



Learning for life

# THE STONEBRIDGE SCHOOL

## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

**Approved by:** The Full Governing Body

**Date:** February 2020

**Last reviewed on:** October 2023

**Next review due by:** October 2025

## **School Charging and Remissions Policy in respect of School Activities**

### **Introduction**

Section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

This charging and remissions policy for The Stonebridge School has been reviewed in conjunction with the updated October 2014 DfE departmental advice for charging for school activities.

### **Activities without charge**

There will be no charge for the following activities:

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments and 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;
- There will also be no charge where instrumental and vocal music tuition is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Wider Opportunities programme. (see further details for music tuition where charges may be applied – see paragraph (a) under the chargeable activities section in this document);
- Instrumental and vocal tuition for children in care.

For transport facilities – schools cannot charge for;

- 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/she has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit (though a voluntary contribution could be requested – see paragraph (b) optional extras – under the chargeable activities section in this document).

### **Voluntary contributions and other charges**

- Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority 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 governing body or head teacher will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset, although there is no obligation to make any contribution;
- Pupils will not be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. It must be outlined that if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school

cannot fund it from some other source, then the school has no option but to cancel the visit/activity;

- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit;
- Many activities are discounted for children in receipt of Free School Meals or Pupil Premium Grant (further details are available from the school office regarding these - see remissions below);
- The school reserves the right to ask families to pay for all or a contribution to any damage caused to school property or the property of others;
- Curriculum enrichment in the form of workshops, visitors into school, theatre groups, etc. provided to bring a richness and common experience to children that enhances learning, language and opportunity are selected carefully and with costs in mind – they bring an important extra dimension to children's learning.

### **Chargeable activities**

#### a) Music Tuition

- 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. These regulations also allow for charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case;
- Charges may now 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/carer. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

#### b) Curriculum Enrichment

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

Optional Enrichment is defined as:

##### (a) Education provided outside of the 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

(b) Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;

(c) Transport (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);

(d) Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;

(e) Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club and after school club, and supervised homework sessions). The school currently operates a breakfast club and after school club, for which charges are made. The current charge for breakfast club is £1 per session for Monday/ Wednesday & Friday or £3 per week and the after school club is £27 per week (£9 per individual session for 3 days or less). These charges are payable as soon as the child uses the club. Charges are made for late collection from the clubs;

NOTE: Any child not collected at the end of the school day by 3.45 pm (where they are not attending an extra-curricular activity) will be placed in the after school club and the daily rate of £9 will be charged for that day via Schoolmoney. This will be explained on the phone to parents who choose to be late repeatedly and will be implemented after a parent has been warned in writing.

(f) The school also has after school clubs for extra- curricular activities – the charges will be notified to parents in advance of the commencement of the clubs.

When calculating the cost of the optional extras being charged by the school, the following costs may be included in the calculation:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- the hourly costs of relevant teaching and 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.

The school can charge for board and lodging costs for a residential visit, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost of the visit. Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging;

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances (the government will prescribe the circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out); Income support (IS); Income based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA); Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; Child tax credit, provided that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14); The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

### **Remissions policy**

Where the school has agreed to implement charges for the activities listed under optional extras, for those children in receipt of pupil premium grant funding (PPG), the school has agreed to waive on a case by case basis contributions and costs.

Charges for other 'chargeable activities' may also be fully or partly remitted. Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities.

### **Freedom of Information/publication scheme**

- Any administration charge will be made if asked to provide any written evidence confirming attendance; status showing on/off rolls or benefit claims. These are currently charged at £10 per letter;
- Please note, the Head Teacher of Stonebridge will sign passport applications and other documentation in regard to residents permits, citizenship or leave to remain at the charge of £10 per item/ application;
- We endeavour to publish as much information as possible on our website- this is free to download;
- Printing any policy at school will incur a charge – this is currently 10 per sheet;
- Staff should be reminded that any printing or copying for personal use is not permitted unless payment has been made.

This policy will be reviewed at least on a biannual basis (or earlier if new guidance/directives are provided to schools'/Governing Board) and the updated policy will be presented to the next available Finance/Governing Board meeting held by the school.