



**WOODTHORPE INFANT SCHOOL**  
**Charging and Remissions Policy**

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# **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

1. Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to the principle of free education at the schools it maintains and believes that central to this principle is an entitlement curriculum to which all pupils should have free access as of right. Nottinghamshire County Council schools are resourced accordingly. It is not expected therefore that schools will charge for activities which have been resourced through their budgets.

2. The County Council recognises the valuable contribution schools can make to the range of educational experiences offered to their pupils by organising a range of visits and other non-classroom based activities, either inside or outside school hours. The County Council accepts that in these circumstances it may be necessary for a school to seek financial contributions from parents if the expenses of a particular activity cannot wholly be contained from within the funds normally available to the school.

3. In arranging activities for which a voluntary parental contribution may be sought, the County Council expects each school to bear in mind whether the requested contribution is reasonable and within the scope of most parents of pupils at the school.

4. The County Council expects schools to operate within the law and not charge for those activities for which, legally, charges cannot be made. Within these legal constraints, however, the County Council recognises that each school governing body is responsible for its own charging and remissions policy. The County Council would wish to encourage school governing bodies, in determining their policies in this respect, to be mindful of the financial circumstances of pupils and their parents. The County Council would also wish to remind school governing bodies that pupils may be assisted, at the governors' discretion, from the school's budget or other funds at their disposal and that pupils must not be excluded from any school activity that extends or enriches the curriculum for their class or group because they have not contributed to the cost. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from another source, then it must be cancelled.

### **CHARGING POLICY**

#### **General position**

5. In recognition of its commitment to free education, Nottinghamshire County Council does not normally charge pupils or parents for any activity which it directly organises, except in the circumstances described in this document.

#### **School governing body responsibilities**

6. The responsibility for charging for other school activities, for which charges are permitted under the Education Act 1996, rests with each individual school governing body, although the County Council expects that in determining their charging policies school governors will be mindful of the general principles set out in this document.

### **Activities organised by the County Council**

7. The Council may from time to time directly provide various activities and rehearsals for those pupils at its schools who are members of the LA's 11th session arts workshops. A similar range of activities may be organised for registered pupils who participate in various performance activities organised by the County Council.

8. Pupils participate in these activities on a voluntary basis and the County Council reserves the right to make charges, where these are permitted by the Education Act 1996, in the following circumstances:

#### **Residential activities held during school hours**

Charges may be made at the discretion of the County Council for the board and lodging element of any residential activities which take place during school hours. Any such charge will be calculated by reference to the actual cost of providing board and lodging for each pupil; no other costs will be covered by the charge. Any remission arrangements for activities of this type will be at the discretion of the Director of Children and Young People's Services, except in the circumstances described in paragraph 14 below. No pupil will be excluded from any of the activities due to an inability to pay.

#### **Activities held outside school hours**

Charges may be made at the discretion of the Council for these activities. Any such charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating in the activity. The cost of other pupils participating in the activity will not be included in the charge. The charge may however include an appropriate element for the following, as appropriate:

- the pupil's travel costs.
- the pupil's board and lodging costs.
- non-teaching staff costs.
- materials, instruments and other equipment.
- entrance fees to places of interest.
- insurance costs.
- the expenses only of any participating teachers engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the activity.

Any remission arrangements for such activities will be at the discretion of the Director of Children and Young People's Services.

#### **The Nottinghamshire Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Units/Alternative Provision)**

9. NCC manages a Learning Centre (PRU) located at 4 main sites across the county, for children with behaviour difficulties, which are not attached to a specific school. The Council's charging and remissions policies for any activities arranged for registered pupils attending these units are explained in the appendix attached to this document.

### **REMISSION POLICY**

10. The Council has determined the following policies which partly or wholly remit certain charges which may be payable by pupils and their parents. The remission policy set out below relates to pupils attending schools maintained by Nottinghamshire County Council and in certain cases is only available to those pupils who actually live in Nottinghamshire.

### **School clothing**

11. Nottinghamshire County Council's Discretionary School Clothing Allowance is no longer available to families living within Nottinghamshire. The Authority maintains discretion to consider, under Section 510 of the Education Act and Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2002, requests for assistance from families in exceptional circumstances to support the most vulnerable families. Included in this category would be families who have lost clothes in a fire, a flood, theft, have been made homeless or are fleeing domestic violence. There is not a set grant for these exceptional cases.

### **Outdoor and Environmental Education**

12. The Council provides a range of day and residential outdoor and environmental education centres for pupils attending Nottinghamshire Council schools. Schools are charged a proportion of the running costs for the centres. These charges are, however, partially remitted, in the case of visits which take place mainly during school hours, to reflect the number of pupils attending who are eligible for both free school meals and pupil premium.

### **Board and lodging charges for residential trips**

13. Any charges for board and lodging for a residential trip, within the terms of the schemes outlined above, will be fully remitted either by the Council or the school governing body, depending upon who funds the visit, provided that the activity:

- (i) takes place during school hours, OR
- (ii) forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or fulfils statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or religious education, irrespective of whether the activity takes place within or outside school hours, and the pupil is eligible for both free school meals and pupil premium.

and the parents of the pupil are in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and has an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,105
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

## **WOODTHORPE INFANT SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

The Governors of Woodthorpe Infant School are interested in promoting educational visits for pupils. They have therefore agreed to the following policy, under the guidance of the Local Authority, with regard to voluntary contributions from parents/carers. The restrictions on charging for activities do not in any way prohibit a school from seeking voluntary contributions from parents for the benefit of the school or towards any school activities. Any such contributions must, however, be genuinely voluntary. It must therefore be made clear to parents if contributions are requested that:

- there is no obligation to contribute and
- that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether their parents/carers have contributed.

