



COLLINGBOURNE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Finance

Charging & Remissions Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body supports the school in recognising the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, such as school trips, residential stays and clubs, can make towards all aspects of a child's education. This Charging and Remissions Policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of trips and activities are offered that will enrich our school curriculum, but at the same time minimising the financial barriers some parents may face, resulting in no child being excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unable or unwilling to pay.

Any charges the school make, must meet the requirements of sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 and the School Admissions Code, specifically paragraph 1.97 in the revised School Admissions Code (in force from 10/2/09).

CHARGING

The school **cannot** charge for the following:

- an admission application to the school,
- 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 Curriculum¹, 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,
- 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, and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

The school **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them,
- optional extras (see overleaf), and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see Music Tuition Section on page 3).

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

Optional Extras

Charges will be made for 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, or
 - 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, and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

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, and
- 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 **will not** exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity - it will be divided equally by the number of pupils participating. Also, it will not 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.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. **A parental commitment agreement will therefore be obtained, on the permission slip, before any optional extra trip/activity is booked and a deposit will be taken.** If a trip is cancelled, the deposit will be returned. If a parent withdraws their child from the activity the deposit will not be refunded.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The school is completely within its rights to ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. If an activity will not be able to take place without contributions from parents/carers or fundraising this will be communicated from the outset. Parents/carers are reminded that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit or trip it will be cancelled.

RESIDENTIAL TRIP

The 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, and

- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

The school **can** charge for:

- board and lodging (the charge will not exceed the actual cost).

When informing parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, trip or activity, we make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/09);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Parents who receive any of the benefits above may qualify for the Free School Meals scheme which helps with costs of school trips, uniform and meals.

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 experiencing financial difficulties. All requests for financial support will be dealt with on an individual basis and will be at the discretion of 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 Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups 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 (Wider Opportunities).

SWIMMING

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2. We shall inform parents when these lessons are to take place and ask for written permission to take their child/ren out of school for swimming lessons. A charge is made to cover the cost of transport, but as swimming is required by the National Curriculum, this falls under a voluntary contribution (see page 2).

TRANSPORT

The school **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 has been prepared for that examination at the school, and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

REMISSIONS

Parents who are eligible for Free School Meals may be entitled to the remission of charges for 'optional extras'. To qualify, receipt of any of the following benefits is needed:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The Guarantee Element of State Prison Credit.
- Child Tax Credit provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and having an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

Parents who receive any of the benefits above may qualify for the Free School Meals scheme which helps with costs of not only meals, but uniform and school trips too. The school office can help with registration and will do so confidentially – it is a very straightforward process and pupils and their parents remain anonymous.

We have established a system for parents to pay by instalments; 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.

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 (optional extras) may be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents experiencing financial difficulties. All requests for financial support will be dealt with on an individual basis and will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Where possible and practicable, we will provide similar activities for those children remaining in school to those on a school trip.

DAMAGE/LOSS TO PROPERTY

A charge may be made in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property or property belonging to a third party, this includes premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or a lower cost as decided by the Headteacher and/or Governors.

LETTINGS

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The Finance and Premises Committee will determine the scale of charges annually.

This policy was produced in line with guidance from the DfE and Wiltshire Council. This policy is linked to the Single Equalities Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy.

Written and Adopted: July 2013

Last Review: July 2020

Next Review: July 2022