

None of us is as good as all of us



Policy:

Charging and Remissions Policy

Revision History:

Date	Changes	Author(s)
22.10.09	new	Business Committee
15.11.13	Reviewed	Steve Down

Associated Policies:

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2.4.14

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Next Review Date: (3 years unless
otherwise advised)

Spring 2015

Policy Statement on Charging and Remissions

Trips

If a trip is to take place during school time or is curriculum related outside school time	No official charges made Voluntary contributions may be asked for and use made of the Educational Visit funds set aside in the School Budget Share.
If a visit is outside school hours and is not curriculum related	All participants can be charged
If a residential visit falls mainly in school time e.g. Mon.-Fri. or Wed.-Sun.	Voluntary contributions may be asked for but charges can only be made in respect of accommodation and food (except to those on Income Support and/or eligible for Free School Meals. Parents so entitled may wish to make a small donation)
If a residential visit falls mainly outside school hours e.g. Fri.-Sun. and is not curriculum related	A full charge can be made to all children

Curriculum Materials

All materials used by the children, as part of their regular curriculum entitlement, will be provided by the school without charge. If children wish to take particular items home then they will be asked for a voluntary contribution.

Visitors and Special Events in School

As part of the curriculum, any in-school events will be provided free. The school may ask for voluntary contributions to cover costs.

Where voluntary contributions are needed to make an event viable then the school may, at short notice, need to cancel the event(s) if there are insufficient contributions made to cover the costs.

Charging & Remissions Policy

1. Introduction

St Luke's Primary School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means that 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 incomes.

We aim to:-

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

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 the ages/needs of the pupils,
- the cost of the activity set against their educational value,
- how the activity will be paid for,
- the appropriate process for raising funds,
- 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, materials for practical work,
- reference to additional or hidden costs e.g. lunch money or pocket money
- an assessment of local facilities.

2. Legislation

i) Education during School Hours

The DfES 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 the LEA or the 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 may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or kind)...the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.”

ii) Education – Outside School Hours

“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 1998 described activities which can be charged for as ‘optional extras’. It is up to the LEA or the school’s Governing Body to decide whether or not to make a charge.”

iii) Residential Activities

“For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the costs of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Head should tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.”

All the relevant legislation is contained in the Educational Reform Act 1988; sections 106 – 111, 117 and 118. Guidance is contained in the DfES circular 2/89; Charges for School Activities.

3. Remission Policy

To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions, St Luke’s 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.

As a minimum, parents of children at St Luke’s School, who are in receipt of Income Support or eligible for Free School Meals are exempt from all educational visits charges. They may wish to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs

4. Informing Parents

St Luke’s School will follow the DCFS guidelines which state that;

“ The LA or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of General Policy on Charging....A Policy Statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explain when charges will be made.... Parents need to know how the charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs (or even get it free). A summary of ‘this information’ must be included in the prospectus published by the school.

“ If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual costs. If further funds need to be raised.... this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.”

5. Implementation

Planning, as part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy 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, taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), costs per head and a breakdown of transportation costs entry fees, teacher 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.

6. Loss and Damage to School Property

Parents of a pupil who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, windows or computer software, are liable for the cost of replacement or repair.