Thus, for example, parents may be invited to contribute towards a school visit planned to take place during school hours, but no pupil may be omitted from the visit if the pupil's parents decline to contribute for whatever reason.

Information in an initial letter to parents/carers explains that a visit can only proceed if there are sufficient voluntary contributions to make it viable. The initial letter to parents explains the nature of the visit, travel arrangements and timings and its educational value. It indicates the contribution per pupil which would be required if the activity were to take place and further emphasises that no pupil would be excluded from the activity should a parental contribution not be forthcoming. It offers parents/carers the opportunity to discuss issues with the Head Teacher and can offer solutions such as the flexibility to pay in instalments or make a different contribution.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make towards school activities. A request for a contribution towards the cost of a school visit could, for example, include an element to cover the cost of admission fees for accompanying adults. This would always be kept to a minimum.

### **Remissions**

Pupils who attract Pupil Premium (PP/PP+) as a grant by being eligible for Free School Meals in the October Census can be remitted charges for educational visits, visitors to school and other curriculum-based contributions made by other parents/carers. PP can also be used to support additional opportunities for support in school to ensure that PP children are not further disadvantaged or wider opportunities which could impact on education and learning. These would be discussed with parents on an individual basis.

### **Breakages and Fines**

There is nothing in the Education Act which prevents schools from asking parents/carers to pay for the cost of any damage resulting from a pupil's misbehaviour. The Head Teacher will discuss any matters of damage with parents and reach a suitable conclusion, according to the nature of the damage.

## **Appendix 1**

# **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy for Nottinghamshire Learning Centre**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

1. The County Council recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including visits, residential experiences and clubs, can make towards all aspects of a pupil's education. The Council accordingly wishes to promote and provide as far as possible such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils attending the pupil referral units it maintains.

### **CHARGES**

2. The Council reserves the right to enable these units to make a charge for the following activities which they may organise from time to time.

Residential activities held during the normal hours of the unit

3. Charges may be made for the board and lodging element of those residential activities which take place during the unit's normal hours of opening. Parents will be notified in advance of any such activities which the unit proposes to organise and the estimated cost. Parental consent will be obtained for their children's participation in any such activities for which a charge may be made.

4. Any charge for a particular activity will be calculated by reference to the actual cost of providing the board and lodging for each pupil; no other costs will be covered by the charge. Any remission arrangements for such activities will be at the discretion of the head teacher of the unit EXCEPT in the circumstances described in paragraph 10.

Activities held outside the normal hours of the unit:

5. The unit will endeavour to provide a range of such activities from time to time. These may sometimes include day and residential experiences and are known generally as 'optional extras'. Charges may be made for these activities EXCEPT where they are provided to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or are required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education, in which case they are not regarded as optional extras and charges cannot be made (Board and lodging charges may still however be made for any residential activities, subject to the remission arrangements described in paragraph 10 below).

6. Parents will be notified in advance of any 'optional extras' which the unit proposes to organise and the estimated cost. Parental consent will be obtained if their children are to participate in any activities for which a charge may be made.

7. Any charge for a particular activity will be dependent upon the type of activity and its cost and the number of participants. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. The cost of other pupils participating in the visit will not be included in the charge. The charge may however include an appropriate element for such items as:

- the pupil's travel costs.
- the pupil's board and lodging costs.
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment.
- non-teaching staff costs.

- entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc.
- insurance costs.
- the expenses only of any participating teachers engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the 'optional extra'.

Any remission arrangements for such activities will be at the discretion of the head teacher of the unit, EXCEPT in the circumstances described in paragraph 10 below.

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**8. Materials and ingredients:** a charge will only be made for any materials and ingredients relating to activities taking place during the unit's normal hours where parents have confirmed in advance that they wish to own the finished product, e.g. in home economics or CDT. Alternatively, parents may be asked to volunteer to provide the ingredients and materials prior to the activity taking place.

**9. Examination fees:** no charge will be made for any prescribed public examination for which a pupil has been prepared by the unit. Charges for other, non-prescribed public examinations or prescribed examinations for which the pupil has not been prepared by the unit will be at the discretion of the head teacher of the unit. If a pupil fails without reasonable cause to complete the examination requirements of any public examination, prescribed or otherwise, for which the unit has paid, or is liable to pay, an entry fee, the fee will be recovered from the pupil's parents. The examination fees payable by parents in these circumstances may be remitted if the unit is satisfied that the cause of a pupil's failure to complete the examination requirements was reasonable. Each case will be considered on its individual merits. As a general guide, however, the payment of examination fees will only be remitted if a pupil was prevented from completing the examination requirements because of illness or some other very exceptional circumstances.

## REMISSIONS

10. The unit will remit in full the charge for board and lodging for any residential activity it organises for the pupil if the activity:

(i) takes place within the unit's normal hours of opening, OR

(ii) forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or fulfils statutory duties relating to the

National Curriculum or religious education, irrespective of whether the activity takes place within or outside the unit's normal hours of opening and the parents of the pupil are in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and has an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit outside the unit's normal hours of opening.

11. Any other remission arrangements for a particular activity or pupil will be entirely at the discretion of the head teacher of the unit. Any subsidy provided by the unit will be met from the funds at its disposal, e.g. the unit's own funds or budget.

## **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

12. Nothing in this policy statement precludes the head teacher of the unit from inviting parents to make voluntary contributions for the benefit of the unit or in support of any activity it organises, whether during or outside its normal hours of opening. Any contributions sought from parents will be entirely voluntary and pupils must not be treated differently according to whether their parents make a contribution in response to any such invitation.

## **BREAKAGES AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY**

13. The head teacher of the unit reserves the right to seek reparation from parents where their children cause breakages or damage to the unit's property.

## **REVIEW**

14. The County Council will review and amend this policy statement from time to time, as appropriate.