

BROOKLAND INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

CHARGES POLICY

The Local Authority or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging. The Governing Body's policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

Residential Trips

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit element)
- (Income Related) Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with income below £16,190
- Working Tax Credit during the four weeks after you cease work or reduce working hours to less than 16 per week
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit

Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment;
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

No pupil may be left out of an activity because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. The letter sent to parents in this case will include the following wording:-

'In accordance with legislation we can only ask for a contribution towards the cost of the (activity). We estimate that the cost will be £ per child. If insufficient money is received from your contributions then the visit may have to be cancelled.'

In appropriate cases, the following may be added:-

'The school would not wish any pupil to be disadvantaged if there is a genuine need and parents are encouraged to contact the Headteacher if they feel the need for financial assistance'.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining the amount of voluntary contribution required to make the activity viable.

Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. In accordance with the guidance set out within Hertfordshire County Council's Financial Handbook for Schools the school will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
- £2 or more per person

Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, eg £3 not £3.29.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that 'a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent / guardian would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by 'date'. If the school is not contacted by the date it will be assumed that the refund has been donated to school funds. All refunds will be made in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail.

OTHER CHARGES

School Meals and Milk

School meals and milk will be provided and will be charged for at the current rate as specified by Hertfordshire County Council or set by the governing body.

Uniform and Book Bags

Stocks of uniform and book bags will be held by the school and sold to parents at or around cost price in line with DfE and Office of Fair Trading guidance.

Lettings

The Governing Body has a 'Lettings' Policy which is regularly reviewed. The charges are agreed annually by the Finance and Premises Committee in line with Hertfordshire County Council guidelines.

Extended Schools Activities

After-School activities arranged directly by the school with an outside provider will be charged as agreed with the provider. Parents will either pay the provider directly or payments will be collected by the school and the provider will invoice the school for the activity. Some of these activities may be offered free of charge to parents with the cost being covered by a grant.

Pre-School

In line with the contract between Hertfordshire County Council and Brookland Infant and Nursery School, the school will provide accommodation on the site for a pre-school.

At present the Lotties Pre-School runs a pre-school in the 'old nursery' building and therefore has a formal lease with Hertfordshire County Council which the school manages on behalf of the County Council. A charge for services will be made as detailed in the lease and a yearly rent (set by Hertfordshire County Council) will be collected by the school. The Pre-School will also be charged appropriately for any use of photocopying equipment and supplies and any use of the building outside of the times specified in the lease.

Documents provided under the Freedom of Information Act

Single copies of information will be provided free unless stated otherwise in Section 6 of the Publication Scheme document. A charge may be made where the request involves a lot of photocopying or printing, a large postage charge or is for a priced item such as some printed publications or videos (the charge will be determined at the time of the request).

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and approved every 3 years by the Resources Committee.