

## Charging & Remissions Policy for School Activities

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 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 means that pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to cover the costs of those who cannot afford to.
- 1.2 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, so long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).
- 1.3 If the school wished 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 should be excluded from the activity because his or her parents cannot or will not contribute. 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 which are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination must be provided free.

### 2. Rationale

- 2.1 The governors of Urchfont Church of England Primary School aim to provide every child with a wide and varied education, rich in experiences that will take place both on and off the school site, irrespective of the families' ability to meet the costs of these activities.

### 3. Relationship to other school policies

- 3.1 This policy complements the school's equal opportunities policy, curriculum policy and teaching & learning policy.

### 4. Guidelines

The roles and responsibilities of the head teacher, staff and governors when planning activities are as follows:

#### 4.1 Music tuition

Charges may be made (in line with the rate recommended by Wiltshire LEA) for individual and small group (four and under) instrument tuition where a special teacher has been employed, as long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum. Parents can be invited to provide or hire instruments – any income generated will be used to increase the availability of such activities.

## **4.2 Non-residential school trips**

No charges will be made for non-residential school trips which take place in school time' or closely relate to the curriculum. Any voluntary contributions made by parents towards these visits will be accepted by the school.

## **4.3 Education provided outside school hours**

As an 'optional extra' this will be charged for on the basis of the cost to the individual pupil, possibly including elements for travel; board & lodging; materials; books; equipment; nonteaching staff costs and teaching staff costs. The prior agreement of the parents will have been obtained before the course of tuition begins and pupil participation will be on the basis of parental choice. This includes residential trip transportation costs where the number of half day school sessions is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, and is therefore deemed to be taking place 'outside school hours'. It is the policy of the governing body to levy the appropriate charge to parents for all board & lodging on residential visits.

For those parents in receipt of Family Credit, where the activity forms part of the National Curriculum, no charge will be made for board on a residential trip regardless of whether the activity is deemed to have taken place in or out of school hours.

Residential visits must be subsidised by at least 2% by official funds in order to claim back any VAT incurred on the visit. This is in accordance with Wiltshire LEA guidelines.

## **4.4 Practical subjects**

Parents may contribute on a voluntary basis for materials and ingredients used in practical subjects such as cookery; science or CDT.

The school may, however, charge for these items in cash terms or in kind if parents have indicated, *in advance*, their wish to own the finished product. Any charges in this instance will be equal to the cost of the materials used.

## **4.5 Breakages**

Parents may be asked to cover the cost of broken or defaced items of school property, where reimbursement is appropriate, at the governors' discretion.

## **5. Calculating charges**

- 5.1 When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating.
- 5.2 There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.
- 5.3 Parents who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of Income Support; Family Credit; Disability Working Allowance or an income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, for example.
- 5.4 The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to the parents.
- 5.5 The decision regarding the proportion of the costs of an activity which can properly be charged to non-public funds will be made by the head teacher.

## **6. Voluntary contributions**

- 6.1 Voluntary contributions may be sought for the benefit of the school or in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential.
- 6.2 In seeking such contributions it should be made clear:
  - a) That there is no obligation to contribute;
  - b) That registered pupils at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.
- 6.3 If it is not possible to fund the activity without voluntary contributions this will be made clear to parents at the outset. At the planning stage, a letter should be sent explaining the activity, its value in educational terms and then indicate the contribution required per pupil if the activity were to take place.
- 6.4 In the event of an activity being cancelled, any voluntary contributions will be refunded to the parents.
- 6.5 There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make towards school activities, nor is any restriction placed upon the use of such contributions. A request for a contribution towards the cost of a particular activity could, for example, include subsidising pupils of low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers. Alternatively, parents could be asked to contribute towards part of the cost of the visit or activity, and the rest could be met from the proceeds of general fund-raising events.

## **7. Status**

Statutory

## **8. School day**

- 8.1 This is defined, for the purpose of this policy, as 08:45-12:00 and 13:00-15:15.

## **9. Monitoring**

- 9.1 The governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a termly basis a report of those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.

**This policy will be reviewed in September 2024.**