



## OXSPRING PRIMARY SCHOOL CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

### Introduction

This policy has been formulated in accordance with Authority's guidance on: Charging for School Activities by the Governing Body.

### Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

### Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents/ carers will be considered jointly by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

### Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the School recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- 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;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any trip that takes place 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;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

## Publication of Information

A summary of this policy will be included in the School Prospectus which will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents/carers.

## Charges

- (a) board and lodging on residential visits (not to exceed the costs)
- (b) the proportionate costs for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:
  - (i) travel
  - (ii) materials and equipment
  - (iii) non-teaching staff costs
  - (iv) entrance fees
  - (v) insurance costs
- (c) individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument
- (d) any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited
- (e) breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils
- (f) extra-curricular activities and school clubs.

## Remissions

Children whose parents/ carers 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 charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- a) Income Support;
- b) Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- c) Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- a) Child Tax Credit, where the parent/ carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by The Inland Revenue) does not exceed the prescribed amount for the financial year to which this policy applies;
- b) the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

In respect of (d) above account will be taken of any revision to the amount as advised by the Authority.

## Voluntary Contributions

Parents / carers will be invited to make a voluntary contribution for the following:

- a) trips
- b) additional sporting activities
- c) visiting performers
- d) anything else that is relevant/ appropriate

The terms of any request made to parents/carers will specify that the request for a voluntary contribution and in no way represents a charge. In addition, the following will be made clear to parents/carers:

- a) that the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent/carers is under no obligation to pay; and
- b) that registered pupils at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/ carers have made any contribution in response to the request.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Headteacher.

Voluntary contributions will be used to:

- Coach, rail or local bus travel
- Entrance fees to museums etc
- Cost of ticket
- Refreshments

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Policy approved

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Chairperson

## Additional Guidance on the use of the School Budget and Verifying Eligibility for Remission of Charges

### School Budget

Whilst the Regulations prescribe what the governing body may spend the school budget upon, in the area of visits and journeys this is less well defined. The restriction of not spending the school budget to subsidise extra-curricular activities can create particular problems with the transporting of pupils for inter-school competitions. Whilst some schools may have the provision to pay for this type of transport from the school funds other schools may not be able to do this.

It is the view of the DFES that expenditure of the school budget is for the educational benefit of the school's registered pupils. Education is deemed to be more than just the national curriculum but the wider pastoral and sporting functions of the school. It would therefore follow that it would be a permissible expenditure of the school budget to fund transport for inter-school competitive activities.

Schools should always give due consideration to any expenditure of the budget in those areas which are open to interpretation. Schools must always be able to defend and justify their decisions should they be challenged.

### Verifying Eligibility for Remission of Charges

It is for the parent to provide the necessary evidence that they are in receipt of those support payments which entitle them to the remission of charges. Schools are not expected to undertake this task for parents.

Schools will be aware that all children entitled to free school meals (not just those who take them) are entitled to remission of charges.

Where there is any doubt regarding eligibility parents/carers must be able to provide at least one of the following:

- Child Tax Credit Award issued by the Inland Revenue **and** has a taxable income of less than the most recent published amount.
- Income Support – letter or document issued by the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance – letter or document issued by the Department for Work and Pensions.

For support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or the State Pension Credit Act 2002 written confirmation should be requested from the parent/carer.

If a school has a particular concern regarding a child's eligibility they are advised to contact Janet Marshall, telephone 773513.

## Requesting Voluntary Contributions

It is for the Governing Body to determine the Charging and Remissions Policy and therefore it would be advisable that they agree for each year/school term those activities for which parents will be requested to make a voluntary contribution. By adopting this approach it will provide Governors with the opportunity to assess the cumulative effect of requesting voluntary contributions and the impact this may have on low income families with several children attending the school.

Activities/events should normally be organised on the basis that the national curriculum is delivered free of charge funded by the school's budget. Before approving a request for a voluntary contribution the Governing Body needs to consider:

- (a) why the activity is not being funded wholly through the budget;
- (b) the purpose of the voluntary contribution.

The school should consider whether it is reasonable to fund an activity solely on the basis of voluntary contributions, thereby putting undue pressure on parents to make a voluntary contribution.

### Request letter for a voluntary contribution

Points to note:

- 1 That the letter be sent from the headteacher on behalf of the Governing Body in keeping with their Charging and Remissions Policy.
- 2 Activities undertaken as part of the national curriculum are free of charge.
- 3 Any reasons why the school budget cannot fund the activity.
- 4 Make it clear all pupils can participate irrespective of whether or not a parent makes a contribution.
- 5 The purpose of the voluntary contribution.
- 6 Whether the voluntary contribution is a fixed amount or whether a smaller amount will be appreciated.
- 7 Avoid using phrases that are misleading in that there is any expectation on the part of the school that parents should pay.