

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery School

'With Christ in our hearts, together we grow'.



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Approved by the Governing Body of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Primary and Nursery
School

Review Dates:	Date Reviewed: May 2019	Next Review: May 2020
Ratified at FGB:		

Statutory Policy -

This policy has been adopted from CEFM in line with their guidance (appendix 1)
The school has a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Introduction

Under the charging provisions of the Education Act 1996, governing boards of maintained schools and academies must draw up a statement of their charging and remissions policy before they may charge for certain defined activities. The policy must also be available online. Our Lady of Peace Primary & Nursery school's policy below can also be found on the school's website.

Education legislation demands that schools, subject to certain exceptions, may not charge for education provided during school hours. However, schools are permitted to charge for other items and experiences provided to the pupils. Schools may also invite voluntary contributions to help support these provisions. Schools have a duty to inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits that support is available towards certain costs when they are being asked to make contributions eg towards school visits.

Objectives and targets

The governing board of Our Lady of Peace Primary & Nursery School has set up this policy for certain activities which take place in the school. The purpose of this policy is to clarify which items and experiences that the school provides may have a levy charged upon them, how much of the cost the school expects parents to be charged and who will be offered support to pay for items and experiences for their children. This charging and remission policy is implemented within the letter of the law, and also embracing the spirit of it. It will be no less generous than the LA's policy.

Action plan

Where visits are arranged either as an integral part of a particular syllabus or to enhance pupils' learning experience, parents may be asked to contribute towards the cost. However, legislation states that a pupil should not be debarred from a visit if a parent does not wish to contribute. In cases of family hardship, parents may apply, in confidence, to the headteacher for exemption from such contributions. However, we hope that parents will realise that there comes a point when a trip is not viable if sufficient contributions are not forthcoming.

There may be occasions when an organisation other than the local authority (LA) or the school governing board arranges an activity during school hours, and parents want their children to take part. Such organisations may charge parents for the services provided, so any parents who do not wish to pay so that their child can attend must seek permission for their child's absence.

We believe that a school should give pupils as many varied learning experiences as possible and we shall do our utmost to ensure that all our pupils have the opportunity to benefit from such experiences. Parents who are in receipt of the following benefits **may be entitled to assistance with payments.**

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (the government plans to prescribe these circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out).
- Income support.
- Income-based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA).
- 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 HMRC does not exceed certain limits.

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- The guarantee element of state pension credit.
- An income-related employment and support allowance.

For activities such as music tuition, field trips, concert and theatre visits, the table below indicates the school's policy on which activities will be charged for.

Activity	Comment
Individual instrumental music tuition that is over and above the national curriculum, and/or an approved examination syllabus.	A charge will be made per lesson. This will be reviewed when the charges made to the school by the music service increase. Parents in receipt of certain benefits could be eligible for a reduction of fees. The first child in the family pays full fees; the second and subsequent child will pay half fees. Any examination fees are paid by parents.
Transport to work experience	Parents will pay directly (except statemented pupils where the statement refers to transport).
Activities outside school time not related to statutory duties.	Charges will be levied.
Board and lodging on residential visits.	Parents are to be charged, except in cases of statutory remission where families receive benefits.
Re-scrutiny of exam results.	Parents to pay all charges.
Exam entry for prescribed exam for which pupils have not been prepared by school.	Parents to pay all charges.
Entry for an exam which is not on prescribed list where preparation takes place outside school hours.	A charge will be made.
Recovery of wasted exam fees.	Parents to be charged.
Educational visits and field trips.	Parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution.

Payment

All payments, including dinner money, should go into an envelope which states the child's name, year group and what the money is for. The pupil should hand the envelope to their class teacher first thing in the morning. Queries

If you have a query about a charge, members of the office staff are available between 8.30am and 4.00pm.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in the light of changes to legislation and comments received from parents and other interested parties.

Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed by a committee of the governing board annually.

Appendix 1

CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY

Reviewed and updated: February 2017

Next review: March 2018

Suitable for: all types of schools.

Status: statutory. Academies and free schools are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with: the Education Act 1996 (sections 449–462), the Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999, the Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended, the Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 and The Education (Charges for Early years Provision) Regulations 2012. The following documents will also be helpful: Charging for school activities October 2014 from the DFE and Charging policy from the Council for learning outside the classroom. The following CEFM documents may also be very helpful: Education Update ii January 2008 – Charging for music tuition, Education Update i March 2009 – Charging for school activities, Do you know? questions and answers March 2014 – Voluntary contributions.

Background

Under the School Information (England) Regulations 2012, every maintained school must publish certain information online. The school's charging and remission policy is part of that information. The policy is a statutory one for all maintained schools including academies and free schools through their funding agreements. For multi-academy trusts, the charging and remission policy may be delegated via the MAT's scheme of delegation to local governing boards.

What must be offered free of charge

The education provided by any maintained school or academy must be free. This includes:

- No requests for financial contributions as any part of the school's admissions process.
- Transporting pupils of the school where:
 - The local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
 - The LA or governing board has arranged for pupils to be educated on another site.
 - The school's pupil needs to sit an examination on another site.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination where the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sits if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit at the school.
- Education provided on residential visits but which takes place during school hours.

