

Barker's Lane Community School

Charges & Remissions Policy

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out what charges can and cannot be made for activities in Barker's Lane Community School. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with Sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996 which sets out the law regarding what charges can and cannot be made for activities in schools maintained by local authorities.

Circumstances where no charge is made

No charge will be made for:

Education in School

- Education provided wholly or mainly during school hours.
- Admission to school for children of compulsory school age.
- Activities which are part of the National Curriculum, or are part of a prescribed examination syllabus, or part of Religious Education.
- The supply of any materials, books and instruments or other equipment.

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 body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit which is part of the National Curriculum.

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, 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.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Music Tuition

- Children learning to play musical instruments as part of the National Curriculum; or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education; or
- Cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination.

Examination fees

Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school or for examination re-sit if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

Circumstances where the School may Charge Parents

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for other activities known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge may be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment as follows:

Education

- Activities which take place mainly or wholly out of school time if they are not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupils being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.
- Materials used in practical subjects and project assignments provided parents have agreed in advance that they or the pupil wish to keep the finished product e.g. ingredients or materials.

Music tuition

- Musical instrument tuition provided to individual pupils or to a group of not more than four pupils if the teaching of music tuition is not part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil.

Transport

- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.

Examination Fees

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Board and Lodgings

- The cost of board and lodging for residential trips, even when taking place largely during school time. (Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging, see Remissions).

Breakages and Damage

- Where a pupil's behaviour results in damage to school property or equipment, parents may be asked to pay for the necessary repair or replacement. Each incident should be dealt with on its own merit and at the discretion of the school.

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school time activities, voluntary contributions may be sought from parents for activities which supplement the normal school curriculum.

Where requests for voluntary contributions are made:

- pupils will not be excluded through parents' inability or unwillingness to pay;
- pupils of parents who cannot contribute will not be treated any differently; and

In the event that without enough voluntary contributions, the activity would be cancelled as there is no way to make up the shortfall, this will be made clear to parents when the contribution is requested.

Requests made for voluntary contributions made in respect of individual pupils must not include any element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Good Practice

All staff are made aware that when planning any visit / activities where a voluntary contribution will be requested that this should be planned well in advance to give as much notice as possible to parents. Parents are given the opportunity to pay for trips in instalments over time.

Uniform, P.E. Kit, Calculators, Pens etc. Aprons

Parents can be invited to equip their child with items of personal equipment intended to be used solely by their child.

Breakages and Damage

Where a pupil's behaviour results in damage to school property or equipment, parents may be asked to pay for the necessary repair or replacement. Each incident should be dealt with on its own merit and at the schools discretion.

Loss or Damage to Reading Books off the School Site

Where a reading book is lost at home, parents will be asked to pay for a replacement. The charge will be calculated based on the type of book. The same will apply if a book is damaged. In the first instance, every effort will be made to repair the book but if this is not possible, a charge will need to be made.

School Essentials Grant

A Welsh Government grant is available to help towards the costs of a child's school uniform and equipment, for children whose families are on a lower income.

The grant can be used to pay towards the cost of:

- School uniform
- School sports kit
- Uniform for wider activities (e.g. sports, scouts and guides)
- Equipment (e.g. school bags and stationery)
- Specialist equipment where new curriculum activities begin (e.g. design and technology)
- Equipment for out of school hours trips (e.g. waterproofs for outdoor learning)

To be eligible parents will need to qualify for certain benefits, and the child will be part of one of the following groups:

- All compulsory school years from Reception to Year 11.
- All looked after children.

More information is available on <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/service/pupil-development-grant-pdq>

Remissions

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

- Income Support.
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance.

In receipt of any other benefit or allowance, or entitled to any tax credit under the Tax Credits Act 2002 or element of such a tax credit, as may be prescribed by regulations from time to time for any period wholly or partly comprised in the time spent on the trip. Currently the following are prescribed:

- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, providing Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's total income is below the HMRC's set limit (i.e. children who are eligible to receive free school meals;
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Guarantee element of the State Pension Credit.
- Receipt of Universal Credit.

In accordance with the Remissions Policy adopted by the Executive Board WCBC the Local Authority will –

- i. Where a charge has been raised for board and lodging for educational activities at supported outdoor Education & Language Centres, namely Nant B.H., Pentrellyncymer, Plas Nantyr, Urdd Millenium Centre (Cardiff), Llangrannog and Glan Llyn, then the LA will offer remission to eligible pupils, in relation to one trip per pupil per year.
- ii. Pupils who are entitled to statutory remissions may, from time to time, be invited to represent their school or the County Borough on foreign exchange visits or take part in special field course or expeditions. In these circumstances, the LA gives such individual cases discretionary consideration.
- iii. The funds to be made available for remissions will be finite and based on an average of one journey per year for those qualified. Schools will forward details of the entitlements to enable the appropriate reimbursements to be made. All other remission costs shall be borne by the school.

The governing body may wish to remit in full or in part, the cost of other activities for parents in certain circumstances. The School will have the responsibility for determining whether a trip is mainly in or out of school hours.

School Meals

WCBC set costs for school meals and this is managed directly by the Council. Parents of children who wish to take a school meal pay in advance for this. Debts should not be accrued.

School is notified by WCBC of children who are eligible for free school meals. WCBC do not make any charge to these families.

This Policy was reviewed in line with guidance from Welsh Government by Mrs C Edwards in March 2023 in consultation with the staff and the Governing Body. It will be revised in Spring 2025.