

Charging Policy



Adopted: September 2022

Thorpe Primary School welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

1. Basic Principles

- 1.1 No charge can be made for education during school hours. The definition of 'education' includes materials equipment and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority or the school to carry pupils between the school and the activity. 'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the day.
- 1.2 School trips, visits and practical activities enhance the pupils' learning and broaden their knowledge and experience. These are undertaken with the voluntary contributions of parents. No pupil will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a voluntary contribution. The opportunity to pay in instalments will be offered to parents who wish to pay in this way.
- 1.3 The school reserves the right to cancel any school trip if there are insufficient contributions.

2. Exception

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or pupils in groups of up to four, to play a musical instrument if the teaching is not part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil.

3. Voluntary Contributions

Parents may be invited to make voluntary contributions to extend the value of school funds. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. If a planned activity has to be cancelled, any monies will be returned. Parents will be asked to make voluntary contributions to school trips, visits or for practical activities such as technology. These contributions will not exceed the actual cost. Where an outside provider is used for school activities a voluntary contribution may be sought. Unfortunately we are unable to offer refunds if a child is unable to attend a trip, as payments are made to venues prior to the visit.

4. Residential Activities

Residential activities are considered optional and therefore not part of the National Curriculum. The cost for residential visits is therefore not a voluntary contribution but a charge. Deposits will not be refunded unless a claim can be made against school insurance. Parents will be informed of this.

5. School Activities Provided by External Providers

Where an external provider leads an out of school activity on school premises, an agreement between the provider and the parents will be sought.

6. Breakages

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages , or loss of school books on loan to children, the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide it right to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

7. Free School Meals/Financial difficulties

If a family is in receipt of Free School Meals (at the time of the trip, or organisation of the trip) the school will offer up to a 50% reduction in the cost of the activity. This applies to all activities; be they residential trips, local trips, or external providers coming into school. In case of other financial difficulties parents should contact the Head Teacher. It will be at the Head Teacher's discretion to offer a reduction of more than 50% if a parent states that further financial hardship would be a barrier to a child engaging in a special activity.

8. School Meals

School meals are reviewed annually and parents will be given one half term notice of any increase. Parents are required to pay for school meals in advance. Entitlement to free school meals is verified by the Local Authority. Where the Local Authority has rejected a claim for free school meals that decision will be final and the school will not subsidise the cost of providing school meals for any pupil.