



**Dringhouses Primary School**

# **Charging & Remissions Policy**

**Signature of Chair of Governors** .....

**Signature of Headteacher** .....

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## **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

This policy for Charging and Remissions conforms to the requirements of Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 (See Appendix A). The aim of this policy is to clearly set out which charges are made and for which there may be remission.

All education during school hours at Dringhouses Primary School is free of charge. We do not make any charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

When organising educational visits or activities, which enrich the curriculum and the experience of children, the school invites the parent/carer to contribute to the cost of the visit or activity. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions we may need to cancel the visit or activity. When a visit or activity does go ahead it may include children whose parent/carer has not paid any contribution. We may not, by law, exclude these children and indeed would not wish to treat them differently from others.

Should a parent/carer have difficulty in funding voluntary contributions they are invited to contact the headteacher to discuss the matter, in confidence. Alternatively, a parent/carer may complete a 'Request for Remission' form obtainable from the school office. The governing body may wish to remit in full or in part the cost of an activity, for example, in the case of family hardship. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors where appropriate.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in an educational visit or activity, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we allow the child to participate fully in the visit or activity, following authorisation of a remission by the headteacher to the child's parent/carer.

The following is a list of possible additional activities, which may be organised by school, for which we would hope for voluntary contributions. This list is not exhaustive:

- Visit to museum, gallery or theatre
- Sporting activities
- Transport expenses to site of visit/activity
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Workshops in school by specialists
- Craft/technology activities (ingredients and materials)

### **Financial Planning**

The cost of an educational visit is carefully accounted prior to the visit taking place and includes the actual cost of transport and entry fee/ticket. In addition, administration, supply and other associated costs are included. Any request made for contributions does not exceed the actual cost. The final date for collection of contributions is two weeks before the visit, which is approved if 85% or more of the full cost has been received.

If contributions total less than 85% then the visit is cancelled and parents/carers notified. Contributions received from parents/carers will be refunded in full.

In the event that a pupil has contributed to a visit/activity and is absent on the day of the visit/activity, a full refund is not offered as costs are calculated on the number of pupils expected to attend. However, a part refund may be offered to cover the entry fee if this has not been paid out by the school in advance.

### **Residential visits**

The school ordinarily arranges a residential visit annually, for children in KS2. Families are invited to pay for the cost of this visit in instalments over several months, or in one single payment. Voluntary contributions are invited to cover the cost of any visit which takes place mainly during school time; a charge is applied for board and lodging.

Any parent/carer who is unwilling to pay the board and lodging charge should not expect their child to be included in the visit. If sufficient contributions for the visit are not received, the school is unable to subsidise the cost of these visits and the visit may have to be cancelled. Again a parent/carer who feels unable to make such a contribution is invited to contact the headteacher to discuss the matter, in confidence, or alternatively, submit a 'Request for Remission' form. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Pupils may be eligible for a remission of the board and lodging charge if their parent/carer is in receipt of any of the following (each case will be discussed individually and confidentially):

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, that does not exceed the prescribed amount for the current financial year.
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Universal Credit with a household income of less than the prescribed amount for the current financial year, after tax and not including any other benefits you are in receipt of

### **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum for which no charge is made. In addition, several music groups run during the school day, at lunchtime or after school for which no charge is made (e.g. recorder groups, choir). The governors do however, reserve the right to charge for these activities as "optional extras" if they occur outside school hours and are not part of the National Curriculum.

Peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. A charge is made for these lessons by the peripatetic teacher. Information about additional music tuition is available from the school office.

### **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons, which is a statutory part of the National Curriculum for children in KS2. The school subsidises the hire of the swimming pool,

tuition and lifeguard cover and parents/carers are encouraged to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs. Remission forms are not required from parents/carers who do not offer a contribution towards swimming lessons.

### **After School Activities/Extended Services**

Schools may use their devolved budgets to provide extended school activities for their own pupils or may make a charge to help cover the costs incurred. At Dringhouses Primary School we offer several after school clubs, for some of which there is a charge. Usually, for example, football and netball clubs are run by teachers and do not incur a charge. Where specialist sports coaches are contracted to run optional activities, parents/carers pay any charges directly to the company.

### **Breakfast Club, After School Club and Holiday Club**

Dringhouses Out of School Club (DOSC) is run independently from the school and charges are made directly by them for attendance at Breakfast Club, After School Club and the Holiday Club (when available).

### **Other Charges**

Parents/carers may be asked to make a contribution towards replacing damaged school property caused wilfully or negligently by their children. This may include window breakage and removal of graffiti. A charge may also be made for lost or damaged items of school property, such as reading books.

The school may invite voluntary contributions towards the cost of ingredients; materials and equipment, where parents/carers wish to keep the finished product.

### **School uniform**

The governing body gives high priority to cost considerations to the school uniform for parents/carers. The school uses a school clothing supplier who provides quality school wear at affordable prices. Orders can be placed online and payment is made directly to the supplier. Alternatively, parents/carers may choose to purchase suitable clothing in our school colours from any appropriate retailer. If a parent/carer has difficulty funding the cost of the school uniform the Local Authority has discretionary power to provide school clothing grants or help with the cost of school clothing, usually if there is eligibility to receive free school meals.

The school also has a small supply of quality secondhand uniform items which can be purchased directly from the school

### **School Meals**

Parents/carers whose child takes a school lunch must pay the relevant cost stated by the school. Pupils may be eligible for free school meals where a parent/carer is in receipt of any of the certain means tested benefits.

### **Premises**

For charges relating to hire of premises, please see the school's separate Lettings Policy.

## APPENDIX A

This appendix explains the legislation governing the charging for school activities as set out in the Education Act 1996: Sections 449-462. It covers what a governing body may and may not charge for when activities take place either during or outside of school hours, including residential activities.

### School charging

#### 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

#### 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 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 (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);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

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;
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, 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 other 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.

### **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 headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or headteacher 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, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure 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 and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

### **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that 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 authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Guidance on school travel is available here:

### **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 local authority'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. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

## **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 a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, 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:

- 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 the prescribed amount for the current financial year;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Guidance on school policies for Learning Outside the Classroom, including charging, is available [here](#).

## **Education partly during school hours**

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education. If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

## **Non-residential activities**

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this



calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

### **Residential visits**

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

#### **Example 1**

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours. 10

#### **Example 2**

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.