



**Abbas and Templecombe  
Church of England Primary School**  
School Lane, Templecombe, Somerset, BA8 0HP  
Head Teacher - Mr James Webb  
Email – [abbastemplecombe@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:abbastemplecombe@educ.somerset.gov.uk)  
Phone – 01963 370481



## Charging for School Activities

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<b>Author</b>	James Webb	
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<b>Consultation</b>	This Policy has been prepared in line with the guidance from Somerset County Council.  It is used in conjunction with other Model LA policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Financial Management Scheme (FMS) - The Scheme sets out the financial relationship between Somerset County Council (SCC) and the maintained schools which it funds.</li><li>• Financial Guidance issued by Education Financial Services.</li></ul>	

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities. No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school has drawn up a Charging and Remissions Policy. The policy must be made available to parents and must be kept under regular review.

The following guidance has been taken into account in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy:

### Guidance on Charging

In general, all education provided during school hours is free, though music tuition can be an exception to this (see below).

#### (i) Residential School Visits

Schools cannot charge if 50% or more of the time spent on the activity is in school hours or if the activity is part of the national curriculum. If a charge is made the cost must not exceed the actual cost; ie the school must not make a profit.

However, schools may charge for the cost of board and lodgings during overnight school trips. The charge must not be more than the accommodation actually costs and parents who are in receipt of certain benefits are not required to pay.

#### (ii) Music Tuition

Charges can be made when the tuition is not an essential part of:

- the National Curriculum

- a public examination syllabus
- first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition, Wider Opportunities programme

### **(iii) Examinations**

No charge can be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are on the National Curriculum.

However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the pupil wasn't prepared for the examination at the school
- the examination isn't on the National Curriculum, 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 local authority (LA) originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee

Schools can also charge for:

- re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- costs of non-prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school

### **(iv) Breakages and Replacements**

Schools can charge for breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils.

### **(v) Extra-Curricular Activities and School Clubs**

School can charge for extra-curricular activities and school clubs. The charge cannot exceed the actual cost of the provision.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Schools can ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

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

In the example of an activity, if it cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school must make this clear to the parents at the outset. The contribution is voluntary and pupils of parents who can't, or don't want to, contribute must not be excluded from the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised then the activity can be cancelled.

### **Remission of Charges**

When a school informs parents about a school visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Further information on charging for school activities can be found on the DfE website - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>