



THOMAS JOHNSON LOWER SCHOOL

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Charging & Remissions Policy

Responsibility	Head teacher and the Governing Body
Review Date	March 2022
Approved by Full Governing Body	March 2020
Storage: Electronic	School website

Philosophy

The School and Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities such as clubs and trips make towards pupils' educational, emotional, personal and social development.

Legal Requirements

Sections 449 – 462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by the local authorities in England. This policy is based on guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies outlined in the Department of Education document 'Charging for School Activities, October 2014'.

Charging Policy

Education

The School and Governing Body recognises that under the legislation they **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to the school – paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admission Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, if it is part of the National Curriculum, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parents;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- education provided on any trip or 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;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit;
- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA 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.

The School and Governing Body **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them;
- individual or group music and vocal tuition which is specifically requested by parents and is not part of the National Curriculum;
- certain early years provision (see 'The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) regulations 2012');
- community facilities e.g. out-of-hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions;
- some activities known as '**optional extras**' which are as follows:
 - education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum; not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or not part of religious education.
 - examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
 - transport (other than transport required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
 - board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (e.g. breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).
- extended pre-school provision. Pre-school age children are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare a week (and in some cases 30 hours of free childcare a week). The sessions we offer are: morning 9.00 – 12.00 and afternoon 12.00 – 3.15. The afternoon session includes a lunchtime hour, and parents should either provide their child with their own packed lunch, or school dinners can be purchased through the main school office. Hours in addition to the statutory 15 hours entitlement can be purchased where there is availability. Costs for these and school meals are available in the Pre-school brochure or by contacting the Office Manager on 01525 402377. Information regarding entitlement to the 30 hours of free care can also be made by contacting the Office Manager.

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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, 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. Therefore no subsidy will be included for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Also 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 will 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 therefore must be sought first before providing an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the School and Governing Body may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the costs. The School and Governing Body may also ask for voluntary contributions towards school equipment and school funds generally.

All contributions are voluntary. When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents will not be made to feel pressurised into paying.

However, if the visit or activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset and if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit or activity and the School cannot fund it from some other source, then it may be cancelled.

No child will be excluded from a visit or activity that is part of the National Curriculum simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. Their child will still be given an equal chance to participate in the visit or activity.

The School will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

Direct debit or standing order mandates will not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

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

- Visits to museums or similar places of interest;
- Sporting activities;
- Outdoor adventure activities;

- Visits to or by a theatre company;
- Schools trips abroad;
- Musical festivals and events.

Residential Visits

If the School organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, no charge will be made for the educational element. However, parents will be asked to cover the costs of board and lodgings as long as it does not exceed the total cost (with the exception of pupils whose parents are in receipt of benefits listed on page 4).

Remissions Policy

The School and Governing Body believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. We will endeavour to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered but at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

For example, when a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home, the School is allowed to make a charge for board and lodgings. This is with the exception of pupils whose parents are receiving the following benefits:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) ;
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

The eligibility criteria that entitles families to this exemption on residential visits is aligned with the Pupil Premium Grant eligibility criteria. The Head teacher will inform all parents of the right to claim free board and lodging if they are receiving these benefits.

In order to remove financial barriers from less advantaged pupils, the School and Governing Body have agreed that pupils whose parents are in receipt of any of benefits listed above or who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant may be eligible for remission of charges (part or in whole) on some extra-curricular or 'optional extra' activities by prior agreement with the Head teacher.

Community Facilities

Schools are allowed to provide facilities that can be used by the local community, for example out-of hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions. These facilities further any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated.

Schools can charge for the use of these facilities, and a profit can also be generated, providing it is spent on the purposes of the school and or on community facilities.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years or sooner if changes to legislation occur.