



CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

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Introduction

Newport Community School Primary Academy believes that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review.

The policy identifies:

- activities for which charges will not be made
- activities for which charges will be made
- activities for which charges may be waived (Remissions)
- activities for which voluntary contributions may be sought
- charges for:
 - Nursery Provision
 - School meals
 - Leaps & Bounds – Out of school child care provision

No charges will be made for

1. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);

2. Education provided 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
3. Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum;
4. Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
5. Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours
 - a. if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
 - b. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or
 - c. part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
6. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
7. Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Activities for which charges may be made

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours but only if the majority of time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

b) Residential activities

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remission policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 8 pupils.

d) Public examination

- a. The Head Teacher has the delegated responsibility to decide whether pupils are entered into particular examinations.
- b. The Head Teacher has the authority to charge for examination entries in certain circumstances
- c. The Head Teacher is authorised to request payment for wasted examination fees

e) Loss and damage to school property

Parents of a pupil who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, musical instruments, reading bags etc, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement. This formal statement has to be made available to all parents. In reality, any problems are usually resolved very amicably.

It is the policy of Newport Community School that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below.

Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available

Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;	Eg A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay	No remission available
Charges will/may be made for music tuition including cost	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to eight pupils	Remission for category A
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge is not exceeded by the actual cost	Remission for category A
Loss and damage to school property	The charge made will be for the full cost of repair or replacement	No remission is available

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

If remission or help is available to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Category A

Parents in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers 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 Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £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)

Parents should make a request for remission of fees to the School Business Manager or Head Teacher who may request evidence to support the request if the child has not already been identified as being in receipt of FSM. All remission of fees will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection

- Offer parents the facility to pay funds to be held 'On Account' to enable them to budget funds for use against future activities their child may wish to partake in

Residential visits

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

If the number of sessions outside of school time is 50% or more, the activity is deemed to have taken place outside of school time and is classified as an Optional Extra for which full charges may be made and no remissions are available.

A day or residential visit may be made up of a combination of both charges and voluntary contributions.

Voluntary Contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils, voluntary contributions may be sought to support an activity which incurs costs that cannot be recovered by charges. In this instance all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law Says:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.

No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.

If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

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

Combination of Charges and Voluntary Contributions

On occasions activities may comprise of elements which are 'charges' and elements which are 'Voluntary Contributions'. The Academy will advise the amount which relates to charges and the amount which relates to Voluntary Contributions. (See appendix 1 for sample wording)

Charging for Nursery Provision

Newport Community School Primary Academy will provide Nursery Places for children aged 3 & 4 accessing their free entitlement of up to **15 or 30** hours per week in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 & 4 year olds'.

The school will make a charge for nursery provision under the following circumstances:

Surplus Places

Parents wishing to access nursery sessions over and above their **15 or 30** hour free entitlement (regardless of where the free entitlement is used) may purchase additional sessions if there are surplus places within the nursery setting. *Surplus places are those that cannot be filled by demand from parents for their free entitlement – see admissions policy.*

Fees are determined by the Governing Body and reviewed annually. Sessions will be charged at the full session time (3 hours morning & afternoon session + 1 hour lunch time session) regardless of the amount of time attended during the session and are invoiced ½ termly in advance. School meals taken during the 1 hour lunch session are payable in addition to the session cost at the published meal rate. No refunds can be given for sessions paid for and not taken unless the nursery is closed due to unforeseen circumstances.

Late Payment Charges

Invoices must be paid promptly, terms and conditions of payment will be clearly stated on the invoice. A £10 administration fee may be levied when reminder invoices are raised.

Session Overrun Charges

Collecting children late at the end of a nursery sessions causes major disruption to the running of the nursery; therefore a late collection fee of £5 for every 15 minutes after the end of the child's pre-booked nursery session will be charged.

Withdrawal of a Nursery Place

There may be circumstances when the school needs to review a child's right to a place within the nursery. These instances include:

- a. where there is a pattern of regular non-attendance at nursery
- b. non payment for a 'surplus' place
- c. pattern of late arrival / late collection of children

In these instances the school will discuss the situation with the parents/guardians of the child involved and make a decision based on each individual circumstance. The review could lead to the loss of the child's session at the nursery.

