

Much Marcle C E Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy



Date Reviewed	Reviewed By	Next Review
October 2017	Lorna Harrison	October 2019

INTRODUCTION

The School conforms to the LA's charging policy, the DES Circular 2/89 and the Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. However due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The Governing Body will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

CHARGING FOR VISITS

a) All Visits

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- The total cost of the visit;
- How much of the cost will come from school
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit;
- How much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- Any surplus funds will be retained for future visits

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food, etc.

b) During Normal School Hours

In all schools, visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit (or more to allow for those parents who cannot or will not contribute). Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute will not be discriminated against. The school may seek voluntary contribution for any activity, free or not, but there must be no obligation and no pupil may be omitted from a non chargeable activity because parents were unwilling or unable to contribute. A school may point out to its parents that an activity will not take place if they are unwilling to support it.

The Governing Body may offer to remit the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which:

- takes place during school hours or;
- is not an optional extra (see following section for definition).

The decision to offer to remit board and lodging costs, as above, is subject to the parents of a pupil being in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by The Inland Revenue, that does not exceed £13,230).
- Disability Working Allowance.

Parental permission should be obtained in the following way:

Signed Slip received back from parents:

A letter about the visit is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following sample:

"All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay. A voluntary contribution of £___ would be appreciated. "

c) Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras

The Headteacher can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a residential trip during the school holidays is an optional extra.
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education.

The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for pupils whose families do not meet the full charge.

The following can be included –

- a) A pupil's travel costs;
- b) A pupil's board and lodging costs;
- c) Materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- d) non-teaching staff costs which can be attributable to providing the optional extra;
- e) Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc.
- f) Insurance costs.

In addition a charge may also take account of the cost of engaging teaching staff specifically for the purpose of providing the activity and supplying such staff with travel, board and lodging.

Existing employed staff of Herefordshire Council or the Governors cannot have their costs passed onto pupils except for music tuition or where they have been given a separate contract to undertake this specific function.

INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents). We do however at Much Marcle CE Primary aim to include these costings within our Budget Planning.

BROKEN EQUIPMENT (REPLACEMENT)

The Headteacher may ask pupils and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the pupil's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief pupils thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the pupils.

RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

Can a parent in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by The Inland Revenue, that does not exceed £13,230) be charged for board and lodging?

If the residential activity is deemed to be within school hours having regard to the 50% rule then the whole charge must be remitted.

However, if the education provided on a residential trip is to be treated as provided outside school hours and is not part of a prescribed public examination or basic curriculum situation it is unlikely that a pupil whose parents are in receipt of the relevant social security benefit will be able to go on the trip unless the Governing Body's remissions policy extends to the situation (see paragraph 11 which defined the 50% rule)

How does a school determine the 50% rule for residential activities?

The test is based on the number of half days taken up by the activity, including travel, compared with the number of school sessions – For example, a term time trip from 5 a.m. on Friday to noon on Saturday is 3 half days compared with two school sessions. The two sessions are more than 50% and the trip will, therefore, be inside school hours. If the trip returned at noon on Sunday the activity is considered to be outside school hours.

REMISSIONS

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity 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 in part. Currently the PTA Hardship Fund is used at the discretion of the Headteacher and Governing Body. The Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation for such remission.