

## Heatherside Junior School Charging and Remissions Policy

We believe that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents/carers' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This policy sets out the circumstances under which the school may charge for activities and those where remissions may apply. This policy has been informed by DfE Guidance and The Governors Guide to the Law.

This guidance clearly states that "School governing bodies and local authorities **cannot** charge for: an admission application to any maintained school; education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment); education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; "

However, in order to enable enrichment activities to take place, the school is permitted to ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these. Charges may be made however for board and lodging on residential trips, for some music tuition and for optional extras; details of these are given below.

### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the pupils, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received it may be necessary to cancel the trip and parents are informed of this in the initial letter. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these pupils differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the pupil is able to participate fully in the trip or activity and no discrimination is made. Sometimes the school will subsidise the cost of a visit or extra-curricular activity or ask the Heatherside Schools Association (HSA) to fund enrichment activities that all pupils are able to benefit from.

Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded and the school can provide this information on request. Best value principles are applied to all bookings, including obtaining quotes for coach travel. Some residential centres do offer a reduction for twins and the school will always explore this.

### Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

**Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of school time that is **not**:
  - part of the National Curriculum;
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will 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.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

**Residential trips**

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When we inform parents about a forthcoming residential visit, we will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.

Parents wishing to check their eligibility can do so via  
<https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/hants>

## **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. A termly charge will 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 led by Hampshire Music Service or other third party music provider, as long as the request has been made by a pupil's parent.

## **Charging for ingredients/materials**

The school may make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated that they would like their child to bring home the finished product. The school's cooking programme is currently funded by the Heatherside Schools' Association (HSA).

## **Charging for lost books**

The school will raise a replacement charge for lost or damaged Library Books and Reading Diaries.

## **Remissions**

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of income support or family credit (see Residential section above), the Governing Body will offer to remit part or the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity. The Governing Body may sometimes use their discretion to remit in full or in part the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity, parents who are finding it difficult to contribute will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.