

### Introduction

The DfE regularly publishes advice for schools in England that aims to help governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities determine their policies on charging and remission for school activities and school visits.

A guidance document, which details the DfE's current advice and provides examples of frequently asked questions, can be accessed via:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/365929/charging\\_for\\_school\\_activities\\_-\\_October\\_2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_school_activities_-_October_2014.pdf)

### Nottinghamshire

**Nottinghamshire County Council's** charging policy applies the DfE's advice as follows:

1. 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 made a contribution to the cost.

#### **General position**

2. 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**

3. 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**

4. 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 Nottinghamshire Performing Arts groups. A similar range of activities may be organised for registered

pupils who participate in various performance activities organised by the County Council.

5. 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, Families and Cultural Services, except in the circumstances described in paragraph 10 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, Families and Cultural Services.

**REMISSION POLICY**

6. 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.

### **School clothing allowances (exceptional circumstances)**

7. School clothing allowances are discretionary and any allowance scheme must be funded by NCC. Discretionary School Clothing Allowance is no longer available to families living within Nottinghamshire.

The Authority retains 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. 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.

Parents who consider their circumstances to be exceptional should write, giving full details of their individual case, to the Business Support Officer, G&B team, Meadow House.

### **Nottinghamshire Performing Arts - Saturday Centres and Performance Groups**

8. The Council provides a range of Arts-based provision for pupils outside normal school hours. Pupils are expected to meet their own travel costs. However, the County Council operates a scheme of financial assistance towards the travel costs of those pupils who are entitled to receive both free school meals and pupil premium. The current level of assistance given amounts to the full travel costs involved, less a defined parental contribution. The parental contributions are reviewed annually.

### **Outdoor and Environmental education**

9. 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**

10. 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.