

Brookland Federation

'Brookland Junior School'

Charging and Remissions Policy



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1. Introduction

The Governors and Executive Headteacher believe that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parent/carer's financial means.

Legislation states that in trying to arrange any form of educational visit, to take place wholly or largely in school hours, schools must not operate any form of charging system whereby any child whose parents did not pay would not be prevented from participating. 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.

Schools are allowed to seek voluntary contributions in relation to such activities. Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

2. During School Hours

In the event of activities organised by the school during school hours, parents may be expected to pay for the following:

- Individual or group music tuition
- The board and lodging element of all residential visits
- Activities arranged by a third party such as a travel agent or tour company
- Swimming lessons

3. Outside School Hours

Outside school hours charges may not be made for any activity which is required by the National Curriculum or to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education. Charges may however be made for optional courses or activities which fall wholly or mainly outside school hours. Charges made for such activities may include an element for:

- Pupils' travel costs
- Pupils' board and lodging costs
- Materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- Non-teaching staff
- Entrance fees to museums, theatres etc
- Insurance costs.

4. Voluntary Contributions

Where the school cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities available within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip/activities. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the trip/activity possible (90%),

then it may have to be cancelled. Where possible, children eligible for pupil premium will be offered a reduced cost and the pupil premium funding will be used to meet the difference in costs.

5. Remissions

Pupils whose parents/carers receive benefits may be entitled to remission of charges. The Executive Headteacher and Governors will consider sympathetically cases of genuine need seeking help with these charges and will endeavour to remit those they feel are necessary from the school's budget or an alternative source. Any discussions with parents, or decisions made, will be confidential. The Executive Headteacher, or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

6. Residential Trips

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, outside school hours parents are expected to contribute towards the cost. If parents are in financial difficulty, arrangements can be made for the school to assist with a contribution towards the total cost – please speak to the Headship team or the lead teacher of the trip.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, may also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit element) (Income Related) Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with income below £16,190
- Working Tax Credit during the four weeks after you cease work or reduce working hours to less than 16 per week
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit

7. Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. In accordance with the guidance set out within Hertfordshire County Council's Financial Handbook for Schools the school will make a refund where the surplus is either: 5% or more of the total cost per person, or £2 or more per person, surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, e.g. £3 not £3.29. Where a refund is offered, parent/carer will be given an indication that a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent /carer would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by 'date'. If the school is not contacted by the date, it will be assumed that the refund has been donated to school funds. All refunds will be made online in order to maintain a clear audit trail.

8. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a pupil or parent/carer, the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement. Lost or damaged library books will be charged £7.99 which will be paid directly into the school bank account.