



Akaal
Primary School

Charging and remissions policy



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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 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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

Akaal Primary School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means that all children have an entitlement to benefit from the full range of educational opportunities and activities we offer and are able to:

- participate fully in the school curriculum
- contribute to all aspects of school life
- be a valued partner in the process of education

These objectives will inform the planning and organisation of educational activities, whether in or outside of the school day and are therefore integral to the decision making process in relation to charging for school activities *and* to the remission which is available to parents/carers who are on low income.

We will:

- make school activities accessible to all students regardless of family income
- encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- respond to the wide variations in family income whilst not adding unexpected burdens to the school budget

The development/opportunities of such activities forms part of the school's strategic planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycle, particularly where specific resources would be needed to support these activities/opportunities.

It includes a number of key factors:

- the value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils
- the cost of the activity set against the educational value
- how the activity will be paid for
- the appropriate process for raising funding
- an assessment of whether the educational aims could be met in any other way
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved – for example education visits, materials for practical work
- an assessment of local facilities (can the same quality of experience be provided closer to the school, thus cutting the transport cost?)

However, such a process should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of such opportunities that arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way that is consistent with the school's overall policy but are unlikely to be part of the strategic planning or shared with parents before the start of each school year.

4.1 The governing board

The governing board 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 board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Finance, HR, Audit & Risk Committee.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Finance, HR, Audit & Risk Committee.

4.2 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

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 school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Members of staff arranging such activities/opportunities must consider

- the projected number of children participating
- cost per head
- entry fees
- discounts which may be available
- transport costs and alternatives

4.4 Parents

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

Parents can expect to be given an outline of the planned opportunities at the beginning of the academic year. This will include:

- details of the visit/activity
- dates and times
- proposed voluntary contribution (if applicable)
- a reasonable payment timeline
- an opportunity to pay in instalments

Nearer to the event, parents can expect:

- to be informed of the expected dress code
- to be given a consent form (which confirms agreement for the child to take part in all activities associated with the activity, whether on site or off site, if not already included in the general curriculum support agreement); this form should be signed by an adult with parental responsibility
- to be given any other forms applicable to the particular activity

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **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

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 board 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 we **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 below)
- › Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- › Residential Visits

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, we 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 or governing board 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, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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

Schools 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.

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
- In-school specialist activities
- External Opportunities

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 the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast club
- After school club
- Specialist events - e.g. Snuggle Movie night, Outdoor Disco

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Finance, HR, Audit & Risk Committee and reviewed in June each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in July each year.

9. Damages and Breakages

Akaal Primary School may ask parents and carers to pay for damage to school property or equipment where this is a result of a pupil's misbehaviour

10. Debt Management

We charge for a range of school activities – clubs, trips, school lunch (for those not in receipt of UIFSM or FSM), school transport (am/pm). Our preferred payment method is ParentPay. We are happy to support any family if they need help to register and get set up initially.

Where your outstanding balance is more than £20 for an individual category of payment (ie you owe more than £20 for after school clubs) a reminder text will be issued and you will be expected to clear your balance within the next 7 days.

If your outstanding debt reaches more than £30 in an individual category, access to things like after school clubs will be suspended.

If your outstanding debt reaches more than £50 IN TOTAL (combined) you will receive a formal letter requesting you settle this balance within 1 week before debt collection procedures will begin. Access to all paid-for parts of school life (with the exception of the provision of a school meal) will be suspended until the debt is cleared.

11. Remissions - *the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable*

In some circumstances it may not be appropriate to charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

11.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)
- Pupils who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding

12. Monitoring arrangements

The Finance, HR, Audit & Risk Committee monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance, HR, Audit & Risk Committee.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Body.

We are committed to equal opportunities for all, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability or religion. We will monitor the impact of this.