



# CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Date written: November 2018  
Review date: November 2019

## Charging and Remissions Policy

### Introduction and context

At Sutton Park Community Primary School we believe the school curriculum should be rich, memorable, exciting and enjoyable in order for children to achieve the highest standards in all areas of their personal, social, physical, creative and academic development.

In order to bring our curriculum alive and make it meaningful for our pupils we undertake a wide variety of activities. Many of these activities are free and do not involve additional costs for the school, however some do. We strive to minimise costs wherever possible. However in order to maximise the range of educationally beneficial experiences we provide for our children there are times when significant costs are involved and this policy explains how we charge for them.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities by schools maintained by local authorities in England. The Act gives schools the discretion to charge for optional activities and request voluntary contributions for activities during and after school hours.

### Objectives

The objectives of the Charging and Remissions Policy are:

- To set out clearly the school's policy for charging for school activities so all members of the school community have a clear understanding of national legal requirements and the rationale behind the policy at Sutton Park.
- To maximise the involvement of all pupils in a broad range of exciting, memorable, purposeful and educationally beneficial activities.
- To ensure activities offered in school time are available to **all** pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.

### Related Policies:

- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Lettings Policy

### Relevant legislation:

- The Education Act 1996 (sections 449 – 462)
- School Admissions Code (paragraphs 1.82 and 1.97)

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

### **What the school cannot charge for:**

The school's governing body **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 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 fee for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

### **What schools can charge for:**

The school's governing body **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 4);
- certain early years provision<sup>i</sup>
- community facilities<sup>ii</sup>

### **Optional Extras**

The school's governing body can make some activities that are known as "optional extras". Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum or
  - b) part of religious education
- 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; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.

Examples of "optional extras" provided at Sutton Park are after-school clubs, Breakfast Club.

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, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. We do not therefore 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.

Furthermore in cases where a 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**

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experiences of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip.

All contributions are voluntary; however should we not receive sufficient contributions to make the trip viable, it might be cancelled.

If a trip goes ahead, it will include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. The school will provide a breakdown of how trips and activities are funded should this be required.

### **Financial Support**

In order to minimise costs to parents, wherever possible the school contributes a small subsidy from the School Budget or seeks financial support from the Parent Teacher Association. Any subsidy, regardless of the source, is used to reduce to the total cost and therefore benefits all children. Any subsidy is not used to pay for/subsidise a visit for some children and not others. The contributions from School Budget and/or the PTA are monitored carefully to ensure that there is parity between different year groups in school.

## **Breakages**

In cases of wilful damage, breakage or loss of equipment on loan to children, the Head teacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Resources Committee may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

## **Residential Visits**

Our residential activities take place largely during school time and as such no charge will be made for the education element of the trip. Expressions of interest are sought prior to the visit in order to determine whether or not it will go ahead. This includes breakdown of the costs involved. Parents of children involved in residential visits will be charged for board and lodging and will be asked for a voluntary contribution towards any other costs involved.

Parents in receipt of the following benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging, however some of our parents make an individual decision to contribute:

- 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 guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

## **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the school curriculum for which there is no charge. A charge is made for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. Peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. We make a charge for these lessons. Contributions towards these lessons are given at the discretion of the Head teacher and Governing Body and within the limitations of the school budget. We give parents information about additional music tuition prior to the start of each term.

## **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Year 3. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place. The lessons take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. The school undertakes to cover the cost of the pool hire and teaching costs however we invite parents to make voluntary contributions from time to time towards the cost of transport to and from the pool.

## **Additional In-School Charges**

The Governors have agreed that a charge will be made to cover the costs involved for private photocopying and personal telephone calls for all staff.

### **Income from Sales**

Some goods are purchased through the school for the convenience of parents and children e.g. book bags, water bottles, uniform. These goods are available to parents at cost price.

Some goods will be sold through the school with the intention of making a small profit and this often takes the form of commission. Goods include; Book Fair sales and school photographs. This small profit is paid into the School Fund which is then used to subsidise school visits and activities.

### **Power of discretion**

The governing body delegates to the Head teacher a power of discretion. This discretion may be used to waive charges, either in full or in part, for an individual pupil. The Head teacher's discretion will be exercised where, in the opinion of the Head teacher, there is clear evidence of financial hardship or an educational or social imperative for a given pupil to benefit from an activity which, but for a remission, would not make their participation impossible. The Head teacher's discretion may only be exercised by the Head teacher or authorised deputy.

### **The Head teacher and Governing Body will ensure that:**

- If a charge is made for each child it will not exceed the actual cost.
- In the case of day visits and activities, no child will be excluded because the school has not received a voluntary contribution towards the cost involved. With day visits the school will strive to ensure the cost is £10 or less.
- Whenever possible, parents are given sufficient notice of forthcoming trips and activities e.g. at least two weeks for any visit involving a cost of up to £5; two weeks for a visit costing between £5 and £7.50; three weeks for a visit costing between £7.50 and £10 and four week's notice for a visit costing £10.00 or more.

Careful consideration is given to making up any shortfall in voluntary contributions from parents from the school's delegated budget.

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<sup>i</sup> The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

<sup>ii</sup> The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act