



Christleton Primary School
Be the best you can be

**Charges and Remissions
Policy**

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Charges and Remissions Policy		Full Governing Body	
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Signed Headteacher			
Signed Chair of Governors			

Christleton Primary School

Charges and Remissions Policy

1. Purpose and principles

Christleton Primary School is committed to providing a broad and enriching education without creating financial barriers. This policy sets out what the school will provide free of charge, when a charge may lawfully be made, how voluntary contributions operate and when charges may be remitted or reduced.

No pupil will be treated less favourably because a parent is unable or unwilling to pay a voluntary contribution. Decisions will take account of equality, SEND, safeguarding and family circumstances.

2. Legal framework

The policy is based on sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996 and the DfE's Charging for school activities guidance. It also operates within Cheshire West and Chester Council's scheme for financing schools and the school's financial, educational visits, lettings and debt-recovery procedures.

3. Responsibilities

- The governing board determines and reviews the charging and remissions policy and oversees its fair implementation.
- The headteacher authorises activities and charges within the policy and ensures parents receive clear information before committing.
- The school business manager calculates charges, maintains records, applies remission decisions confidentially and ensures income is used for its stated purpose.

4. Education and activities provided without charge

The school will not charge for admission; education provided during school hours; education required as part of the National Curriculum or statutory religious education; entry to prescribed public examinations where the pupil has been prepared by the school, subject to lawful exceptions; or materials and equipment necessary for education unless the parent wishes to own the finished product.

Education outside school hours will also be free where it is required as part of the National Curriculum, a prescribed examination syllabus for which the pupil is being prepared by the school, or statutory religious education.

5. School hours

For charging purposes, an activity takes place wholly or mainly during school hours according to the statutory calculation, which considers the number of half-days occupied by the activity, including travel where required by the guidance. The school will not describe an activity as an optional extra merely because some travel occurs outside normal hours.

6. Voluntary contributions

The school may invite voluntary contributions for an activity or for the benefit of the school. The request will state clearly that the contribution is voluntary, that there is no obligation to contribute and that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or how much their parents contribute.

No pupil will be excluded from an in-school-hours activity because a contribution has not been made. If voluntary income and available subsidy are insufficient, the school may alter or cancel the activity. The school may explain this possibility honestly but must not apply pressure, publish who has paid or set a "voluntary" amount that is presented as compulsory.

7. Optional extras

The school may charge for an optional extra provided wholly or mainly outside school hours where it is not required by the National Curriculum, a prescribed examination syllabus or statutory religious education. Participation is voluntary and written parental agreement to the charge will be obtained before the pupil takes part.

The charge will not exceed the actual cost attributable to the participating pupils. It may include materials, books, instruments, equipment, non-teaching staff, relevant teaching staff engaged specifically for the activity, entrance fees, insurance and transport where lawful. It will not include a profit or require participating parents to subsidise pupils whose parents have not agreed to pay, although the school may use other funds to provide remission.

8. Educational visits and transport

Transport required to take a pupil to or from the school, another maintained school, premises where the governing body has arranged education, or a statutory examination will be free where the law requires. The school may request voluntary contributions for transport connected with a free activity or charge where transport forms part of a lawful optional extra.

9. Residential visits

Where a residential visit takes place wholly or mainly during school hours or is required by the National Curriculum, prescribed examination syllabus or statutory religious education, the education and required activities will be free. The school may charge the actual cost of board and lodging, subject to statutory remission.

Where the residential is an optional extra outside school hours, the school may charge the permitted actual cost after parental agreement. Parents who may qualify for remission will be invited to contact the school confidentially and will not be required to disclose circumstances to teaching staff or other parents.

10. Music tuition

Whole-class or group teaching provided as part of the National Curriculum will be free. Charges may be made for individual or small-group instrumental or vocal tuition provided at a parent's request, except where the tuition is required by the National Curriculum or prescribed examination arrangements or where another statutory exemption applies. Charges and any instrument-hire terms will be communicated in advance.

11. Materials, ingredients and finished products

The school will provide materials necessary for curriculum teaching. It may ask a parent to pay for or supply materials, ingredients or equipment where the parent has indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product. A pupil will still receive the educational experience if a parent does not wish to purchase the product.

12. Completing Statutory Assessments

No charge will be made for entry to a prescribed public examination where the pupil has been prepared by the school. A permitted charge may be made for entry to an examination not on the prescribed list, for a re-sit where additional preparation is not provided, or where a pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement and the school has incurred a fee, provided the legal conditions are met and parents were informed in advance.

13. Damage, loss and replacement

The school may seek the reasonable actual cost of repairing or replacing property damaged, defaced or lost through a pupil's willful or negligent behaviour. The circumstances will be investigated fairly, the pupil's age and understanding and any SEND or safeguarding factors considered, and the charge will not be punitive. General wear and tear will not be charged.

The school may charge for replacement of a lost or deliberately damaged item supplied for the pupil's use, such as a book or device, subject to the same proportionality and remission considerations.

14. Community use and lettings

Charges for hiring premises or facilities by community users are governed by the separate Lettings Policy and annually approved schedule of charges.

15. Remissions and financial assistance

The school will remit board and lodging charges where the statutory conditions are met and a parent is in receipt of a qualifying benefit or tax credit, including any successor benefit specified by law. The school business manager will check the current eligibility rules before decisions are made.

The governing board may provide wider full or partial remission from delegated funds, charitable funds or other lawful sources where hardship would otherwise prevent participation. Decisions will be confidential, fair and based on available resources.

16. Deposits, cancellation and refunds

Any deposit, payment timetable, cancellation term and refund arrangement will be explained before payment. Refunds will reflect the amount the school can recover from suppliers and costs already irreversibly incurred. The school will not automatically retain more than its reasonable unrecoverable loss and may exercise discretion for illness, bereavement or other exceptional circumstances.

Where the school cancels an activity, parents will receive a refund of the amount not already lawfully and irrecoverably committed, unless they agree to an alternative arrangement.

17. Complaints, records and review

Questions about a charge should first be raised with the school business manager. Complaints will be handled under the School Complaints Procedure. Financial records will show how charges were calculated, remissions applied and income used.

The governing board will review this policy annually. The approved version will be published on the school website and parents will be given clear activity-specific information before payment or consent is requested.