



# **Charging & Remissions Policy**

## **2023-2025**

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## **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

### **Reference and Law:**

- Department for Education – ‘Charging for School Activities’. (Departmental Advice for Governing Bodies, School Leaders, School Staff and Local Authorities). October 2014
- Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

### **Purpose of Policy**

At the Island Learning Centre (ILC), we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) 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 whilst at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

### **Relationship to other policies**

The policy compliments the school’s Equality Policy and Educational Visits Policy

### **Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher and Governors**

The Headteacher and Governors will ensure that the following applies:

#### **a) No Charges**

No charges will be made for:

- An admission application to school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the ‘School Admissions 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 <sup>[1]</sup>, 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.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil’s parent.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.

[1] It should be noted that ‘part of the national curriculum’ is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum ‘inclusion statement’ (e.g. developing teamwork skills) .

- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school <sup>[2]</sup>.

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority 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.

## **b) Charges**

Activities for which charges may be made:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them.

## **c) Optional extras**

Charges **may be made** for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below).
- Certain early years provision <sup>[3]</sup>.
- Community facilities <sup>[4]</sup>

Education provided outside of school time that is not:

- Part of the national curriculum.
- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or □ Part of religious education.

Additionally

- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education). See voluntary contribution below.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

[2] However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.[3] The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012 [4] The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act

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 (See Appendix 1).

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**. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, 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 can 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 is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

#### **d) Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents the school governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Headteacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If, however, insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, the activity will be cancelled.

It will also be made clear to parents that if a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Equally, it will be made clear to parents at the outset what the policy for allocating places on each and every school visits will be.

#### **e) Music Tuition**

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. As such, charges will be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges (Appendix 1) will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

Charges for Music Tuition will not, however, be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. In addition, no charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

**f) Other Charges**

- Breakages. The school reserves the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of replacement items incurred as a result of breakages, loss or damage, books, equipment, material other than normal fair wear and tear.
- Resources. Where parents indicate in advance that they wish to own the finished product of a practical activity they may be asked to provide or pay for ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed. No child will be at a disadvantage because of a parent's unwillingness or inability to contribute in this way.

Data Protection Act, Pupil Information Regulations and Freedom of Information Act

**g) The Governing Body has determined:**

- a) To charge the statutory maximum fee in respect of a request made under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- b) To charge a fee not exceeding the cost of supply in respect of a request made under the Education (Pupil Information) (England)

Regulations 2000; and

- c) To charge a fee, in accordance with relevant regulations, in respect of a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- d) To charge for photocopying documents up to the specified maximum charge (as detailed in the Freedom of Information Act)

**h) Residential Visits:**

**Charges cannot be made for:**

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours <sup>[5]</sup>.
- 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.

**Charges can be made for: Board**

and lodging

- the charge will not exceed the actual cost

**i) Exceptions:**

When informing parents about a forthcoming visit, the school will make exceptions from paying for the cost of board and lodgings to parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits -:

- 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
- Universal Credit

**N.B. Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the Headteacher, on behalf of the governing body, taking into account as to whether additional help is justified.**

**j) 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 the school will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead □ We will arrange for parents to pay in instalments for each activity.
- 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.

(5) Section 452 of the Education Act 1996 gives guidance as what counts as ‘during school hours’.

**This Policy will be reviewed in November 2024, or if any significant governmental changes are made before then, especially with respect to Universal Credit or changes to a family’s ‘Tax Credit’ income<sup>(6)</sup>**

(6) The government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal Credit is fully rolled out.