

Eccleston Mere Primary School **Charging and Remissions Policy**



Approved by: Headteacher / Governing Body
(signed electronically)

Reviewed on: September 2021

**Next review due
by:** September 2022

Introduction

This document sets out our policy on charging and remission for school activities and school trips.

This policy has been written taking into account the Governors Guide to the Law Section 16 and Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Education

At Eccleston Mere Primary we do not charge for:

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours if it is a statutory 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 compulsory religious education;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the statutory 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 (with the exception of 'optional extras' referred to in this document).

However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

We may charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wished him to own them;
- Optional extras/voluntary enrichment;
- Music and vocal tuition/voluntary enrichment, in limited circumstances.

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.

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 1. part of the National Curriculum
 2. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 3. part of a religious education.
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school, or to other premises where the Local Education Authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip.
- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra (voluntary enrichment).

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. It will not therefore 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. Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

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 will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or any school activities. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contribution, the governing body or Head Teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or Head Teacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is also important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip, then school can take the decision to cancel the trip.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Residential Trips

School offers pupils the opportunity to attend an adventure activity weekend. This is classed as an optional extra (voluntary enrichment) and a charge is made for board, lodgings and transport. School will not exceed the actual cost.

School will not charge for:

- Supply teachers to cover those teachers who are absent from the school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new regulations which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges are only made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Breakfast and After School Club

Breakfast and After School Club operates from 8:00am until the school day starts and at the end of the school day until 5:30pm. A nominal amount of £4 is charged per session to cover lighting, heating, premises hire, wages and resources. This amount is reviewed annually by the Finance and Personnel sub-committee.

- Bookings will be taken daily, weekly and monthly. Parents are requested to complete the appropriate booking form.
- In emergency (to ensure the well-being of the child) a telephone booking can be made.
- Payment should be made with the booking.
- Current charges are £4 per Breakfast club session and £4 per Afterschool Club hour. These charges are to be reviewed annually.
- Payment can be made in cash, cheque (made payable to St Helens Council) or by voucher.
- The charging policy will be reviewed annually by governors.
- Money collected is entered onto an income sheet by a staff member – signature required.
- Parents must also sign the income sheet as proof of record unless the money is sent through the school office or via voucher payment. Club staff will then sign on their behalf.
- All money is held in a secure cash box which is then held in the safe. The key is removed from site each night.
- We must endeavour to keep our charges at a reasonable level.
- We operate a flexible arrangement to transfer sessions.
- Whilst we operate club as a business we are not looking to make a profit only to remain viable.

Exceptions to charging policy:

- School staff are not charged.
- Club staff are not charged.
- Parents supporting school activities e.g. school trip are not charged.
- Free club entry may be granted as a result of a request from the Head Teacher e.g. parental meeting.

Transport

Schools will not charge for:

- Transport registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the Local Education Authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport,
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body has arranged for pupils to be educated,

School will however request a voluntary contribution for transport if the activity is an optional extra (voluntary enrichment).

Can charge for:

- Any other transport if the activity is out of school hours (Monday to Friday 9:00am – 3:30pm), e.g. Young Voices Concert

Remissions Policy

The governing body may remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to school in accordance with this charging policy.

For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

Education Partly During School Hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and 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.

Eccleston Mere will conform fully with the guidance outlined in DFE guidelines.

In particular school will have regard for:

1. Restrictions on charging for educational activities.
2. Voluntary contribution.
3. Music tuition.
4. Remissions Policy.