lunch is charged at £2.10 per day, payable in advance. There is a separate Dinner Money Policy, which is reviewed annually.
- The first 15 hours of nursery provision is provided free of charge (universal entitlement), and we also accommodate children entitled to an additional 15 funded hours. Where there is space, after the allocation of funded hours, we will offer the families of children not eligible for 30 hours funding the opportunity to pay for additional sessions in the afternoon, at a cost of £4/hour. Further details are found in our Nursery Admission and Fee policy.

Policy approved: 02/07/2018

Updated: 11/03/2019

_____ (Headteacher) _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date of next review: March 2020