



# **Brookland Junior School and Brookland Infant and Nursery School**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

Date policy last reviewed: 20 March 2025

**Note:** *Based on School Bus (National College) policy that was last updated 13 January 2025*

## Statement of intent

Each of Brookland Infant and Nursery School and Brookland Junior School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and have created this policy to ensure we adhere to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities and meet all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

**NOTE REGARDING VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS:** In addition to the charges set out in this policy the schools may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the schools or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the schools will make this clear to parents at the outset. The schools will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

The schools will ensure that this policy is published on its website and provides the schools' communities with details of activities for which the schools will charge parents, and the circumstances in which they will waive any charge parents would otherwise expect to pay.

# 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) 'Maintained schools governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'What maintained schools must or should publish online'
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Complaints Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Financial Management Policy

# 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

**Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

**Remission:** the cancellation of a charge, partly or wholly, which would normally be payable

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The management of the schools' delegated finances
- Ensuring the schools act in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring money is spent for the educational benefit of pupils attending the schools, and for the benefit of pupils in other schools.
- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the DfE.

The headteachers will be responsible for:

- Prioritising and allocating financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Informing parents on low incomes and in receipt of specific benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- Liaising with parents and staff regarding any charges being applied and making decisions regarding appropriate remissions on a case-by-case basis.

The SBM will:

- Process and record payments for activities, taking into account any remissions applied.
- Ensure that the correct invoices are sent to parents, and that payment is received.

## 4. Charging for education

The schools will not charge for:

- 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless 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 schools.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the schools.

The schools may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- Certain early years provision including nursery hours in excess of the statutory free hours (currently 15 or 30 hours per week depending on eligibility) and losses arising from the withdrawal of funding for free Early Years Foundation Stage Provision by the Local Authority due to the lengthy absence (two weeks or more, consecutive or non consecutive) of a child.
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

## 5. Optional extras

The school may charge 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
  - Part of RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the schools
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA 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, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision
- School lunches where free school meals do not apply.

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff, including TAs
- Teaching staff 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, where the tuition is an optional extra

The schools will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils.

Charges applied will not include an element of subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate 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 school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The schools will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from schools accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

Where free school meals do not apply, parents/carers may take up the option of children (including those in the Nursery) receiving school lunches. The cost of the school lunches to be charged to the parents will be determined from time to time by the Finance Committee and advised to the parents in advance. All parents/carers will be given the option of providing children with packed lunches as an alternative to taking school lunches. Parents whose children are entitled to free school meals will not be required to pay for their children's school lunches, except for the nursery lunches.

## 6. Voluntary contributions

In addition to the charges set out in this policy the schools may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the schools or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the schools will make this clear to parents at the outset. The schools will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil 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 and the schools will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the schools cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

The schools will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when the schools requests contributions.

## 7. Examination fees and resits

The schools may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the schools.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the schools arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the schools will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the schools, resits must be taken at the schools.

If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the schools will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded

## 8. Music tuition

The schools are aware that instrumental and vocal music tuition is an 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. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

There will be no charges applied if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge for music tuition will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

## 9. Transport

The schools will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the schools 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 schools.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

## 10. Residential visits

The schools will not charge for:

- 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 RE.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

The schools may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- 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 they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

The schools will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

## 11. Education partly during school hours

The schools will follow DfE guidance when determining whether an activity is deemed to take place during school hours or not, as set out below:

- 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 will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
- If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school 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 RE.
- Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the schools. These costs will be borne by the school.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

## 12. Damaged or lost items

The schools may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The schools will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

## 13. Remissions

The schools will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be 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 or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact the [relevant headteacher](#).

## 14. 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 either of schools 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 will be 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 will have 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 will be 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.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be 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.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be 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 will be able to do so via the Complaints Policy.

## 15. Freedom of Information Policy

The school's Freedom of Information Policy will set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

## 16. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on at least an annual basis by the governing board.