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- Education provided outside school hours if it is:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the school is preparing a pupil or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning individually or in groups (except where this is provided at the request of a pupil's parent).

Note on academies: Under their funding agreements, academies may charge persons who are not registered pupils at the academy for education provided or for facilities used by them at the academy.

Drawing up a charging and remission policy for items upon which a charge may be levied

(See appendix 1). Under the charging provisions of the Education Act 1996, governing boards of maintained schools and academies must draw up a statement of their charging and remissions policy before they may charge for certain defined activities. The governing board's policy may be more or less generous than that of the LA, 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). The policy should be made available to parents.

When drawing up their statements, governing boards should remember that charging is only permissible for the following areas of activity:

- Any materials eg books, instruments or equipment that the parent wishes the pupil to own.
- Costs associated with individual or group tuition during school hours for playing musical instruments or vocal tuition, provided that the request has been made by the pupils' parents. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision but the cost of the staff can be included. No charges can be levied if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum or provided under the KS2 Instrumental and vocal tuition programme. Children who are 'looked after' by LAs may not be charged at all. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/2239/contents/made are applicable.
- Non-curricular activities which take place during school hours eg when a theatre group is asked by a school to arrange an activity to take place during school hours. Such organisations may charge parents who want their children to join in with the activity. (While schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they can still ask parents to make voluntary contributions to help school funds go further where this is the source of funding). While it is legitimate for the school to say a particular activity cannot take place if sufficient voluntary funding is not forthcoming, no pupil may be left out of such an activity because her or his parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Parents who do not wish their child to attend must ask the school to agree to their child's absence. The headteacher and governing board must decide whether this is in the pupil's best interests.

- Activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and which are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.
- The cost of entering a pupil for a public examination, not prescribed in regulations, and for preparing the pupil for such an examination outside school hours.
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared at the school for the examination.
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations when no further preparation has been provided by the school.
- Certain early years provision.
- Community facilities.
- In state boarding schools, the cost of overnight board and lodging can be charged at cost.
- Any optional extras eg:
 - Transport to school or other premises (except where the LA/governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education).
 - Extended school activities eg breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea or homework clubs.
 - Board and lodging for residential visits but not exceeding the actual cost.

Note on within or outside school hours

For an activity to be considered wholly or mainly outside school hours, the bulk of the time spent on the activity must lie outside normal school hours. For example, if a group of pupils is going to a musical concert and has to leave mid-morning and arrive back an hour after school normally finishes, the visit would be considered to be within school hours. On the other hand, if pupils leave mid-afternoon and arrive back in the late evening, the visit would be considered to be taking place outside school-time, so charges could be made. See appendix 2

Residential activities are treated in a similar way to educational activities that take place wholly or partly outside school hours. A residential trip counts as falling within school-time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to at least 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Bearing in mind that the school day is divided into two sessions and that each 24 hour period is divided into two half days beginning at noon and at midnight, a trip taking place during term time that begins on Wednesday at 8.30am and finishes on Saturday evening at 9pm would count as eight half days. Of these eight half days, six count as school sessions so this trip would be considered to take place during school-time. On the other hand, a trip starting at 8.30am on Friday and finishing at noon on Sunday would count as five half days of which two would be counted as school sessions. This trip would therefore be considered as taking place outside school-time and could be charged for in total, including board and lodging. See appendix 2.

For a residential trip that takes place largely during school-time, or that is essential to the curriculum provided by the school, no charge can be made for the education element or the cost of travel, but charges can be made for board and lodging.

Note on board and lodging for residential visits

If the school chooses to charge parents for the board and lodging costs of a residential visit, and if the education provided on that visit must otherwise be provided for free under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the school must advise parents that they will be exempt from the cost of board and lodging if they can prove that they are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (the government plans to prescribe these circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out).
- Income support.
- Income-based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA).
- 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 HMRC does not exceed certain limits.
- The guarantee element of state pension credit.
- An income-related employment and support allowance.

Thus, if the work done on a field trip were part of the GCSE examination syllabus, parents receiving any of these benefits would not have to pay the board and lodging cost for their children.

Optional extras

If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds need to be raised, eg to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising, and not by charging the paying pupils more.

Charges for optional extras may not include

- Where the activity takes place during the school day – supply teachers to supervise any pupils not involved in the optional activity while covering for teachers who are participating in the activity.
- An element of subsidy by any pupil for any pupil participating in the activity, whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Permitted charges include

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided.
- The cost of accommodation and buildings on residential activities.
- Support staff.

- Teaching staff or supply staff engaged specifically to provide the optional extra under contract.
- An appropriate proportion of the cost of teaching staff employed specifically to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or providing vocal tuition as an optional extra.
- An allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the optional extra. (A contract could be a simple letter to a teacher asking him or her to provide a service on a particular occasion.)

Voluntary contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Schools should also make it clear that the children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently from the children of parents who do contribute. If a particular activity for pupils cannot take place without some financial help from parents, this should be explained to parents at the planning stage. The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution