Fox Hollies School

Charging & Remissions Policy

Spring 2020
To be reviewed spring 2021
Purpose of Policy

The policy is provided to provide advice to parents and carers and systems for school management in actions relating to charges made to families on behalf of activities undertaken by children whilst in the care of the school.

The policy is agreed by the Governing Board of the school and is reviewed annually taking into account current legislation and DfE advice.

We aim:

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at best value
- 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:

- Value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils
- Cost of an activity set against its educational value
- How the activity will be paid for
- Appropriate process for fund raising
- An assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way
- An understanding of the various types of activities involved e.g. educational visits, music tuition
- Reference to additional or hidden costs e.g. lunch or pocket money
- An assessment of local facilities which can provide a more cost effective experience
Legislation

a] During School Hours
The DFE in its guidance to school governors states that "education provided during school hours must be free." It goes on to advise that although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions.... the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of a curriculum based activity because his or her parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. However, if sufficient funds to make the trip viable are not raised, the visit will be cancelled, and parents will be advised of this when details of the visit are given.

b] Outside School Hours
Parents/carers 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. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities which can be charged for as “optional extras”. It is up to the LA or Governing Board providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge. The definition of ‘outside school hours’ is given in the DfE guidance ‘Charging for School Activities’ (May 2018)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities

c] Residential Activity.
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 the education or the travel costs, however, a voluntary contribution towards the costs can be requested. In the event of insufficient voluntary contributions and the school budget being unable to support the costs, the visit will be cancelled.

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Where the trip takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed the current specified rate.

Again, if the school budget is unable to support the costs the visit will be cancelled.
Charging Policy of the School

Fox Hollies 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:

1) Participate fully in the school curriculum
2) Contribute to all aspects of school life
3) Be a valued partner in the process of education
4) Have fulfillment from a rich and stimulating educational experience

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities.

As stated above all education undertaken in school time hours as part of the National Curriculum is free and is an entitlement of all the children in the school. Therefore, for such education no charge is made to families.

However, educational opportunities may take place beyond the school grounds and local community or require external additional specialist tuition services to give enrichment to what the school statutory has to offer. For such opportunities the school budget may not be able to fund these opportunities and so families may be asked to support the experience through providing a voluntary contribution towards the costs of the activity.

This may require the school to request families to contribute towards:

- Costs related to travel
- Costs related to admission
- Cost related to specialist tuition and or guides
- Costs related to boarding

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.

If the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions the activity may have to be cancelled.

If families find that they are having difficulty financing such an activity then they are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher in confidence.

Children are not to be excluded from any school activity on the basis of inability to pay by the family.

Additional activities organised by the school which may require voluntary contributions to be made by the families may include:

- Museum Visits
• Sporting Activities additional to normal experiences provided by the National Curriculum
• Outdoor adventure activities
• Theatre visits
• Musical events
• End of year visits

These experiences are judged to be above what the school provides as part of the National Curriculum and are justified as ‘enrichment activities’ beyond the normal quality education provided free of charge.

**Day Visits in School Time**

Families may be asked to contribute wholly or partly towards costs of the visit with regards to making a voluntary contribution if the school budget cannot fund the visit. The visit will be cancelled if insufficient voluntary contributions are not achieved to cover the cost of the visit.

**Visits Outside School Time Not Involving Overnight Stay**

Full costs for the visit, as itemised, will be required from families.

**Residential Visits**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum and thus follows activities that are part of the normal school schemes of work promoted by the school, the school will not make any charge for the cost of the education or travel expenses if the school budget permits. If the school budget cannot fund the visit, contributions will be requested from families and if these are inadequate to fund the visit it will be cancelled.

If the proposed visit provides experiences beyond the experience that is normally offered to the children in the school then the visit will be funded through contributions made by the families of the participating children, to include the costs of:

• Travel costs
• Board and lodgings
• Tuition services
• Necessary equipment
• Additional insurance costs
• Parents/carers who receive specified state benefits may be exempt from some of these charges

Such visits are deemed an enrichment experience and not essential to the core learning of the children.
Physical Education and Artistic Activities

No charges will be made to families for activities occurring under the Physical Education and relevant Artistic schemes of work of the school which will include swimming. Additional opportunities may require a request for voluntary contributions. Such examples may be coaching opportunities from outside agencies but these will take place outside school time.

Constructional Activities

The school budget provides money for materials to support these activities as part of the national curriculum. However, if the final product is taken home a small charge may be sought to cover costs of materials.

Before and After School Activities (to include dinner time activities)

These are outside the normal school day and although they may relate to the National Curriculum full charges will be made to families whose children are involved in the activities. These charges may be variable according to the activity being provided.

Remissions Policy

Fox Hollies School will implement the following Remissions Policy within the aims stated in this policy.

A programme of visits will be arranged by Fox Hollies School, which is directly related to the curriculum delivered. The visits will be in one of the following categories:

1. Curriculum related visit.

Where possible, and if school finance allows, such visits will be funded free of charge. However, if such funding is not possible then the school will ask parents to make a voluntary contribution in order to allow the visit to take place. If in such circumstances insufficient voluntary contributions are made then the visit will be cancelled.

2. Non curriculum related visit:

Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution in order to allow the visit to take place. As the visit is not curriculum related any shortfall in covering the visit cost will result in the visit being cancelled.

3. Residential visit:

Parents will be asked to make a contribution in order to allow the visit to take place. If in such circumstances insufficient voluntary contributions are made then the visit will be cancelled.

4. Physical Education and Artistic Activities in School Time:

These will be funded free as part of the curriculum experience of the children. Charges may be necessary for out of school hours’ activities.

5. Curriculum enrichment activity:

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution in order to allow the activity to take place. For children whose families are unable to support their children on these
activities financially then the school will seek ways with the families to help the child undertake the experience being offered.

The Governing Board may wish to remit in full or part, the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity, such parents will be invited, in confidence, for the remission of charges in full or part. The Head Teacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will make authorisation for such remission.

**Informing Parents**

A summary of this policy will be in the school prospectus.

**Implementation**

Planning, as part of the process of budget planning is essential to developing a charging policy at Fox Hollies School which recognises equality of access.

We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on clear set of priorities identified by the school and taking into consideration projected number of children, cost per head and breakdown of transport costs, entry fees, discounts, teachers’ costs etc.

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 that is consistent with the school's overall policy.

**Hiring of Premises**

A part or whole of the school premises is not currently available for hire, however, a Lettings Policy exists for the eventuality that this situation may change in the future.

*Spring 2020*

*To be reviewed spring 2021*

**Policy adopted by Governing Board**

Signed ………………………………………………………….. Chair of GB

Date …………………………………..