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Charging and Remissions for School Activities

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information about charging and voluntary contributions for Shipley CE Primary school activities.

Voluntary Contributions

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours. The school follows the West Sussex policy for charging for school activities that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education's advice document published in November 2013

(<https://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00213976/school-charging>).

No compulsory charge will be made for any activity which takes place during school hours. Any contribution is entirely voluntary, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute are not discriminated against. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

Arrangements

All letters regarding contributions for school activities will make it clear that these are voluntary, and that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated differently. If any parents have any financial difficulty (no child will be prevented from taking part) they will be invited to talk to the headteacher who will come to an agreed arrangement.

Residential trips

Special rules apply for residential activities.

a) In School Hours

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time (50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs within schools hours), it meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges not exceeding the actual cost for

the individual pupil will be made for board and lodging. Voluntary contributions (as above) will be requested.

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, (provided that the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit, and their annual Income, assessed by HMRC does not exceed £16,190 for the year 2013/14)
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

b) Outside School Hours

An activity is deemed to take place out of school hours if 50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs out of school hours. In this case, and for a residential trip, this will be considered as an 'optional extra' and a charge will be levied which includes an appropriate element for travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and other equipment, non-teaching costs and teaching staff costs. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Parents in receipt of the allowances identified above have the same entitlements.

Music Tuition

There will be no charge for musical tuition if the teaching is an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. For other musical tuition, charges will be made for individuals or groups to play a musical instrument, and for the hire and repair of instruments which are used for instrumental tuition at school. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Governing Body will review this policy every 3 years, and as necessary due to any changes in legislation.

Please see the Learning Outside the Classroom guidance on school policies available at:
<http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/GCharging-Policy-Updated-PDF-1APR09.pdf>

The following example letters are provided to assist schools to comply with the required legislation.

EXAMPLE LETTER 1

(Ref: Purchase of equipment, books or musical instruments) Dear Parent,

During each school year pupils, as part of the curriculum, may make certain articles out of materials provided by the school. There are also occasions when specific books, equipment or instruments might be acquired for pupils.

At times, parents might wish to own such items, and it is possible for these to be purchased from the school at a price equivalent to the cost incurred by the school.

If you are interested in buying any items, please either detach and return the slip below indicating your wish to make a purchase or write to me at any time during the year. You will be told the cost of any item in a note which your son/daughter will bring home. Payment would become due immediately.

Naturally if, you do not wish to own any particular article, your child will not be disadvantaged in any way as the school has a duty to provide all materials and equipment to ensure an effective delivery of the National Curriculum.

If any parent is interested in owning materials or equipment, but feels unable to meet the cost at present, please do not hesitate to make an appointment with me to discuss how a resolution might be achieved.

Yours sincerely

EXAMPLE LETTER 2

(Ref: charging for an 'Optional Extra') Dear Parent,
Example: Visit to Theatre

It is intended to arrange a visit to xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx on xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx(date) for a

performance of xxxxx commencing at 5.00 p.m. the journey will be by coach, leaving the school at 2.30 p.m. Return to school is expected to be about 10.30 p.m.

As the major part of the journey is outside of school hours and the activity is not directly related to the children's curriculum or an examination for which they are being entered, there will be a charge for the visit amounting to £xx per head.

This includes the cost of the coach and of the theatre ticket.

Participation in the visit is voluntary. Those pupils choosing not to take part will follow a normal timetable until the end of the school day at 3.30 p.m. when transport home will be as normal.

If any pupil/student wishes to take part in the trip, but current circumstances make it difficult to meet the charge, please do not hesitate to contact me in the confidence to discuss whether it is possible to reach some mutual arrangement.

Yours sincerely

EXAMPLE LETTER 3

(Ref: requesting 'Voluntary Contributions' for a residential Educational Visit) Dear Parent
Residential Visit

We are proposing to arrange a residential trip to xxxxxxx next year/summer/autumn for Class/Year X pupils. The dates planned are xxxx to xxxxxx inclusive, and the children/students will stay at xxxxxxx (name of hotel/establishment). The purpose of the trip is to enhance the curriculum for the children/students and they will benefit (*give brief details of educational opportunities and benefits*).

The total cost per pupil for the trip will be £xx, which includes an element for board and lodging which is chargeable to parents.

The cost of board and lodging will be £xx per child/student, which includes breakfast, packed lunch and dinner. Payment of a £xx deposit is required by (*date*), with the balance being paid by (*final date*) either in a lump sum or by instalments as agreed with the leader of the trip.

SHIPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

If a family is in receipt of specific benefits which mean that your child is eligible for a free school meal, the school is obliged by law to waive the charges for board & lodging. A list of the benefits applicable is set out in the School Prospectus and in the school's charging policy. The charging policy is available from the school office together with a free school meal eligibility form. If you wish to speak to me in confidence about the entitlement to waive charges, please do not hesitate to contact me to arrange an appointment.

All other costs, including transport, will be £xx, and parents are being asked to make a voluntary contribution for all or part of this amount. Parents are not obliged to make a contribution but it is probable that if insufficient monies are received, the trip will have to be cancelled. If there are exceptional cases of hardship, the school will support costs through its own budget and the Pupil Premium grant for disadvantaged pupils.

Further details of the trip will be sent at a later date. Yours sincerely

EXAMPLE LETTER 4

(Ref: Requesting 'Voluntary Contributions' for an Educational Visit) Dear Parent
Visit to xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

It is intended to arrange a visit for Class xxx/xx pupils to xxxxxx on (*date*). The journey will be by coach, leaving school at xxx am. Arrival back at school will be at about xxx p.m. and, if you wish your child to participate, you would need to meet your child, or make arrangements for his/her collection, at that time.

You are invited to make a voluntary contribution of £x to cover the cost of the transport and other incidental expenses, but you would need to provide a packed lunch. Although the contribution is voluntary, I do need to point out that it is probable that the visit could not take place unless all parents, who are able, are willing to contribute.

I appreciate that some families might find it particularly difficult to contribute all or part of the suggested sum, and if you feel that you are in such a position, please do not hesitate to contact

me in confidence to discuss whether some suitable arrangements can be made to cover the cost of your child's participation.

I also need to stress that if a family were unable contribute, and the trip were still to proceed, no child with the class/year group for whom the trip is intended will be disadvantaged and be left out of the activity.