



Deanery C.E. Primary School
Academy Status

Charging and Remissions Policy

September 2017

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

The Deanery Church of England Primary School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:-

- participate fully in school curriculum;
- contribute to all aspects of school life; and
- be a valued partner in the process of education.

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parents/guardians who are on low income. We aim

- To make school activities accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school; and
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycle with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities.

It includes a number of key factors

- The value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils;
- The cost of activity set against their educational value;
- How the activity will be paid for;
- The appropriate process for raising funding;
- An assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way;
- An understanding of the various types of activities involved – for example, education visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- An assessment of local facilities.

2. Legislation – Educational During School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to school governors states that **“education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of “education” includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.”** It goes on to advise that **“although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)”**

When additional costs are incurred by the Deanery to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Such activities which may incur additional cost are:-

- Educational Visits off site
- Visits to school by professionals e.g. Authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.

3. Education Outside School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to school governors states that **“Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay.** The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

The Governing Body will support the Head Teacher in agreeing to make charges made for such “optional extra” activities which will be set by members of staff, in agreement with the Head Teacher to cover the cost.

4. Residential Activity

The DfE in its guidance to school governors states that **“For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel. However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Head Teacher will tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.”** A voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities.

The Deanery will follow the relevant legislation as contained in the Education Reform Act 1988: Section 106 – 111,117, and 118. The guidance is contained in the DCSF circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities.

5. Remissions Policy

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, the Deanery C E Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties, which, people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children. Birmingham City Council defines people in receipt of Housing Benefit and their dependants as living on the margins of poverty and this is agreed by the Governing Body of the Deanery.

Children at the Deanery C E Primary School, whose families approach the Head Teacher for support, are looked on favourably and personal circumstances are taken into account.

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

Termly or annual contributions towards School and Governors fund will be requested at the start of the school year.

6. Informing Parents

The Deanery C E Primary School will follow the DfE Guidelines to inform parents and a summary of this will be included in the school prospectus.

A letter will be sent to parents giving them information about any proposed visit/activity which includes:-

- Details of the visit/activity
- Dates and times
- Expected dress code
- Proposed voluntary contribution (if applicable)
- Return slip to include a parental signature agreeing to the child taking part, contact and medical details (as appropriate)

Any charge that is made for each pupil will not exceed the actual cost.

7. Implementation

Planning, as a part of the process of budget building, is essential to developing a charging policy at the Deanery C E Primary School which recognises equality of access. We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school.

Members of staff arranging such activities will consider:-

- the projected number of children
- cost per head
- breakdown of transportation costs
- entry fees
- discounts
- teacher costs

Such a process however, should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities that arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way which is consistent with the school's overall policy.

8. Refunds

Refunds for trips where a child was unable to attend due to absence will be considered on an individual basis. Refunds cannot be guaranteed as they may not always be possible. The school may incur costs in advance of the trip and these will therefore be non-refundable e.g. travel costs.

9. Photocopying and Private Fees

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', or for the purpose of a third party private assessment requested by a parent (eg. private psychologist reports or solicitor reports), will be charged at an agreed rate by the Head Teacher in discussion with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Governors. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information (not less than £10 per hour) as well as photocopying charges (not less than 10p per sheet) and postage.

This policy will be brought to the attention of all the Deanery C.E Primary School employees and will be subject to review annually.

Policy prepared by Sally Yates
Policy reviewed by Buildings and Lettings Committee
Agreed and accepted by Governing Body

September 2007
February 2017
March 2017

Signed _____

Dated _____