CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Sherford Vale School & Nursery

Key information	
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CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which our schools will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge.
The policy has been informed by the DfE guidance on charging for school activities.

Definition

The school day is defined as: *the morning and afternoon session times of the individual school.* The midday break does not form part of the school day.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

Policy statement

During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge. *(See below)*

The school or governing body can ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activity. Voluntary contributions will be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, *for example trips and events.* In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions and insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities. There is no obligation to parents to make any contribution.
From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as *a story teller or drama or sporting organisation* to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents/carers, who may, if they wish, ask the headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

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. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging; except for pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits.
Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the pupils' totals half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. In such cases parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example *sports clubs.* Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus. Where we wish to charge, we will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities, we will subsidise the charge to the extent permitted by the funding.

Optional Extras

Charges will be made for some activities 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 educations; 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 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. It will not include a

subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
A charge will not be added for the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.
Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental/guardian/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental/guardian/carer agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils expected to participate. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.
Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.
The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum.

In cases of hardship the governors will consider in their absolute discretion, the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils who they consider will benefit from such tuition.

Eligible benefits

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances.
- Income Support (IS);
- 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;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;

  an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Further Guidance and Reference to Legislation

Governors Guide to the Law, Chapter 23 – Charging for School activities