

Brookland Junior School

'Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be the best that you can be'

Charging and Remissions Policy



Date: September 2023	Last reviewed: September 2022
Written by: Adopted from HCC	
Approved by: Governing body	
Next review due by: September 2024	

Introduction

The Governors and Headteacher will ensure that all children have access to all areas of the life of the school, regardless of the parents'/carers' ability to pay.

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 be prevented from participating.

Schools are allowed to seek voluntary contributions in relation to such activities, provided that all parents know that such contributions are genuinely voluntary.

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

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.

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 will 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.

Remissions

Pupils whose parents/carers receive benefits may be entitled to remission of charges. The 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 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.

Residential Trips

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours parents are expected to contribute towards the cost. If parents are in financial difficult arrangements can made for the school to assist with a contribution towards to 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, 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

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, eg £3 not £3.29. Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that 'a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent / guardian 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 in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail.