

St Levan Primary School
where all children **SHINE**-for life

Charging and Remissions Policy – April 2017

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the vision, aims and values of the school.

The policy has been informed by 'A guide to the Law for School Governors' and local authority guidance on charging for school activities. This guidance accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act, 1996.

The Board of Governors, of St Levan School, cannot charge for:

- an admission application;
- 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, 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;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.

The Board of Governors can charge for:

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

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 c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

Charging

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;
- 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 the case 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experiences of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. The governing body or Headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution as all contributions are voluntary. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Friends of St Levan, our parents support group, frequently support us to ensure all our children can participate and benefit from all our activities and for example pay for the cost of transport to and from our residential school journey and the annual transport costs to the theatre. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. We must make sure that this is made clear to parents.

The following is a list of additional activities- 'optional extras', organised by the school, which require a voluntary contribution from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- Visits to museums and other places of educational interest
- Sporting activities which require transport and fees
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to or by theatre companies
- Musical events

Residential Visits

We are very proud to offer a yearly residential school journey for Years 4,5 and 6. Our aim is for all of our children to take part due to the social and academic benefits of such trips. We charge for the cost of board and lodgings and aim to keep the cost as low as possible to ensure as many of our children can participate. Our Friends of St Levan group pay for the cost of transport.

St Levan Primary School cannot charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit that takes place 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;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We can charge for:

- board and lodging- the charge must not exceed the actual cost. When we inform parents about a forthcoming visit, we will make it clear that pupil premium children will be asked to pay only a reduced amount in the cost of board and lodging

If parents are experiencing financial difficulty they are invited to write in confidence to the headteacher.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. The Education and Inspections Act, 2006, introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the DfCSF to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new regulations, which came into force in September, 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or groups of pupils of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity, but we do ask for contributions to the cost of travel. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

Transport

We 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/she has been prepared for that examination at the school.

Remissions or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to families qualifying for Free School Meals for children in our school.

Data protection of pupils and families

St Levan Primary School staff will ensure that where families are experiencing financial difficulties, their children are not publicly identified. Our methods of collecting voluntary charges, dinner money etc. do not identify children who are unable to contribute.

St Levan Primary School Summary of Charging Policy

The attached summary may be published regularly in the Newsletter and posted on the school website, along with the full Charging Policy Document:

1. The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as a part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.
2. The Governing Body reserves the right to charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by school:
 - a) The cost of all activities MAINLY OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS which are optional extras, i.e. evening trips and weekend visits.
 - b) The cost of any board and lodging in any residential visit in school time or in any visit that takes place as part of the National Curriculum.
 - c) The cost of ingredients and material (or require them to be provided) if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to have the finished product.
3. Parents of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium will pay a reduced amount.
4. Activities that take place inside school hours or as part of the National Curriculum will be completed dependent on voluntary contributions and this will be stated to parents. Such contributions will determine whether an activity is viable.
5. Trips may be cancelled if insufficient support is received. This applies to all activities (both charged and those where voluntary contributions are sought).
6. The remission policy for charged activities will operate at the statutory minimum.
7. The Governors reserve the right to amend this policy.
8. The school's hours as referred to in this statement are 9.00 a.m. until 3.15 p.m. on each school day where pupils are required to attend.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and for seeking the views of staff, children and parents. The Headteacher will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of this policy.

This policy was approved by the governing body in May 2017. It is due for review by May 2018.