



The Federation of Boldmere Schools

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The Federation of Boldmere Schools are committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes and recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. In practice, this means that the pupils have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:

- participate fully in the school curriculum;
- contribute to all aspects of school life; and
- be a valued partner in the process of education.

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for the schools' activities and to the remission which is available to parents/carers/carers who are on a low income. We aim:

- to make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income;
- to encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- to provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents/carers/carers, pupils and the school; and
- to respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.
- To use identified Pupil Premium funding effectively to ensure pupils make expected progress.

The law states that education provided during school hours must be free. This definition includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority or the schools. No pupil may be left out of an activity because their parents/carers/carers cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Certain key factors are taken into account when planning the range of activities. These are:

- the value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils;
- the cost of activities set against their educational value;
- how the activity will be paid for;
- the appropriate process for raising funding;
- an assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way;
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved – for example, educational visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- reference to additional or hidden costs – for example, lunch money and pocket money;
- an assessment of local facilities.

CHARGING POLICY

The governing body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the schools. Parents/carers/carers of children for whom the schools receive Pupil Premium funding however will not be charged for any trips, visits or additional activities, unless the parents/carers of these children chose to make a contribution.

For school based activities within school hours that are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education eg lunchtime clubs and activities, a charge will be made when an outside provider is used to deliver the activity and the school is charged for their services. Charges may not exceed the actual cost of the activity.

For activities taking place outside of schools hours charges will be made when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education and are supplied by an outside provider and the school is charged for their services. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges must not exceed the actual cost of the activity.

For off-site activities within school hours eg educational visits to off-site locations during the school day, a request for a voluntary contribution will be made to cover the cost of transport and entrance fee. The total voluntary contributions received may not exceed the combined cost of transport and entrance.

For residential activities taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances except for pupils whose parents/carers/carers are in receipt of the benefits listed below under Remissions.

Individual Instrumental Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. However, charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s) or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition programme.

REMISSION POLICY

To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions, the Federation of Boldmere Schools will implement the following remission policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the schools are able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Parents/carers of children for whom the schools receive Pupil Premium funding will not be charged for any trips, visits or additional activities, unless they choose to make a voluntary contribution. Also parents/carers of pupils at the Federation of Boldmere Schools whose families are in receipt of the following benefits are exempt from all charges:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
- Child Tax Credit provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

Parents/carers must prove entitlement by producing a Tax Credit Award Notice (TC 602).

The Governing Body may wish to remit in full or in part the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents/carers, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity such parents/carers will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. The Heads of School in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation for such remission.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested from parents/carers to cover the cost of a range of activities provided by the schools. The Governing Body may from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made. Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of additional activities, which take place in school time. Parents/carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided to run such an activity no qualifying child will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions. Parents/carers will be informed of how the charges for activities have been calculated and who might qualify for help with the costs. Each activity or trip is considered individually and on occasions school fund may be used to subsidise the cost.

Boldmere Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and expects its staff and volunteers to do the same.