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Lanesend Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Statutory Policy

Signed: Date:
(Headteacher)

Signed: Date:
(Chair of Governors)

Review Date: March 2020 (Yearly)

Reviewed By: Money Group / Full Governing Body

Lanesend Primary

Charging and Remissions Policy

We believe that all children should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their families financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers that may prevent some children taking full advantage of the opportunities.

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 policy sets out the circumstances under which the school may charge for activities and those where remissions may apply. This policy has been informed by DfE Guidance and The Governors Guide to the Law.

This guidance clearly states that “the school governing bodies **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 a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the child is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; tuition for children 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 child is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.”

However, in order to enable enrichment activities to take place, the school is permitted to ask families to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these. Charges may be made however for board and lodging on residential trips, for music tuition and for optional extras. Details of these are given below.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits that enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites families to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received the Headteacher may decide to cancel the trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose families have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If families wish for their child to take part in a school trip or event, but are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child is able to participate fully in the trip or activity and no discrimination is made. Sometimes the school will subsidise the cost of a visit or extra-curricular activity or ask other professionals or charities to fund enrichment activities such as a theatre group visit or skipping workshop that all children are able to benefit from.

Families have a right to know how each trip is funded and the school can provide this information on request. Best value principles are applied to all bookings, including

obtaining quotes for coach travel.

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 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 child is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered child has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the child to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the child to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a child 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 children will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of children participating. It will not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other children wishing to participate in the activity whose families are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Residential Trips

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. A charge will be made for teaching either an individual child or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument led by a bought-in professional musician.

Charging for ingredients/materials

The school may make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where families have indicated that they would like their child to bring home the finished product. If a charge is requested a letter will be provided so that families can indicate whether they wish the finished product to come home.

Charging for lost books

The school may raise a replacement charge for lost or damaged reading books, Library Books and Homework Diaries.

Remissions

The Headteacher may sometimes use their discretion to remit in full or in part the cost of other activities in consultation with the families.

For all chargeable activities the school will endeavour to inform families no less than four weeks prior to the activity.

The school will endeavour to give families as much prior notice as possible for chargeable activities and residential trips.

The school offers easy payments through the www.schoolmoney.co.uk online payment system. If families are not able to pay the previous paragraph must be referred to and a meeting with the Headteacher arranged.

Lanesend Primary, when providing any trips or activities, will find the best price for the trip and communicate the full cost of the trip to our families. We try to ensure that each trip and activity is affordable to all families and can be paid for over a period of time.

The Governing Body will monitor school trips through the monthly Money Group meetings.

Trip Debts

If, following non-curriculum trips that have been attended by their children, and the family have outstanding trip debts, then the Finance Team will contact the families for the debt to be paid or arrange for a meeting with the Headteacher. However, if, subsequent trips are offered and there are still outstanding debts for previous trips, their children will not be included in these trips until the debt has been cleared or a payment plan is in place, with regular payments being made for at least four weeks prior to the trip.