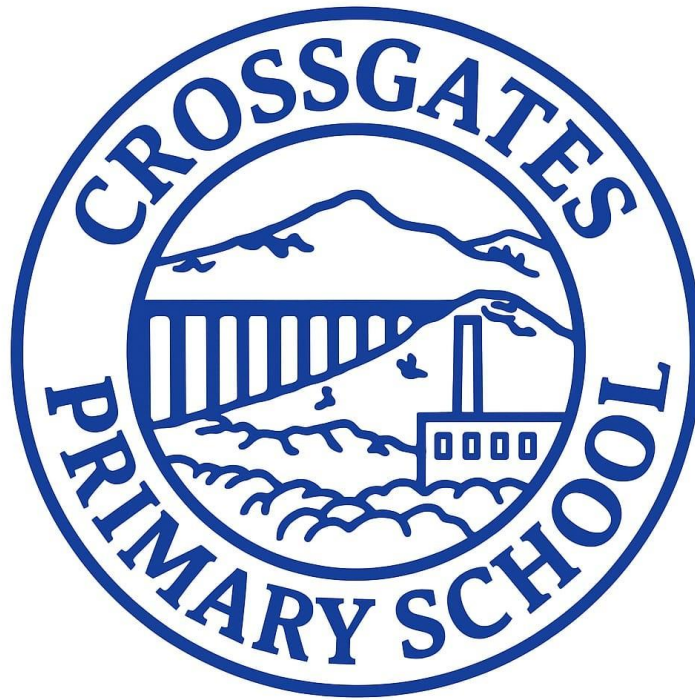


Crossgates Primary School

Charging and Remissions

Policy



Approved by: Governing Board

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Contents

Contents	2
1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Definitions	3
4. Roles and responsibilities	3
5. Where charges cannot be made	3
6. Where charges can be made	4
7. Voluntary contributions	7
8. Activities we charge for	7
9. Remissions.....	8
10. Monitoring arrangements	10

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits while minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and the [Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

This policy also has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Finance Policy

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils. The school promotes equality of education for all which includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well

as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

3. Definitions

- **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Jennifer Needham, School Business Manager.

4.2 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate information and training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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

- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- 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/carer
- 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

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities (for example, holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions)
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

➤ Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:

- The National Curriculum
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- Religious education

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

➤ Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school

The school may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
- Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.
- If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA or governing board has 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 (such as before and after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When 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 (including 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

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. Any charge will not include an element of

subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers 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.

Any charge will not include the cost of supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Parental agreement to participation in the optional extra, and a willingness to meet the charges, is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

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

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

Music fees are payable in advance on a termly basis but parents who are experiencing financial difficulties and wish to pay over an extended period are asked to contact the office to discuss. Failure to pay your music fees promptly and in advance of the term will result in lessons being withdrawn with no refund being issued.

The school will review its pricing for music tuition on a termly basis. The school reserves the right to increase the cost of this service to ensure that the full cost of the service is covered. In the event of a price increase, parents will be notified before the start of the new term/ school year.

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Where a residential visit forms part of the National Curriculum, we will not exclude a pupil because their parent or carer cannot, or refuses to, pay or make a contribution to the board and lodging charge. We will consider if the costs can be covered from within the budget or by fundraising, and seek to reach an agreement with the parent/carer so that the pupil can still take part. In some cases, it may be necessary to cancel the visit.

When we inform parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, we will make it clear that parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

The parent must submit their request to the school office, in writing, providing proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities for the benefit of the school or any school activities that would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Day trips and educational visits
- Residential trips
- Specialist workshops and visiting performers
- Sports and swimming activities, including transport
- Materials and ingredients: Supplies for design technology, art projects, or practical cooking lessons

There is no obligation for parents or carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity or visit if their parents or carers are unwilling or unable to pay. All pupils will have an equal chance to participate in an activity or visit regardless of whether their parents or carers contribute.

Our procedures for allocating places on school visits will be set out clearly to parents/carers.

When requesting voluntary contributions we will make it clear to parents/carers at the outset if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions. We will also make it clear that contributions are not compulsory. We will not send communications when requesting contributions in a way that may make parents/carers feel pressured to pay, for example by sending colour-coded letters or direct debit or standing order mandates.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, and it cannot be funded from other sources, then it will be cancelled. This will be made clear to parents/carers.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- Damaged or lost items
- Wraparound Care
- School Meals

Damaged or lost items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

Wraparound Care

The Breakfast Club is open from 07.15am in the morning - the current cost is £5.50 per child.

The After School Club is open from 3.15pm to 5.30pm and the current cost is £5.50 for the first hour (3.15pm-4.15pm) and £7.70 for the full session. This is payable at the time of booking. Where a parent books their sessions half termly, we will allow families to ensure their debt is cleared at least by the end of every half term. We do not carry debts across half terms and therefore reserve the right to withdraw a child's place and refrain from future bookings. Places are limited and issued on a first come first served basis. We do not allow arrears to build and persistent failure to pay fees for Breakfast and After School Club will result in the loss of the child's place.

Failure to collect your child promptly will result in a £10 charge being applied. Please also note that if you are late on more than two occasions, we reserve the right to withdraw the place.

The school will review its pricing for before and after school club on a termly basis. The school reserves the right to increase the cost of this service to ensure that the full cost of the service is covered. In the event of a price increase, parents will be notified before the start of the new term.

School Meals

School Meals are charged at £2.95 per meal or £14.75 per week. School meals must be paid for in advance. Our MIS will not allow families to preorder meals if their account is not in credit. If a child does not pre-order their school meal in advance, they may not receive their preferred meal choice and will be provided with the default meal of a sandwich.

We do not allow arrears to build, and persistent failure to pay will result in the child being placed on permanent packed lunches.

Children who are entitled to Free School Meals can only access them if the school office has received notification from Rochdale Borough Council – if notification is not received all meals must be paid for, any overpayments will be refunded if required.

The school will review its pricing for school dinners on a termly basis. The school reserves the right to increase the cost of this service to ensure that the full cost of the service is covered. In the event of a price increase, parents will be notified before the start of the new term.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

The school will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a need's basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact the School Business Manager via the School Office.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Universal Credit (regardless of annual net income)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit

Children eligible for targeted free school meals (FSM), will also be eligible to have the cost of board and lodging remitted on residential visits. This includes parents/carers whose child is already known to the school to be currently eligible for FSM.

Parents/carers who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) may be able to receive FSM for their child, subject to maximum income thresholds. Where this is the case, they will also be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits.

Where a pupil becomes newly eligible for FSM after their parent/carer has already paid for board and lodging on a residential visit, we will refund the amount paid provided their child's entitlement is in effect before the visit takes place.

School Trip Refunds

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

It will be at the school's discretion to decide if a full or partial refund is to be received in the event that:

- A school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances
- A pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip*
- A pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits
- A pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness*
- A school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances (The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents)

*The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board