



Coxheath Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

Reviewed - December 2017

Next review – December 2018

Coxheath Primary School **Charging and Remissions Policy**

Summary

- *The Governing body cannot charge parents and pupils for any activity unless it has drawn up a charging policy. Moreover, when made, charges per pupil cannot exceed the actual costs incurred, which mean that pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to cover the costs of those who cannot afford to.*
- *The governing body must not charge for any activities which take place when the school is actually in session, excluding the break in the middle of the day. The exception is musical instrument tuition for individual pupils or groups of pupils as long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum, and provided at the request of the pupil's parent.*
- *If the school wishes to run an activity during the school day for which it would need contributions from parents or others, it can invite voluntary contributions. However, no child should be excluded from such activity because his or her parents cannot or will not contribute.*
- *The school can charge for optional, extra activities provided mainly or wholly outside school hours as long as such activities are not an essential part of the National Curriculum or religious education.*
- *Chapter 23 of A Guide to the Law for School Governors provides further, detailed guidance on residentials, use of mini-buses, public examinations and activities provided during school hours by external bodies*

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The school day is defined as: 8.45am – 3.10pm (KS1) and 3.15pm (KS2)

Objectives

- To ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to meet the cost
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school, where appropriate
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging policy are clearly and appropriately allocated
- To ensure the regular review of operations of both Charging and Remissions Policies.

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the schools' equal opportunities policy, curriculum policy and teaching and learning policy.

Roles and responsibilities of heads of schools, other staff, governors

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of School will ensure that the following applies:

During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. It excludes charges made for teaching individual pupils or groups of pupils to play a musical instrument.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because their parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example, Breakfast Club. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day.

Residentials

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit, the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for an activity (excluding the optional activities), 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 cannot or are unwilling to pay the full charge. Support for cases of hardship will come through the school budget, voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Income Related Support Allowance
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit

The school may also, at the Executive Head Teacher's discretion, agree to waive or remit charges following consideration of a parent's particular circumstances at the time if they are known to be suffering temporary hardship or economic difficulties but do not fall within one of the above categories.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Finance Monitoring Group or the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a regular basis, a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.

Appendix to Coxheath Primary School

Charging Policy

(Based on updated DfE Guidance, Charging for School Activities published October 2014)

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to help head teachers and governing bodies set out their policies 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 advice has been written to provide at-a-glance information and complements the information given in section 7.5 of the Governors Handbook. This advice 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 4 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 state funded school- paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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, 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;

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- Optional extras (see below); and
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 6-7).
- Certain early years provisions
- Community facilities

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 by the school

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of religious education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- Transport (other than transport that is 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);
- Extended day services offered to pupils, for example breakfast club, after school club and supervised homework clubs.

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;
- The cost of buildings and accommodation;
- Non-teaching staff and adult supervision;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;
- 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 an element of subsidy for any 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, which are published on the school website.

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.

Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, 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.

School policy is that where the school finds it necessary to cancel a school trip due to insufficient voluntary contributions being received, a full refund of payments received will be made, However, a voluntary contribution will not be refunded where a pupil is no longer able to attend,

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 religious education;
- 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 (the government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal Credit is fully rolled out)
- 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 £16190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

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 Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

Schools **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 provided in connection with an educational visit.

Charging and Remissions Policies

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for and a remissions policy.

The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents.

The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school or local authority propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy.

Optional Extras currently charged by Coxheath School:

- Breakfast Club
- Board and lodging for residential trips

Charges for the Extended Services (Clubs) are publicised on the school website:

[Coxheath Primary School - Extended Services](#)