



The Gateway Primary Academy

Charging and Remissions Policy

March 2025

This policy was reviewed and updated by the Finance Committee and Headteacher on behalf of the full Governing Body on: 25th March 2025

Date for next review: March 2027

Signed by Chair of governors:

Introduction

The Law on charges for school activities is set out in Sections 402, 450, 458 and 468 of the Education Reform Act 1988. It clearly states "No fees shall be charged in respect of admission to any school maintained by a local education authority, or to any county college, or in respect of the education provided in any such school or college." However schools have the right to request voluntary contribution to support activities organised by the school and have the discretion to levy a charge for 'optional extra' activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.

The term "education provided" is interpreted as including any activities organised by the school outside the school day and not recognisably distinct from the school curriculum.

The Governors have set this policy in accordance with the requirements of this Act and within KCC guidelines.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Maintain the right to free education
- Enable all pupils to take full advantage of the activities provided by the school.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure that activities offered in term time are available to all pupils regardless of their parent's ability or willingness to help meet the cost
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship.
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school either during or outside school hours
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging policy are clearly and appropriately allocated
- To ensure that the operation of the policy is systematically reviewed and findings acted upon.

Statement for activities during school hours (including offsite swimming)

The school will seek voluntary contributions from parents for the cost of all elements of a school visit during school hours. This includes the cost of transport to offsite swimming lessons. Contributions requested will also include the costs for accompanying staff, but:

- Such contributions are genuinely voluntary
- Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether parents have made a contribution
- Parents will be informed of the level of contribution and whether the activity could take place if parents were reluctant to support it.

There is a limit of £20 on the level of voluntary contributions sought for school visits. Parents will also be requested make a voluntary contribution to:

- The cost of ingredients or materials for technology if pupils/parents wish to keep the finished product.

It is the policy of the Governing body:

- To levy a charge for the provision of individual and group music tuition to all pupils, except when the tuition is provided to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum. This charge will include the cost of the teacher giving the tuition as well as the cost of sheet music and the hire and insurance of a musical instrument.
- To levy a charge for the board and lodging element of a residential activity.

Statement for activities out of school hours (including before, after school and lunchtime clubs)

Education outside school hours is defined in the Education Act as an 'optional extra' and participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as made.

It is the governors policy to levy a charge for all activities described as 'optional extras' defined as falling wholly or mainly outside of school hours provided that activities are not:

- Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
- Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education

The charges may include an element for:

- A pupil's travel costs
- A pupil's board and lodging costs
- Materials, books, instruments and other equipment.
- Non-teaching staff costs
- Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc
- Insurance costs
- The engagement of teaching staff specifically for providing the activity and supplying such staff with board and lodging, providing that if they are employed by the LEA or governors, they are employed to provide music tuition and engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the 'optional extra' activity.

This contract may take the form of a letter inviting the teacher to provide certain services for a specific activity at a specified time, in return for payment of expenses, and where appropriate, a fee.

Charges for individual pupils will not:

- Exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of pupils willing to participate.
- Include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parents wish them to participate but are unwilling or unable to pay

- Include the cost of alternative provision for pupils who do not wish to participate, where a small part of the activity takes place in school hours.

Residential Activities

The Act defines a residential trip as a trip arranged for registered pupils by, or on behalf of the LA or governing body and requiring pupils to spend one or more nights away from home. It may be deemed as an activity in school hours or out of school hours. The Act prescribes the basis for determining this based on equating a half-day on a residential visit to a school session. With a half- day being any period of 12 hours before noon or midnight.

If the number of school sessions missed by pupils is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours and a charge can be levied.

Where a residential activity is deemed to take place during school hours i.e. number of school sessions missed is more than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, no charge may be made for the education provided, nor for the cost of travel and any fund raising will be on the basis of voluntary contributions. Charges will however, be made for the cost of board and lodging.

Special arrangements apply for pupils whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit ***if the activity is deemed to take place in school hours***. The Act requires the school to remit any board and lodging charges in their case. When a residential visit is planned the headteacher will advise parents that anyone in receipt of income support or family credit will be entitled to make a claim for remission.

Prior to a school residential journey taking place the approval of the Governing Body will be sought.

Remission Statement

If the activity is deemed to take place in school hours it is the policy of the governing body to:

- Remit charges for board and lodging element of a residential visit
- Remit charges for instrumental tuition if funding is available

Eligibility

For pupils from families who meet any of the following criteria

- Income support
- Working Tax credit
- Looked After Children
- Children Eligible for Free School Meals

Level of Remission for Musical Tuition

Looked after Children are entitled to receive bursaries of up to 100% for specialist instrumental tuition and for the hire of instruments, when the LAC is in receipt of tuition during the school day.

The following circumstances apply to all other eligible pupils:

- 50% of the charge levied for tuition and instrument hire for tuition during the school day.

Governors delegate to the Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of this policy

Resources

The Governing Body agrees that any subsidies for activities in school hours may be made from the school fund or curriculum budget as necessary to a limit of £150

The Pupil Premium Grant will be used to fund expenses arising out of this policy in relation to the provision of Instrumental Tuition during school hours for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding.

Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of these budgets is devolved to the Headteacher who will determine the proportion of costs of an activity, within a subsidy limit of £150.

Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans at the draft stage will be submitted to the Headteacher for consideration and approval.

Communication

Parents are informed of this policy through the school website and in newsletters where appropriate.

Any letter to parents concerning school visits will include:

- A description of the event or activity, indicating where appropriate its value in educational terms and its relevance to any curriculum programme being followed in school.
- Details of the duration of the activity.
- Details of any external funding which may be available eg PTA contributions to travel
- An explanation that this activity cannot be funded by the school therefore voluntary contributions will be needed but if insufficient contributions are received the activity will be cancelled.
- An encouragement to all parents to try and support this activity to the extent that they are able and that no child will be omitted from the activity or treated differently according to whether or not their parents decide to contribute.
- This policy is published on the school website and a copy is centrally stored in the school office.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring and implementing this policy.

The Governor's Finance Sub-Committee will be responsible for the evaluation and review of the policy every 2 years.