

Woodfield School Charging Policy

Charging and Remissions Policy

This is the Governing Body's general statement on charging.

All staff and Governors need to be aware of this policy and its implications on listed activities.

This policy is covered in more detail in Guide to the Law Section 23 (June 2007), this should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Implementation

- The Governing Body may not charge for any activities which take place in school time, apart from instrumental tuition by peripatetic teachers.
- The Governors must draw up a charging policy.
- The school may invite parents and others to make a contribution towards any part of the school's work.
- The school may charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras.

The school may charge for board and lodging on residential courses.

Planning

Education outside School Hours

Charges can be made for 'optional extras' such as after school clubs run by outside providers. Charges will be based on the actual cost divided by the number attending or the rate set by the provider.

Education partly during school hours

Charges are allowed when the majority of the activity falls outside schools hours. We have no activities currently falling into this category.

Residential Activities

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel (see section on voluntary contributions). However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances except for pupils whose parents are receiving:

- Income Support;
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an income of less than £16190 and not receiving Working Tax Credits
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
- Support under Part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act

The headteachers should advise all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits.

Musical Instrument Tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to specify circumstances where charges can be made for music tuition. The new regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Guidance about the charging regulations can be found on TeacherNet. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Activities not run by the school or LA

When an organisation acting independently of a school or LA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their children out of school for a family holiday. However, where an activity is organised by a third party and is approved by the school, is educational, or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the DCSF's view that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school and no charge should be made to the parents or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an "approved educational activity" within the meaning of Regulation 4A (a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended).

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. The governing body shall also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this should be explained to them at the planning stage. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity must be cancelled. 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. The school must first decide which class, or group of pupils, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity, or by general fundraising.

The following paragraphs are the suggested wording on our notices to parents.

Under the law, Woodfield's Primary School is not allowed to make a charge for activities during school-time. The Governors believe that parents will appreciate that the school cannot afford to pay for all activities from the funds available to us. However, the school can ask for voluntary contributions, and the Governors have agreed to allow this.

Parents are asked if they are willing to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of an activity. No child will be excluded from the activities if his or her parent does not make a contribution of any kind. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received then the activities may be cancelled.

Monitoring

The finance committee should monitor through discussion with head teacher the adherence to the policy and its implications on finance for the school fund.

Evaluation

The finance committee will report to the Governing Body of the implications of charging for activities and number of cancellations of activities.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Responsibilities

The governors resources committee have responsibility for the overview of the policy and to ensure that it complies with details in the Guide to the Law Section 18.

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring the policy is put into practice in school.

Reviewed by the Governor Resources Committee April 2016