

March C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING POLICY

Policy Reviewed
To be reviewed
Next policy review date

June 2017
2 Yearly
June 2019

To be reviewed by

Finance and Policy Committee

MARCH C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING POLICY

Purpose of Policy

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 whilst trying to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Roles and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff and governors

The Headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

1. No charges will be made for

- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Tuition for pupils/Whole classes learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.
- Admission to school

2. Activities for which charges may be made

- Activities outside school hours – Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above), which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).
- Residential activities – Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs. Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above). When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.
- Music tuition – for individuals or groups of any appropriate size, in addition to National Curriculum requirements. These charges may be made by WSCC or other providers and charged directly to parents.

Clubs

- A large number of school clubs are run by school staff and parents are not charged for their children to attend. On occasions children may be charged for specific equipment that may be required to run this club i.e. cooking ingredients , art equipment.
- Independent providers charge the parents/carers directly and are not charged to rent the premises and resources.

3. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made may be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

Parents in receipt of:-

- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed state pension
- Income related employment and support allowance

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the Headteacher taking into account as to whether additional help is justified. These additional costs may be met from our School Fund account or church donations if appropriate. Parents will not contribute towards the cost of other pupils' visits etc. The voluntary contributions requested, must not exceed the cost of the activity or visit.

4. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish information about visits as early as possible so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for residential visits
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first respond, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection. Parents who send in permission slips first, will be selected and payment can be made by an agreed date.
- Where a visit or activity is cancelled for any reason, full refunds will be made where possible, and where not, this will be made clear in the initial letter outlining the visit.
- If a child misses a visit or activity due to illness or parents deciding not to send the child on the visit, then a refund will not be guaranteed, as the school may still incur costs. This will be made clear on initial letters to parents outlining the visits.
- On occasions judged necessary by the Governors and Headteacher, parents will be asked to pay for the cost of broken equipment, damaged school property and defaced, lost or damaged school materials, where this is the child's misbehaviour.
- Occasionally, contributions are made by the PTA to keep the contributions required by parents to a minimum
- Requested copies of paperwork pertaining to a parents child over and above what is normally sent out to parents i.e. trips, end of year reports, class letters will incur a cost of 10p per page of photocopying.

Signed.....
(Chair of Governors)
Reviewed by Finance / Policy Committee
June 2017
Next review date June 2019