Tanfield Lea Community Primary School

Opening Doors, Enriching Lives

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Reviewed: Annually

Introduction
The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head Teacher and Governing Body aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Statement
The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:
- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income.
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum.
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school.
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Legislation – Educational Activities During School Hours
The Department for Education (DfE) in its guidance to School Governors states that "education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of 'education' "includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity". It goes on to advise that "although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they can still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)".

When additional costs are incurred by Tanfield Lea Community Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Education Outside School Hours
The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that "Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as 'optional extras'".

The school endeavours to seek best value when booking residential visits. All children have the cost of the visit reduced and those classed as Pupil Premium benefit from an additional reduction in price to ensure the visit is as inclusive as possible.

Remissions
To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Tanfield Lea Community Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy considers the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Support under part IV of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received), the Governing Body will observe its statutory requirement to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Data Protection of Pupils and Families
Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute. Monthly contributions towards School Fund (through non-school uniform days) will be requested at the start of every term through the school newsletter.

Contributions
Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.

Charges
The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (ie residentials).
- After-school and pre-school clubs.
- Music tuition if it is not required for the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or for groups of pupils.
- Damage to school property - the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's behaviour.
- Visits to school by professionals eg authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.
- Damage to school books (eg reading scheme).

Individual Music Tuition
Charges may be made to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will

be obtained before the tuition is provided. The Governors have agreed to support children who are eligible for free school meals by paying for the tuition for individual music tuition and the hire charge for the instrument.

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects
Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc needed for practical subjects such as Technology. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.

Lost School Equipment, Books etc
Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of School property.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture or Property
Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's behaviour.

Residential Activity
The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that "For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel."

However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Head Teacher will tell all parents of the right to claim reduced cost activities if they are in receipt of these benefits. A voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities.

Tanfield Lea Community Primary School will follow the relevant legislation as contained in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996: Charges for School Activities.

Photocopying
Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', will be charged at **10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing.**

Private Fees
Any report or data that is requested on a child for the purpose of a third-party private assessment requested by a parent (eg mid-year pupil progress report for solicitors, private psychologist reports or solicitor reports) will be charged at an agreed rate by the Head Teacher in discussion with the Chair or Vice-chair of Governors. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information (not less than £10 per hour) as well as photocopying charges (not less than 10p per sheet) and postage.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.