



*'Together We Grow'*

Smithdown Primary School

# Charging and Remissions Policy

Reviewed: September 2023

# **'Together We Grow'**

## **Our Key Values**

Our school motto is 'Together we Grow', through **Courage, Friendship, Equality, Respect and Thoughtfulness**

We ensure that every child has access to a broad, balanced and supportive curriculum. Through this we are able to give our pupils a range of opportunities and experiences to grow and develop academically, physically socially and morally.

## **Our School Vision**

At Smithdown Primary School we aim high. We want every part of our school community- pupils, parents and members of staff to experience success. Smithdown Primary School will work with everyone to create a happy, safe and stimulating setting where children are motivated to learn together. By maintaining high expectations of ourselves and each other, our children will be equipped to encounter opportunities and challenges with resilience and determination. We encourage a curiosity about the world and strive to ensure that our children will contribute positively, now and in the future.

## Summary

This Charging & Remissions Policy is guided by the DfE document '*Charging for school activities 2018*'<sup>1</sup>.

No charges will be made for activities that are not included in the charging and remissions policy. The policy defines each type of activity that will be charged for and when charges apply.

The school cannot charge for education during school hours, including any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, subject to the exceptions referred to in this policy.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents will be advised of how the charge has been calculated, who may benefit from school subsidy (remissions) and how to apply.

The school will inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of activities.

This policy sets out circumstances in which the school proposes to remit or subsidise (wholly or in part) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with the policy.

## Education

The school **cannot** charge for:

- Admission applications to any state funded school
- 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<sup>1</sup>, 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
- 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
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school<sup>2</sup>

The school **can** charge for:

- School meals (except for those entitled to free school meals)
- Breakfast club
- Materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where parents' wish to own them
- Provision of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Art & Design or Food Technology where pupils take home the finished product

- Optional extras
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision [*Education Regulations 2012*]
- Community facilities [*s.27(1) Education Act 1996*]
- Travel costs for educational visits

## School Meals

Payment for school meals (dinner money) must be made by parents/carers weekly in advance. This would normally be the Monday of the week ahead for which the meals are being provided. Parents can pay by card or cash.

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except for those pupils that are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. If parents believe that their child may qualify for free school meals, they are advised to contact the school office or an LCC 'One Stop Shop'.

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount of **£2.00** per day (£10 per week) decided by the Governing Body.

Access to free school meals is a statutory (legal) entitlement and it is important that parents register for free school meals if they are eligible, to enable the school to secure funding for Universal Infants Free School Meals and Pupil Premium.

Breakfast club will be charged at **£1.00** per day per child.

Arrears of dinner money or breakfast club money from the sale of school meals will be pursued by the school on a weekly basis in accordance with *LCCs Debt Management/Recovery Policy (see Appendix 5, LCCs CBP&CH)*. If a parent falls into arrears of £30 or more for dinner money or £15 or more for breakfast club, the parent will be contacted by school and a plan discussed by SLT, which may include the parent providing a packed lunch for their child.

## 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.

The HT will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the HT on the recommendations of the LA Finance Officer. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - part of the national curriculum
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school

- part of religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Extended day services offered to pupils. Charges will cover the costs of teaching/non-teaching staff engaged to provide the activity or brought in to run the club
  - breakfast club
  - after-school clubs
  - breakfast club
  - lunch club (not included in 15 hr free entitlement)
  - childcare
  - supervised homework sessions
- 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
- Visits to school by professionals e.g: theatre groups, dancers, musicians, artists etc.
- Mini bus travel costs

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

- Materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with optional extra
- The cost of buildings, insurance 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
- 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
- Mini bus costs
- Travel costs

Any charge made in respect of an individual pupil will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It **cannot** 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.

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.

No charge will 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges apply.

School may decide to provide for example, an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. However, the GB may decide to reduce the cost for those children who are eligible for free school meals.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school 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 school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school must make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any voluntary contribution.

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 the activity/visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled and all monies paid will be returned to parents/carers.

School will 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 activity/visit. The school will 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 will not be pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. The school will not send colour coded letters, reminders to make payments, direct debit or standing order mandates to parents.

The school will decide the cost of educational activities, but activities and educational visits may have to be cancelled if there is not enough financial contributions made by parents.

### **Music Tuition**

Although government legislation states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. This is non-chargeable.

However, charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is delivered by specialist tutors and provided at the request of the pupil's parent. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

Charges may not exceed cost of the provision, including cost of staff who provide the tuition.

Charges will not apply if 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. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the LA [s.22 (1) of the Children Act 1989].

If a child/third party damages or loses a loaned musical instrument, a charge will apply.

### Transport

The School **cannot** charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA 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

### Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours [s.452 Education Act 1996]
- 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 lodgings and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.
- Travel costs to and from the residential setting
- Cost of specialist residential staff

When a school informs parents/carers about forthcoming visits, they should make it clear that parents/carers of children entitled to free school meals, will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

## 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 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.

### 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. Examples:

- Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm in Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.
- Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.



## **Damage to Property & Breakages**

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly lost/damaged by a student/parent/carer/3<sup>rd</sup> party, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of the repair, damage or replacement.

For example, a school reading book damaged or lost at home will result in a £5 charge

Where property belonging to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party has been damaged or lost by a pupil and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible. This includes musical instruments loaned out by the school.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the HT and dependant on the situation.

## **Uniform**

Pupils' cardigans, sweatshirts, ties and PE kits are available for sale from:

Trutex Schoolwear  
48-50 London Road  
Liverpool  
L3 5NF  
t: 0151 709 7009  
m: 07877 652220

All other items such as shoes, socks, trousers and white shirts, can be bought from local supermarkets.

School does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged articles of clothing or any personal possessions. Parents should write their child's name in all their property.

## **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for children. These take place in school time and, although some lessons may exceed the National Curriculum requirement, the school does not levy a charge to parents/carers.

## **Remissions Policy**

Where the parents of a child are unable to meet any one of the charges the school may make, they can apply in writing and complete confidence, to the HT for the remission of charges in part or full. The HT in consultation with the governing body will make any authorisation of the remission of charges.

Pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of relevant government support payments may, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school visits/trips.

- Income Support (IS)
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed the limit for that tax year
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced in October 2008

The identity of the child or parents/carers of the child who did not want to make the payment/charge, or could not make the payment/charge, will not be disclosed.

All remission decisions will be at the discretion of the Head teacher

### **Review and Approval**

This policy will be formally approved and minuted by the Full Governing Body on an annual basis and be made available on the school's website.