There are no remissions for nursery places.
No refund will be

Charging for Leaps & Bounds

The Academy will provide before and after school child care known as Leaps & Bounds Breakfast and After School Club. The club must run as a totally parent funded provision and costs will be reviewed annually.

Fees

Fees, determined by the Governing Body and reviewed annually, are payable monthly in advance for pre-booked sessions. Ad-hoc sessions taken during a month will be invoiced the following month.

Session overrun charges

We charge £5.00 for every 15 minutes for late collection of children after 5.45pm. This is to contribute towards staffing costs.

Non-Attendance due to Residential Visits

Pre-booked sessions will not be charged when the child is on a residential activity organised by the school.

Notice

One week's notice is required to give up a space, pre-booked sessions will be charged for a week where no notice is given.

Withdrawal of a Leaps & Bounds Place

There may be circumstances when the school needs to review a child's right to a place within Leaps & Bounds. These instances include:

- a. where there is a pattern of regular non-attendance at Leaps & Bounds and there is a requirement for the place by another child
- b. non payment for sessions
- c. pattern of late collection of children

In these instances the school will discuss the situation with the parents/guardians of the child involved and make a decision based on each individual circumstance. The review could lead to the loss of the child's session at Leaps & Bounds.

There are no remissions for Leaps & Bounds places.

Charges for School Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a school meal everyday as part of the universal free school meal system.

Children are eligible for free school meals if parents are eligible for any criteria outlined in Category A above.

Fees

The cost for a school meal is £2.35. This cost is reviewed annually by governors. Payment for school dinners is to be made in advance and through the school's online system SCOPay.

Non payment

If arrears exist for the payment of school meals and an agreement for the payment of debt has not been arranged. The school will ask the parents/carers to provide a packed lunch and no further meals will be provided.

Sale of Uniform

The Academy supplies uniform to parents at a cost determined by the governing body and reviewed annually. The academy seeks only to recover its costs in providing these services.

Procedure for Collection of Outstanding Payments for Services

Where payment for services is not received in advance or on receipt of an invoice and arrears accumulate longer than one week and over £15, the following actions will be carried out:

1. **Informal Reminder** – Parents will be informally reminded of monies outstanding by an email and ask to make payment on to SCOPay within 5 days.
2. **First Formal Reminder** – If payment is not received within 5 days a formal letter requesting payment will be sent reminding parents of previous communication and requesting payments to be made immediately. Parents will be given the opportunity to set up a payment plan to bring arrears up to date.
3. **Payment Plan** – if payments agreed in the payment plan (sufficient to cover the ongoing weekly costs and pay off past debts) are made on time, the service provision can continue. If regular payments are not made the service will be withdrawn.
4. **Second Formal Reminder** – If no payment plan has been set up and the debt is still outstanding, a letter will be sent from the Academy's Chair of Governors to the parents/carers stating that the school will no longer be able to provide the service unless payment is made within 5 days.

Possible Legal Action – *The Academy reserves the right to [consult Tarka Learning Partnership](#) to take legal action to recover debts if payment is not made, or a payment plan arranged. Where the Academy incurs additional costs in recovering a debt then the Governors will decide whether to seek to recover these costs from the debtor. The debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs.*

Appendix 1

Sample wording – request for Voluntary Contributions.

We are requesting a voluntary contribution of £ _____ towards the cost of this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be cancelled. Any money paid for an activity that is subsequently cancelled will be refunded to parents in full.

Sample wording – request for Charges and Voluntary Contributions

The charge for this activity is £ _____ this relates to the following items:-

We are also requesting a voluntary contribution of £ _____ towards the cost of providing this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be cancelled. Any money paid for an activity that is subsequently cancelled will be refunded to parents in full.

The total contributions made will not exceed the total cost of providing the activity, in the event that the activity costs are lower than anticipated, refunds for the difference will be made