

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Signed by:

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# Statement of intent

Netherthorpe Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

* Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
* To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

# Legal framework

* 1. This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:
* Education Act 1996
* The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
* The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
* DfE (2018) ‘Charging for School Activities’
* DfE (2017) ‘Governance Handbook’

# Charging for education

* 1. We will not charge parents for:
* Admission applications.
* Education provided during school hours.
* Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education.
* Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil’s parents.
* Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
* Examination re-sits, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.
	1. We may charge parents for the following:
* Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them, or where damage has taken place.
* Use of community facilities.

# Optional extras

* 1. We may charge parents for the following optional extras:
* 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.
	+ Religious education.
* Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
* Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
* Extended day services offered to pupils
	1. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the following:
* Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
* The cost of buildings and accommodation
* The employment of non-teaching staff
* The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
* The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument
	1. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.
	2. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra.
1. **Sales Items**

 4.1 The school has available a range of items available for purchase:

 (a) **School uniform.** Children are expected to wear clothing that conforms to the

 school colours. School-branded garments are available for purchase.

 (b) **Book bags.** Before children are permitted to take reading books home, school

 Bags must be purchased.

 The above items are for sale at prices set to cover costs.

# Voluntary contributions

* 1. We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.
	2. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.
	3. We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

# Music tuition

* 1. Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil’s parents.
	2. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

# Transport

* 1. We will not charge for:
* Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
* Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
* Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
* Transport provided for an educational visit where it is an essential part of the national curriculum, although voluntary contributions may be requested for enrichment trips that go beyond the requirements of the national curriculum.

# Residential visits

* 1. We will not charge for:
* Statutory 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, 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 teachers accompanying pupils on visits.
	1. We may charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
	2. A charge for transport and other costs may be made, except where the activity is either: deemed to be in school hours or is provided to meet the statutory education requirements above. Where the school does not make a charge, voluntary contributions may be requested.
1. **Day Visits**
	1. In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances.

 9.2 The criteria for remission are the same as those for Free School Meals (FSM).

# Education partly during school hours

* 1. If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
	2. If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is 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.
	3. **Residential visits:** If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, we will not charge for the activity.
	4. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.
	5. Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

# Damaged or lost items

* 1. The school may charge parents for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child’s behaviour.

# Remissions

* 1. We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity may be cancelled.

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* 1. Parents in receipt of certain benefits, parents who do not have access to public funds or parents who are experiencing financial difficulties should request a remission by contacting the Headteacher via the school office.
1. **School Trip Refunds**

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school’s discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil’s place on a trip, it is at the school’s discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil’s place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the school’s discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil’s place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil. If the place is not refilled then no refund will be given.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school’s discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Policy.

1. **Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme**

The school’s Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

1. **School Meals**

Dinner money is payable in advance for meals and are charged at £2.00 per day for pupils in Y3 to Y6. Nursery meals are charged at £1.75. Daily charges are added to School Spider parent app and parents are responsible for ensuring the dinner money account is kept in credit. Payments are made through the School Spider parent app.

Parents will be informed or any LA increases in the cost of school meals.

# Charges for Optional Extras

**Additional Clubs / Music Tuition**

Parents will be advised about any additional homework, specialist activity clubs, language classes or music tuition that they may wish to book. Charges for these sessions will be calculated in accordance with this policy. Parents wishing to book these sessions will be book and pay using the school spider app.

# Charging & Debt Collection

Charges for Optional Extras which parents have signed up to will be added to School Spider. Parents are responsible for ensuring their School Spider account remains in credit. Reminder emails / texts regarding any debts will be sent out weekly. Where debts have not been settled within 2 weeks, consideration will be given to cancelling sessions to avoid the debts rising further.

School dinner debts of over £20 could result in meals being stopped and the debt passed over to the Sheffield Credit Control Team.

# Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals by the Governing Body and charges may be reviewed as a result of that review.

Date of next review: On or before May 2025