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Charging & remissions policy

Policy referenced in statutory guidance (Gov.uk - Advice on statutory policies for schools) Review frequency: annual	
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Next full review by	01.11.17

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.

The school day is defined as: Monday – Friday, 8.50 am – 12 noon, 1.05 pm – 3.15 pm.

- The governing body cannot charge parents and pupils for any activity unless it has drawn up a charging policy. Moreover, when made, charges per pupil cannot exceed the actual costs incurred, which mean that pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to cover the costs of those who cannot afford to.
- The governing body must not charge for any activities which take place when the school is actually in session, excluding the break in the middle of the day. The exception is musical instrument tuition for individual pupils or pupils in groups of up to four, as long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).
- If the school wishes to run an activity during the school day for which it would need contributions from parents or others, it can invite **voluntary contributions**. However, no child will be excluded from such an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not contribute. The school will, however, make clear to parents that, if insufficient contributions are made, the activity may have to be cancelled.
- The school can charge for optional, extra activities provided mainly or wholly outside school hours as long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or religious education. Activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination must be provided free.
- Chapter 16 of 'A Guide to the Law for School Governors' provides further, detailed guidance on residential activities, use of mini-buses, public examinations and activities provided during school hours by external bodies.

Policy informed by:

DfE publications and guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_school_activities_-_October_2014.pdf

'A Guide to the Law for School Governors'.

Relationship to other school policies

The policy compliments the school's equality policy, curriculum policy and teaching and learning policy.

Roles and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff, and Governors

The Headteacher will ensure that the following applies:

During the school day

- All activities will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials and equipment used. However, charges will be made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument.
- Voluntary contributions will be sought for activities during the school day that entail additional costs, for example:
 - Transport to swimming for Year 5 pupils
 - Educational trips out of school
 - Some specific Art, Design Technology or cookery projects
- From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a theatre group, storyteller, dance or sports group, music group etc. to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge for their services. The school will, in such circumstances, ask parents for a voluntary contribution.
- Where the school requests a voluntary contribution from parents, no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution, but wish their child to take part.
- However, the school will explain to parents when making the request that, if not enough parents contribute to the activity and the school is unable to meet the additional costs involved, then the activity may have to be cancelled.

Optional activities outside of the school day

- We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example sports coaching e.g. tennis, football, drama club etc., provided that such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an approved examination syllabus.

Activities taking place partly during the school day

- If a non-residential activity (which is not part of the National Curriculum, religious education, or part of an approved examination syllabus) happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time (50% or more) to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Residential Activities (e.g. Barton Hall)

- Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Guaranteed State Pension Credit and Child Tax Credit (the last subject to applicable criteria). Parents in receipt of these benefits should contact the Head Teacher.

- Except where a residential activity takes place outside school hours the school will request all parents to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the activities. Any child whose parents cannot or will not make the voluntary contribution must be allowed to participate in the activities. Again, the school will explain that, should insufficient contributions be received, the activities may have to be cancelled, in which case the trip itself will not take place.
- When the number of school sessions (half school days) missed by the pupils is half or more of the total number of actual half-days (12-hour periods) taken up by the activity, charges will be made. In such cases parents will be told how the charges were calculated.
- (Note: where activities take place partly within, and partly outside the school day (as is the case with Barton Hall), then they are deemed to take place entirely outside the school day (and are therefore chargeable) only if the number of school sessions (half school days) pupils miss is less than 50% of the total number of actual half days spent on the activities. A residential trip may therefore have chargeable activities if it takes place mainly over a weekend.)

Calculating charges

- When charges are made for any activity they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no “levy” on those who can pay, to support those who are not required to. Support for cases of hardship will come through school funding, voluntary contributions and fundraising.
- The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

- The Governors’ Finance sub-committee will monitor the impact of this policy through its monitoring of the school’s budget, with special regard to the ‘Educational Visits’ budget. Where charges are made, the Governors may agree subsidies for pupils whose parents are unable to meet such charges. All pupils will remain anonymous in such discussions.