Yew Tree Primary School

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

<table>
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<th>Committee with oversight for this Policy</th>
<th>Joint Finance</th>
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<td>Policy last reviewed by the Committee</td>
<td>Autumn 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy ratified and adopted by Full Governing Body</td>
<td>07/11/17</td>
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<td>Review frequency</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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<td>Policy due for review</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out the school's policy on charging and remission for school activities and school visits.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This guidance has been written to provide at-a-glance information and compliments the information given in "Guide to the Law for School Governors" (Chapter 23). This guidance accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996, but it is not a substitute for those terms.

Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 6 of this guide of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Education

School governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained 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 Curriculum\(^1\), 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 school\(^2\).

\(^1\) It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (eg geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National curriculum ‘inclusion statement’ (eg 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.
Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child’s parent wishes him/her to own them;

- Optional extras (see below); and

- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 4).

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; 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 included 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 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 any 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 cases 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 necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

**Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or Head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making request for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school funds. Schools should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting contributions.
Charges and Voluntary Contributions

School will request contributions for the following events or activities:

Early Years: Foundation Key Stage

Because of the many practical and creative elements to the early years curriculum, a greater proportion of consumable materials and additional resources are needed to really give the children an excellent start. Additional financial contribution or resource requests may be made throughout FS1 and FS2 – this will enable children to keep what they have cooked and created and bring them home.

No child will be disadvantaged because of parents’ inability/reluctance to pay. Where necessary, school may pay the cost of this or reserve the right to cancel the activity.

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 Children, Schools and Families 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 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. Guidance about these changes to the charging regulations can be viewed at:

https://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/g/guidance%20charging%20regulations%20for%20music%20tuition%20-%20july%202007.pdf

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).

Charges will be set on an annual basis by the Governing Body, and should be paid termly.
Children will be expected to take up lessons for the full year. Parents will be expected to hire or buy their child’s own instrument, though some instruments may be available on loan from the Music Service.

**Residential Visits**

Where residential visits take place the full realistic costs will be passed on to all participants. If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, 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.

**Example 1: Visit during school hours**
Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

**Example 2: Visit outside school hours**
Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have place outside school hours.

It is not compulsory to participate in residential visits.

**Schools 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.

**Schools can** charge for:

- Board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.
When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should 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);
- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances\(^3\);
- 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 £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Guidance on school policies for Learning Outside the Classroom, including charging is available here\(^4\).

School reserves the right to refuse a child a place on any day or residential trip organised by the school if it is felt that his or her behaviour in the time preceding the trip is unsatisfactory.

If this is the case the child will have a verbal warning from the Head teacher, followed by written notification to parents. Be aware that any money already submitted to third parties is unlikely to be returned in this instance.

**SCHOOL VISITS**

**Education partly during school hours**

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

**Non-residential activities**

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during schools hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

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\(^3\) The government plans to prescribe the circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out

\(^4\) http://www.lotc.org.uk/
Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

**Extra Curricular Clubs**

A charge may be levied for participation in extracurricular activities to meet the costs of materials as needed.

**Lost school equipment or books etc**

Parents may be requested to replace school equipment, books etc which have been lost by their child.

**Breakages and damages to school buildings, furniture or property**

Wilful damage to school buildings or property by a pupil may be charged to parents by the school.

**Lettings**

The lettings charges will be reviewed annually. The Governing Body may adopt a flexible approach, which could include reduced rates to assist new regular hirers. Any remission would require approval of the Finance and Personnel Committee.

**Visitors to School**

From time to time, visitors may be invited to the school during normal school hours to perform to, or to work with the children. Where costs are incurred in making such optional extras available to the children, then parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution to help the school meet such costs.

**Payments**

School uses the Parent Pay system.