



Dropmore Infant School
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Chair of Governors: **Mr Tim Wicks**

Policy No: **033**

Policy Title: **Charging Policy**

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Approved by Chair of Governors: 

Date: 15/01/2025

Introduction:

- School governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- All activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils without charge, regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to pay. The exception is instrumental music tuition.

Non-Chargeable activities:

School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school (paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process);
- 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;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- transport incidental to free education, namely between school premises and to and from other places where education is provided, or in connection with a prescribed public examination.

Chargeable Activities

Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wished him/her to own them;
- Optional extras (see below);
- Music & vocal tuition in limited circumstances (see below);
- Certain Early Years provision (The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012);
- Community facilities (The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act).

Optional Extras:

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.

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.

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the national curriculum.
- 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 have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit

Where the school decides to make a charge for "optional extras" noted above, which are provided outside school time, the charge may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity.

Extended Day Services:

Extended day services offered to pupil, such as Wraparound Care which includes breakfast club and after-school care, as well as after school activity clubs and supervised homework sessions, will be charged at a rate that is deemed to be fair and reasonable in comparison to other local schools.

Voluntary Contributions:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.
- When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.
- When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.
- Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

Equality Impact Assessment:

When a visit or activity is being planned, every reasonable effort will be made to find a venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. We ask for voluntary contributions toward funding the school trip, but all children will be included regardless of the financial contributions received.