



*'Within a caring Christian community we enable every child to flourish and inspire a love of learning in all members of our community'*

## **Charges, Voluntary Contributions & Remissions Policy**

### **Purpose**

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

### **Introduction**

The legislation governing the charging for school activities as set out in the Education Act 1996 sections 449-462 has been used to devise this policy. It has also been updated in view of the advice given in the Governors Guide to the Law 2012 (chapter 24)

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. In the interests of Child Protection all school activities, trips, music lessons, PE activities and out of school residential activities will be led by people who have been subject to a satisfactory CRB check.

### **Education**

School governing bodies and local authorities **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any maintained school;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided 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;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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;

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- optional extras (see below); and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances

### **Optional Extras**

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- Other activities for which a charge may be applied in accordance with this policy.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher **must** also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experiences of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, it may be necessary to cancel a trip. This is made clear to parents when asking for donations. Parents who may have difficulty in making a voluntary contribution are asked to see the headteacher in confidence. Parents of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding will not be expected to make a voluntary contribution. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. The school does not treat these children differently to any others. If a parent wishes for their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling to make a voluntary contribution, the school does allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school will provide this information on request. The following is a list of non-inclusive examples of additional activities organized by the school, which may require voluntary contributions from parents:

- Visits to museums;
- Historical days;
- Sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- Visits to the theatre;
- Musical events.

### **Residential Visits**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, the school makes a charge for board and lodging. It will charge the direct cost of the residential visit and does not make any profit or recover any supply costs to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit. The cost of the transport may be subsidised from fundraising.

Parents who receive any of the following state benefits are exempt from payment:-

- Income Support (IS);
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support provided under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2012/13)
- State Pension Credit, where the parent is in receipt of the guarantee credit; and
- Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance.

### **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum and the school does not charge for this. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition.

Therefore, there is a charge for individual or group music tuition which takes place during the school day subject to the parent or carer requesting the tuition and it not being part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. The school makes a charge for these lessons but does not make any profit. The school gives information about additional music tuition in time for the start of each academic year and parents must give 4 weeks notice.

## **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for all children during Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. The school makes no charge for this activity but do ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of transport. It informs parents when these lessons are to take place, and the school asks parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

## **Externally run clubs**

The school offers a variety of after school clubs. Although the school may collect the money payments are made directly to the provider of the club.

From time to time the school may offer other clubs for which a small charge may be made to cover the costs of materials or the cost of providing the club.

## **Transport**

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school.

## **Monitoring**

The Chair of Resources will undertake the monitoring of this policy.

It is the policy of the school to be as inclusive as possible. In cases of hardship the Headteacher can be approached in confidence and may be able to help with applications to various charities that may subsidise or fund additional activities resulting in a remission of the contribution or the charge.

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