



Charging Policy

At Greentrees Primary School we want to provide a range of experiences which add excitement and enjoyment to children's learning and personal development. All our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Many of these activities have a cost associated with them and, unfortunately, cannot be provided unless we ask parents for voluntary contributions and, in some cases, make a charge. But there are some strict rules we have to abide by. Our charging policy, which has been agreed by governors, sets out what we will charge for, how we will try to make it manageable for parents and how we will help parents with limited incomes.

The Charging Policy follows the guidance given in the Department for Education's document 'Charging for school activities - advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff, and local authorities' published October 2014.

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514619/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

1 Introduction

1.1 All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition. The school can, however, under DfE guidelines, seek voluntary contributions to assist with costs (see below).

Examples of circumstances in which we might ask for voluntary contributions include:

- Transport to swimming sessions and other associated costs e.g. provision of life guards
- Transport on trips
- Admission charges

2 Voluntary contributions

2.1 When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

2.2 If a parent 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 in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

2.3 The following is a list of additional activities organized by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are 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;
- school trips abroad;
- musical events;
- other enrichment activities.

2.4 Parents who are in receipt of any of the benefits listed below may not be required to pay for school activities.

3 Residential visits

3.1 If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education or travel expenses. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging and seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of the trip. Otherwise, it would not be viable for the school to run these activities. Parents who receive state benefits are exempt from payment.

4 Music tuition

4.1 All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

4.2 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. We make a charge for these lessons. Parents in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

5 Swimming

5.1 The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2, as required by the National Curriculum. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity however, a voluntary contribution towards costs is requested. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

6 Sports Coaching and After School Clubs

- 6.1 The school offers additional 'extra-curricular' sports coaching and other activities at school from time to time e.g. judo, fencing, football, choir. A coach or instructor, who is not a member of the school staff, runs and organizes these sessions. We make a charge for these sessions, but children whose families are in receipt of benefits (see below) may be exempt.

7 Additional Activities

- 7.1 As the school develops we may offer further activities for which a small charge may be made, where appropriate.

Date: January 2017

Review date: January 2019

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers:

Why do we need to ask for voluntary contributions?

We want to offer a wide range of activities to broaden your child's experience but we can't afford to do everything we would wish without help from parents.

What happens if I am unable to pay?

Parents in certain financial circumstances (see below) will not be expected to make voluntary contributions

Will my voluntary contribution pay for people who have not paid?

No. The amount we ask in voluntary contribution must not exceed the actual cost of the activity per pupil.

We promise that:

We will tell you at the outset if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions. We shall give as much notice as possible of any activities which will require voluntary contributions.

What happens if I am unwilling to pay?

Your contribution is voluntary. Your child will not be excluded from the activity ***BUT if we do not receive enough voluntary contributions we may have to cancel the activity or reduce the scope of the activity.***

We can charge for optional extras

We can charge for any materials, books, instruments or equipment if you wish your child to own them.

This means that we will make a charge for:

- Materials used in technology if your child is expecting to bring the finished product home.
- We can charge for music tuition if it is not required as part of the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or for appropriate sized groups of pupils.

We promise that:

- The charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra.
- We will obtain your agreement before we provide the optional extra.

Charging for residential visits

We can't charge for transport although we shall usually need to request voluntary contributions.

We may charge for board and lodging (unless parents are in receipt of one or more of the benefits listed at the end of this guide). The charge will not exceed the actual cost.

We promise to help you to plan for these costs by:

- having clear procedures to enable you to pay by instalments
- publishing a fair, objective and transparent procedure for allocating places in case of oversubscription (we shall avoid 'first come, first served' payment which may favour some pupils more).

Special financial arrangements

Parents who are in receipt of any of the benefits listed below may not be required

to pay for

- Board and lodging on residential visits
- Technology materials
- Music tuition
- Transport to out of school activities
- After school coaching and clubs

In addition, reduced rates may be negotiated for:

- Extra-curricular activities
- Cookery ingredients if your child will bring the result home
- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum and outside the school day e.g. some theatre trips, football matches, music concert
- After school clubs

Benefits required to qualify

- 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 State 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

*These figures and other criteria for Free School Meals may change. The school will adopt criteria that apply.