Newtown Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy 2026 - 2027

Charging and Remissions Policy

Rationale

The school acknowledges that it has a responsibility to provide a variety of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for all students regardless of family financial circumstances. This policy may be read in conjunction with Appendix 1 DfE documentation 'Charging for school activities'.

Terms of reference

This policy statement has been formulated in accordance with DfE guidance on: charging for school activities.

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities; what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

To do this the school will

- Make it clear to parents when an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions.
- Seek voluntary contributions from Parents when necessary to enable pupil excursions to be organised.
- Put parents under no pressure to make contributions.
- Assist individual families in cases of hardship where possible to do so.
- Ensure confidentiality and treat students in the same way regardless of whether their parents have contributed.
- Request a contribution towards repair or replacement where damage has occurred because of unacceptable student behaviour.

Principles agreed by the Governors

- Parents will be invited to make voluntary contributions towards any part of the school's work that is offered as an extension to the normal curriculum provision.
- A charge may be made for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, if these activities are optional extras.
- A charge may be made for board and lodging on residential courses.
- When it is legal and considered appropriate, associated staff cover costs will be reflected in the cost of the trip. In such cases, these costs will be kept to a minimum and parents will be told that cover costs have been included.
- 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 a visit, then it must be cancelled. We will make sure that we make this clear to our parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. We will make it clear to parents at the outset what our policy for allocating places on school visits will be.
- The cost of accompanying supervisory adults will be met by the voluntary contributions from parents, unless these are members of the school staff, or volunteers.
- An extra-curricular activity should be self-financing and non-profit making.
- If a trip account shows a substantial balance once all payments have been cleared, a refund will be offered to all paying participants in equal shares. Small balances will be transferred to the trip contingency fund.
- The interests of the school community should determine the development of procedures and practices within the Charging and Remissions Policy.
- The Charging and Remissions Policy should operate in a way consistent with, and complementary to, other relevant school policies e.g. Equal Opportunities and reflect the spirit of the Disability and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Education

School governing bodies and local authorities **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any maintained 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[1], 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;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and

[1] It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school[2].

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them;

- optional extras (see below); and

- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see Section regarding music)

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:

    a) part of the National Curriculum;

    b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or

    c) part of religious education.

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

- transport that is not 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; and

- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In 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;

- 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; and 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.

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

[2] 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.

Furthermore, 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. Therefore, no charge can 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 will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority 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 governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher **must** also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that 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 a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they 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 visit. Schools should 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 to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds. Schools should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting for contributions.

Charging for Visits

a) All Visits:

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible, following the Offsite Guidelines already adopted by the school, as to:

- The total cost of the visit
- How much of the cost will come from School funds.
- How much each parent will be asked to voluntarily contribute towards the cost of the visit
- How much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element).

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food etc.

b) During the School Day:

In all schools, except Independent Schools, all activities that relate to the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. The value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit (or more to allow for those parents who cannot or will not contribute) and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled - parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

Current legislation permits the school to ask for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. A contribution of £- per pupil should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed.

- That no pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay
- That if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit may have to be cancelled
- All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. Pupils who receive free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch provided the kitchen is given adequate notice.

c) Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- 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, 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; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

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. Guidance about these changes to the charging regulations can be viewed here. Charges may only be 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).

Currently Newtown Primary School makes no charge for teaching individuals or groups of pupils learning to play an musical instrument.

Transport

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- transporting 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 or local education authority 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; and transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of transport.

Ingredient / Materials / Equipment (In Kind)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials / ingredients for the following subjects:

- CDT,
- Science
- Art/Craft.

Broken Equipment (Replacement)

The Governors will allow all departments to ask pupils and / or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the pupil's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief pupils thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the pupils.

Remissions

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remissions will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Refunds may be available where pupils have failed to take part in all or part of a trip that they have already paid for, or for other exceptional circumstances and this is at the discretion of the governing body on an individual basis.

DATE APPROVED: May 2026	REVIEW DATE: September 2027

Signed: (Chair of Governors)