Charging and Remission Policy

Southmead Primary School



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| **Approved by:** | Full Governing Body | **Date: 5th February 2019** |
| **Last reviewed on:** | June 2017 |
| **Next review due by:** | When next updated by DCC |

**Introduction**

Southmead Primary School believes that all 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. At the same time, we will try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities, while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review.

**The policy identifies:**

* **activities for which charges will not be made**
* **activities for which charges will be made**
* **activities for which charges may be waived (Remissions)**
* **activities for which voluntary contributions may be sought**

**No charges will be made for**

1. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

2. 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.

3. Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum.

4. Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.

5. Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours;

a. if it is 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 the school’s basic curriculum for religious education.

6. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

7. Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

8. From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a theatre company to arrange an activity or performance during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge in these circumstances the school may ask for a voluntary contribution from parents.

**Activities for which charges may be made**

a) *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 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).

b) *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 remission policy 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).

c) *Music tuition* Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 8 pupils.

d) *Public examination*

a. The Head Teacher has the delegated responsibility to decide whether pupils are entered into particular examinations.

b. The Head Teacher has the authority to charge for examination entries in certain circumstances

c. The Head Teacher is authorised to request payment for wasted examination fees

 e) *Loss and damage to school property* Parents of a pupil who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, musical instruments, reading bags etc, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement. This formal statement has to be made available to all parents. In reality, any problems are usually resolved very amicably.

**It is the policy of Southmead Primary School that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below.**

**Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.**

Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

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| **Activity or thing which will or may be charged for**  | **Notes** | **Remitted or help available** |
| Charges will / may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;  | E.g. A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay | No remission available |
| Charges will / may be made for music tuition including cost  | The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to eight pupils | Remission for category A |
| Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips  | The charge is not exceeded by the actual cost | Remission for category A |
| Loss and damage to school property  | The charge made will be for the full cost of repair or replacement | No remission is available |

**Remissions**

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 will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

**Families qualifying for remission or help with charges**

If remission or help is available to a particular charge it is indicated in the right-hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below (category A). Also, when parents are informed about a forthcoming visit, it will be made clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits in category A will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

Category A

Parents in receipt of:

* Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
* Income Support (IS)
* Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
* Support 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 the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190
* Guaranteed State Pension
* Service Premium

Parents should make a request for remission of fees to the School Business Manager or Head Teacher who may request evidence to support the request if the child has not already been identified as being in receipt of FSM. All remission of fees will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

**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:

• Parents with siblings attending the same trip, will receive 50% discount for the second child

* We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for the Residential Trip

• We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a ‘first pay, first served’ basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection

**Residential visits**

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

**Is a residential trip in or out of school time?**

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A ‘half day’ means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

If the number of sessions outside of school time is 50% or more, the activity is deemed to have taken place outside of school time and is classified as an Optional Extra for which full charges may be made and no remissions are available.

A day or residential visit may be made up of a combination of both charges and voluntary contributions.

**Voluntary Contributions**

Separately from the matter of charging, in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils, voluntary contributions may be sought to support an activity which incurs costs that cannot be recovered by charges. In this instance all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

***The Law Says:***

*If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.*

*No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.*

*If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.*

*If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.*

**Combination of Charges and Voluntary Contributions**

On occasions activities may comprise of elements which are ‘charges’ and elements which are ‘Voluntary Contributions’. The School will advise the amount which relates to charges and the amount which relates to Voluntary Contributions.

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| **Calculating Charges** |
| 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. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who are unable to or do not wish to pay. |

**Sale of Goods**

The School supplies school meals to parents at a cost determined by the governing body and reviewed annually. The school seeks only to recover its costs in providing these services.

**Sample wording – request for Voluntary Contributions**.

We are requesting a voluntary contribution of £ \_\_\_\_\_\_ towards the cost of this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be cancelled. Any money paid for an activity that is subsequently cancelled will be refunded to parents in full.

**Sample wording – request for Charges and Voluntary Contributions**

The charge for this activity is £ this relates to the following items:-

We are also requesting a voluntary contribution of £ \_\_\_\_\_\_ towards the cost of providing this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be cancelled. Any money paid for an activity that is subsequently cancelled will be refunded to parents in full.

The total contributions made will not exceed the total cost of providing the activity, in the event that the activity costs are lower than anticipated, refunds for the difference will be made.