

Charges and Remission Policy

October 2024



Claregate Primary School

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Charging and Remissions Policy for Parents and Carers

Introduction

The Governing Body of Claregate Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. Whenever financially possible the school aims to fund as many of these activities as possible.

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. However for certain activities or optional extras we may charge or ask for voluntary contributions. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity.

In accord with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, the Governors have drawn up the following charging and remissions policy. This was approved by the Finance Committee of Claregate Primary School in January 2020 and will be reviewed bi-annually.

This policy shall be made available on the school website.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or towards activities. For example, contributions towards school fund, fund raising, and costs associated with school trips and visits.

School Trips and Visits

When organising school visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school will write to parents asking them to contribute towards the cost. If a visit cannot take place without some help from parents or carers, this will be explained at the planning stage. No pupil will be left out because a voluntary contribution has not been received. However, if there are insufficient contributions, the school may be left with no choice but to cancel the visit.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

If a parent/carer has reserved a place on a school trip and is unable to take part in the visit, the school will attempt to fill the child's place. However, it is at the school's discretion as whether a part or full refund can be given. For example, if the school has not incurred a cost due to the admission to a venue. Where the school loses money, refunds are not given. For example, the contribution towards a coach or money that a commercial company will not refund to the school.

Governors have agreed to subsidise some trips at their discretion.

Residential Visits and Overnight stays

Where a school activity involves pupils staying night(s) away from home, there may be a charge for board and lodging. Parents or carers who are in receipt of the following support payments are entitled to claim remission from the payment of the board and lodging charge:-

- 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 you're 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 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Note: There will be changes to the benefit system as part of the Government's Welfare Reform plans. Further information will be made available once known.

All other costs involved in residential visits are asked for as voluntary contributions. If we cannot raise sufficient funding through these voluntary contributions, the visit may have to be cancelled, and that aspect of the curriculum would have to be covered in other ways.

Optional Extras

Out of hour's activities and clubs are classed as Optional Extra's.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are also known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to the theatre;
- Musical events;
- Visiting speakers, theatre groups or workshops

N.B at present the school does not run any trips abroad.

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

- Activities outside of school hours

After School Club

The school offers additional after school clubs e.g. art club. These clubs are not part of the National Curriculum. There is no charge for after school clubs run by members of staff, as this incurs no cost to the school. However, when qualified coaches who are not members of the school staff run and organise these sessions, we, or they themselves make a small charge for the sessions. This may be payable directly to the external provider or to the school office.

Football, Netball and Gymnastics club are £3.50 per session and payments are required in advance to cover the cost of a specified number of weeks. If you have already paid for your sessions in advance and your child does not attend, then a refund will not be given as the school will have incurred a charge from the sport coaches. In exceptional circumstances then the school may consider a refund, for example a clash with city football trials when a full payment has already been received by the school.

CAT and BAT clubs or any private pre-school childcare groups are privately owned and finances and charging policies are independent of the school systems. The school simply lets the premises to them.

Instrumental Music Lessons

There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. Parents in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment. We give parents and carers information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all year 4 children. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity, but we do charge for transport to and from the activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

Charging for School Equipment

No charge will be made for materials, books or equipment needed for lessons.

Lost or deliberately damaged property

If a child has provably and deliberately damaged or defaced school property or another child's property, the parent of that child will be voluntarily requested to replace it. If the parent requests the school to provide a replacement e.g. for a diary planner that they cannot access themselves, the school is happy to assist. However, these cannot be constituted as a charge because there is no way of enforcing this and it is therefore voluntary.

Milk

There is provision to provide ½ pint (189ml) free milk per day to children under the age of 5 years attending approved day care facilities for 2 or more hours per day, until their 5th birthday.

Children aged 5 and over that are registered to receive free school meals are also entitled to receive free school milk.

School Meals & Ingredients for Cooking

The school has adopted the standard Local Authority charging policy for school meals. We also follow the Local Authority Universal Free School Meals where all infant pupils are able to receive a free school meal. We do ask that families who are eligible for free school meals still apply for them as the pupil premium attached to this benefit comes in to school and helps provide children with additional benefits such as free milk, extra help in lessons, reduced costs for some school trips, sports coaching, pastoral/welfare support etc. The previously mentioned criteria will be used to assess entitlement.

The cost of a school meal is £2.50, and this money is due in on a Monday.

Occasionally parents/carers will be asked to provide a voluntary contribution towards ingredients in cooking lessons.

Money handled through school but not charged by school

There is occasionally money collected by necessity of administrative convenience by school but is not a charge by school and therefore not within the remit of this policy. For example, money collected for school photographs by school are handed straight over with envelopes unopened to the photographer. Payment is for goods received and it is not a charge for curricular activity. The photographer then donates profits towards school fund.

Goods or services sold by school

Occasionally, school will sell goods such as school ties. A charge is made to the value of the goods received with the school receiving a small profit. School uniform is available to be purchased on the myclothing.com website. It is not school policy to specify which supplier must be used and there are alternatives in the free market.

Paying for Information

Where parents request copies of information under the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing copies of information. This is detailed in the Publication Scheme.

Charges for miscellaneous services

There are no set charges for miscellaneous services.

Nursery and Reception Fund

School requests a voluntary weekly contribution to Reception and Nursery fund. This provides toys and cooking ingredients etc.

30 hours Childcare and Lunchtime Supervision Charge

In addition to the 15 hours free nursery provided to children the term after their 3rd birthday, school has a limited number of places available under the 30 hours childcare scheme. Subject to eligibility, an additional 15 hours may be offered, these hours are spread evenly over the school week, up to a maximum of 3 hours per day. Parents or carers that aren't eligible for the 30hrs free childcare under the childcare scheme are charged at £4.98 per hour.

A lunchtime supervision charge of £2.20 is payable for each day that the child attends Nursery.

Productions and Assemblies

The school does not charge entrance fee for productions and assemblies. However voluntary donations towards school fund are often requested on exit.

Parents/carers are sometimes asked to make voluntary contributions to the cost of costumes.

Parent Teacher Association

PTA have separate funding arrangements from the school and are largely a fundraising body. They may charge for entrance to voluntary events and voluntary activities or ask for voluntary contributions to fundraising activities.

Lettings

Lettings for external potential profit making organisations such as sports clubs and adult dance groups will be charged the Local Authority rates and lettings will be managed by the LA lettings team.

For voluntary non-profit making organisations that involve children of Claregate School (e.g. cub scouts) the Governors agree to charge £25.40 letting fee at the discretion of the Site Manager and his working hours.

For organisations that benefit the school educationally, or in a child welfare capacity e.g. a private after school club, the school will charge a nominal letting fee to cover utility bills and incidentals.

Monitoring & Review

The procedures in this policy will be monitored considering any new information and guidance which becomes available.