



# **Southfield Primary School**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

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### **Introduction**

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996” This requires the Governing Body to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Further information relating to this policy comes from the Department for Education’s guidance document “Charging for school activities - Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities October 2014.<sup>1</sup> Parents have a right to ask for this policy and related information and a summary must be included in the school prospectus and displayed on the school website.

### **Philosophy**

Southfield Primary School is an inclusive school committed to ensuring all our children have equal access to the range of curricular activities on offer and that none are excluded because of costs. For every child, we aim to provide a happy, nurturing community which inspires them to learn and to be their best.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil’s education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

We aim to support families who may not be able to afford extracurricular activities and will arrange subsidies where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> There have been no changes to government guidance since 2014

## **Charging Policy**

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

1. Voluntary contributions
2. Permitted charges

### **Voluntary contributions:**

Nothing in the legislation prevents a school governing body from asking for voluntary donations for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher must make sure that this is made clear to parents at the outset. No child should be excluded from an activity because their parents are unable or unwilling to pay. When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying. It is not appropriate to send out direct debit or standing order mandates to parents when requesting for contributions.

Voluntary contributions are requested by the school in the following circumstances:

#### **1. Trips/ Visits**

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to make a contribution to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from

any others.

If parents are experiencing financial difficulties they are invited to speak or write in confidence to the Parent Support Advisor. (Also please see the section on Remissions Policy.)

## **2. Non uniform Days**

From time to time the school may decide to hold a non-uniform day. These days are usually related to fundraising for charities and for the Southfield Parent Staff Association. We ask for a voluntary donation on these occasions. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a non-uniform day but is unwilling or unable to make a donation we allow the child to participate fully.

### **Permitted Charges:**

Schools are permitted to request monies to cover costs in the following circumstances:

#### **1. Music tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. Current legislation allows pupils to be charged for instrumental music tuition during the school day as long as a teaching group does not exceed 4 pupils. A charge may not be levied where the tuition is provided as part of a recognised external examination course within the school's curriculum. Subject to availability and to the terms of individual tutors we do from time to time offer children the opportunity to study a musical instrument with peripatetic teachers. Parents who wish their child to participate should purchase or hire the instrument and pay the additional music lesson fee to the peripatetic teacher on a termly basis. These lessons may be taught individually or in small groups of children who have been chosen to learn one of a variety of instruments. The school will endeavour to arrange a loan of instruments whenever possible.

## **2. Activities Outside School Hours**

Where clubs are provided by external providers before, during or after school or at lunchtimes the school/they may charge. Charges are made explicit at the time of offering opportunities. It is not the school's intention to make a profit from the clubs.

## **3. Residential Trips**

Page 8 of the DfE document, referred to in the introduction, refers to further guidance on school charging policies from the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC). The LOTC guidance explains on page 2 that social or recreational visits taking place largely outside school hours, and not directly related to the National Curriculum, RE or an exam syllabus, are considered an 'optional extra'. In this case, the guidance says that:

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges

The parents and carers who consent to young people taking part can be charged the full cost of the experience including accommodation costs. What they must not be charged is any additional element to subsidise other young people.

The section on 'optional extras' on pages 4-5 of the DfE's guidance, linked to above, explains:

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual

parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

### **'Optional extra' trips: parents in receipt of benefits**

The LOTC guidance linked to above notes that for visits that are considered 'optional extras', parents and carers in receipt of benefits are unlikely to have their costs refunded. Therefore, it says:

It is quite legitimate to explore other sources of funding for these activities.. Southfield Primary School part-funds these children through the pupil premium funding.

### **4. Damage/Loss to property including library books**

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the school may decide it right to make a charge in full or ask for a contribution towards the cost of the book. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the school's discretion.

We reserve the right to ask families for the full cost of any library books borrowed by children and either damaged beyond repair or not returned to the school on request.

### **5. School dinners**

Parents reserve the right to choose whether their child has school dinners or a packed lunch from home. School dinners are non-chargeable for children in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Parents/ carers of children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 who wish their child to have a school dinner pay our catering company Harrisons at school or online.

### **6. Other charges**

The Headteacher, or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. photocopying at their discretion.

Schools cannot charge for:

- 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 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; and

### **Remissions policy.**

Where non-chargeable (see above for exceptions) education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a pupil who receive the following support payments are eligible for complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

a) Income support

b) Income based job seekers allowance

c) Child Tax Credit except if the parent meets ANY of the following criteria -

i) entitled to working tax credit (regardless of income)

ii) have an annual income in excess of £16,190

d) Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

e) Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

## REVIEW OF POLICY

<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>Published</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Author</b>
<b>Sub Committee</b>			
Resources Committee		October 2019	Sheila McCabe
<b>Headteacher's Signature</b>			
<b>Chair of Governors Signature</b>			

## Flow chart to determine charging for activities

