



Charging and remissions policy

Purpose

At Boxmoor Primary School 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 wide range of visits and activities is offered while minimising the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head teacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

1. Activities that take place during school hours

There is no charge for activities during school hours.

There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

We may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before the charge)
- optional extras (see below)

2. Activities that take place outside of school hours

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are part of the set curriculum, including sports fixtures against other schools.

Optional extras:

The school reserves the right to charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is **not** part of the National Curriculum.
- Transport that is not taking the pupil to a school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

The cost of optional extras:

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

The 'actual cost' of providing the activity may include the cost of materials, books, instruments, or equipment and the cost of staff engaged directly for the activity in question.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

3. Residential activities

Our school will **not** charge for:

- Education provided on any 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
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- Travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours
- Residential activities that take place during school hours.

Our school will charge for:

Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. In cases of financial hardship the Head Teacher will consider a reduction of up to 50% of contributions to school residential activities. Requests by the Head Teacher to support greater reductions will require approval by the Resources Committee.

Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities

The school may charge for residential activities that fall outside of school hours.

4. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be dependent on the situation.

5. Voluntary contributions

The School may ask for voluntary contributions to support school / class activities which would not normally be provided.

The Governors have resolved that where financial costs would be incurred by the school for a projected trip or other event the school may solicit voluntary contributions from the parents. No child shall be excluded from a school activity which is undertaken on the basis of a voluntary contribution because his parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

Families entitled to benefits which qualify their children for pupil premium are not expected to contribute to school day trips.

The Governors shall approve a form of words which presents the voluntary contribution request to the parents (see Appendix 1).

Refunds

- a. Day and residential trips: where an activity makes an unexpected surplus, the school will make a refund where the surplus exceeds £1 per head for school day trips and £5 per head for school residential journeys. Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent/carer would like to take advantage of it, they should contact the school office by a particular date. If the school is not contacted by that date, it will be assumed that the refund has been donated to school funds. All refunds will be made in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail.
- b. Day and residential trips: refunds will not be made if a child is absent from school for whatever reason (e.g. illness or exclusion) unless the school can recover the cost from the provider (e.g. coach company or venue).
- c. Milk: milk has to be pre-ordered and no refunds are made for children who are absent from school or do not take their milk for whatever reason.
- d. School meals: where parents/carers have paid in advance for their child's school meal and the child is then absent from school, the amount will be credited to that child's account.
- e. Music tuition: no refunds are made if the child is absent from school or is in school but does not go to their lesson at the allocated time. In the absence of the music teacher, the teacher will attempt to make up the missed lesson by the end of the year. If this is not possible a refund will be given at the end of the year.

Appendix 1

This appendix contains the wording to be used in communications with parents / carers when requesting voluntary contribution towards school activities.

School Day Trip Advice Letters

To be included in initial advice letter soliciting support for voluntary contributions for a day trip:

“The above activity can, however, only go ahead if parents are prepared to contribute to school funds the requested amount (approximately £xx.xx). It is entirely up to you whether you do contribute or not, but I must emphasise that if all parents involved do not contribute this sum the activity is unlikely to take place for any of the children. Families entitled to benefits which qualify their children for pupil premium are not expected to contribute. On the rare occasion that a funding excess is made on school activities any amount exceeding £1 per head will be returned to contributors. Smaller sums will be donated to PTA funds from which any losses are financed.”

Included on the Parentmail form accompanying the letter:

I confirm that my child will be taking part in the above school trip and that I will contribute the sum requested.

School Residential Journey Advice Letters

School residential journey letters will also include similar advice to parents, with amendments reflecting the agreed charging principles given in this policy.