Thornhill Primary School



Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by: Resources & Community Committee

Date approved: March 2026 Date of Last Review: Feb 2026 Next Review Date: March 2027

Responsible Person: School Business Manager

Supersedes: Charging and Remissions Policy, March 2025

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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for *approving* and *monitoring the implementation* of the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Resources and Community Committee.

4.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.3 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what the school **cannot charge for:**

5.1 Education

- Admission applications

- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - 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
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- 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 he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out **what the school can charge for**.

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below, section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus
- Optional extras (see below, section 6.2)

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras.' In these cases, the school can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
    - The National Curriculum
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - 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/Governing Body has 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 [such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs or extended school childcare (School Plus)]

When 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 (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- 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 will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

The school can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- School trips
- Sports activities
- Special events

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the school may need to cancel or amend the activity.

8. Activity this school charges for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- School meals – No charge will be made for pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM)

  Currently (since November 2013) there is no charge for school meals for any child in an Islington primary school.
- Breakfast Club
- School Plus (after school childcare)
- After-school Clubs
- Holiday Clubs
- Nursery top-up fees for full-time places *(where parents are only eligible for 15 hours)* – these fees are aggregated based on household income and are in line with the local authority recommended charges and in accordance with Early Years Funding regulations.
- School Uniform
- Instrument rentals
- Late collection from school, after-school clubs, School Plus or Holiday Club (at the discretion of the Headteacher)
- Damage to property and loss or breakage of equipment.The school may seek to recover some or all of the costs arising from deliberate or reckless damage to, or loss of, school property, following investigation and in consultation with parents/carers. The Head Teacher will determine whether recovery of costs is appropriate in the circumstances.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Governing Body and reviewed annually. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in September each year.

The school reserves the right to review its charges where necessary.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher (as delegated by the Governing Body) and will depend on the activity in question.

Where the parents of a child are unable to meet any of the charges the school may make, they can apply in confidence to the headteacher for the remission of charges in part or full. We may choose to subsidise, in full or part, charges for certain activities and pupils as determined by the Headteacher, and authorised by the Governing Body. The circumstances in which concessions are applied will be reviewed regularly.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

- Parents who are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will be eligible for a significant remission of board and lodging costs. The level of remission will be determined annually by the Headteacher in consultation with the Governing Body, taking account of the overall cost of the visit.. The agreed discount for this financial year is:
    - Year 4 residential (Cardfields) - 20%
    - Year 6 residential (Kingswood) – 25%

  These percentages represent the minimum remission and may be increased in cases of financial hardship.
- Where parents are in financial hardship, they can apply in confidence to the headteacher for a subsidy. They need to complete a 'Financial Assistance Application' form (Appendix 1), explaining and evidencing the reasons for the request. This request can also be made verbally if necessary.
- Financial hardship requests also apply to parents with siblings attending multiple trips within the same academic year, for example Year 6 twins or a child in both Year 4 and Year 6.

  Please note: Parents need to apply for the subsidy, as the discount for siblings will not automatically be applied.
- The school will consider each application on its merits and will apply a subsidy for each qualifying factor. For example:
    - FSM = Year 4 20% subsidy, Year 6 25% subsidy
    - FSM with a sibling also attending residential = Year 4 40% subsidy, Year 6 50% subsidy
- Parents/carers of a looked after child or child in need will receive a 25-100% subsidy depending on the financial circumstances, to be determined by the Headteacher
- Parents in severe financial difficulties who do not fall into any of the official categories (FSM, siblings) may make a request for a subsidy to the Headteacher using the 'Financial Assistance Application' form (Appendix 1).

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.
This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and School Business Manager every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Resources and Community Committee.

Appendix 1 – Application for Financial Assistance

Application for Financial Assistance for Parents/Carers

Once completed, please hand back to the school office. Thank you

Child's name:	
Class:	
Trip/Club/Activity financial assistance is needed for:	
Amount discount requested:	**£**
Reason for request:	

Parent/s name/s:			
Receipt of benefits?	Y / N *(if yes, please state which benefits)*		
Signed		**Date**	

Headteacher to complete

FSM? Pupil Premium? LAC/Post LAC?

Notes

This application for financial assistance is **approved** for the amount of **£**_____

This application for financial assistance is **not approved**.

Signed		**Date**	