
Charging and remissions policy

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1 General

- 1.1 The Potton Federation (Potton Lower and Potton Middle School - the school), subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, will not charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- 1.2 The Federation will inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed at the end of this document of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

2 School charging

2.1 The school cannot and will not charge for the following:

- an admission application;
- 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 public 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, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- 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.

The school **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 6);
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities

3 Optional extras

3.1 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:**

- education provided outside of school time that is not: a) part of the national curriculum; b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or c) 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 that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

3.2 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.

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

3.5 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 pre- requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

4 Voluntary contributions

4.1 The school is **allowed** by law to ask for or voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if any activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or the head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher will **always** make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

4.2 **No** child will ever be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to take part in the activity concerned. .

5 Music Tuition

5.1 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.

5.2 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. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

5.3 Accordingly, the school will charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, where the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

5.4 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).

6 Transport

The schools **will not** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local 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 s/he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

7 Charging and remissions policies

7.1 No charges will be made outside this charging policy.

7.2 There will be no remissions available outside those set out in this charging policy.

8 Residential visits

8 The school **will not** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;⁵
- 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.

7.3 Schools **will** charge for: board and lodging in the case of residential off-site visits, but the charge will never exceed the actual cost. When the school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, the head teacher will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found at the end of this policy document.

General information and definitions

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge will only be made for the activity outside school hours if it 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 and not part of religious education.

If 50 per cent or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50 per cent of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Non-residential activities

If 50 per cent or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50 per cent of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 per cent of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

EXAMPLE 1

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

EXAMPLE 2

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Free School Meals

All children in Year R, 1 and 2 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals – UIFSM. Parents of children in Year 3 and above, and who are in receipt of one of the following, are entitled to claim Free School Meals for their child/children:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and you have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)