AYCLIFFE DRIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING, REMISSIONS AND REFUNDS POLICY

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Staff Responsible

Mrs K Atkinson	Head teacher
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Rationale: to ensure that:

- **charges for school activities are fair.**
- **there are clear procedures for refunds**
- **there are clear procedures for remission of funds**

Introduction

The Governing Body wish to align this policy with the LAs charging policy as stated in the Manual of Financial Procedures Section 13, Appendix A.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that additional activities can make towards a child's social and academic education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children, and also as additional optional activities.

Charges

The Governing Body reserve the right to authorise a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

1) Activities outside school hours

The full cost for each parent for activities deemed to be optional extras taking place largely outside normal school hours.

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

The cost must 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

2) Optional activities in school time

The full cost for optional activities outside the National Curriculum such as music lessons, can be charged. Charges may 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.

3) Charging in kind

The Governing Body may charge for ingredients and/or materials or require them to be provided, if parents have indicated that they wish to keep the finished product.

4) Damage

The Governing Body may charge for the cost of repair or replacement of items wilfully damaged, or loaned and subsequently damaged or lost.

Voluntary Contributions

For other trips and activities, which form part of the children's curriculum, a voluntary contribution may be asked for.

Parents may therefore be asked to contribute voluntarily towards:

- museum and theatre trips
- visits by "experts" who are extending the children's knowledge and experience.
- group instrumental tuition that is required by the National Curriculum.
- nursery voluntary contributions.

These outings, trips and visits therefore only operate if parents provide the voluntary contributions. It may therefore be necessary to cancel any such outing, trip or visit if insufficient funds are forthcoming.

The cost of each activity is calculated by dividing the total cost by the number of pupils taking part.

In this respect we rely on the support and understanding of the parents, who we hope value these activities and understand that they are organised for the good of the children.

No child to be excluded from an activity simply because of his or her inability to pay.

Calculating Charges for Activities

~~The cost of a school residential journey is calculated by dividing the total cost by the number of pupils taking part. At the discretion of the governors parents in receipt of income support may qualify for a reduction in the cost.~~

For activities which must be paid for by all participants, such as activities outside school hours or optional activities in school time, the charge per pupil is calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of children taking part.

For activities which are paid for by voluntary contributions the charge per pupil is calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of pupils who potentially will be taking part, irrespective of whether they actually contribute to the cost.

Remission

The Education Act 1988 requires that charges be remitted in relation to the cost of individual musical tuition in the case of children whose parents are in receipt of income support~~ or family credit.~~ In the case of genuine hardship, t~~he school will provide assistance where it has the funds to do so.~~ parents may contact the Headteacher in confidence to discuss whether any additional assistance may be available, subject to the school's available funds and applicable policies.

~~Parents are made aware of this and asked to contact the Head Teacher in confidence~~.

Communication about charges to parents

~~Parents will be notified about residential trips approximately 12 months in advance.~~

The school aims to provide as much notice as possible when contributions are requested and aim for a terms notice. However, this may not always be possible due to impromptu events, etc. Parents will also be given the option to pay instalments, where the cost can be split over a couple of months.

They will be provided with the following information:

- a breakdown of the costs involved
- a clear schedule of what payments are required and when
- will be invited to make regular weekly/monthly payments
- ~~that the first deposit is to secure a place on the trip and is non refundable~~
- all income will be recorded

Refunds

~~If there is a surplus on a residential school journey, a refund to the nearest full pound below the actual refund will be offered, if this is more than £5 per child~~.

On day trips, and activities (such as workshops) a ~~similar~~ refund will be offered if the surplus amount is more than £1 per child.

Children who are unable to attend activities or trips through illness will be given all available refunds i.e. those which have not had to be paid in advance.

Certain charges will not be refunded for any reason, where this is ordered and paid in advance and is not flexible, e.g. milk, school dinners that are not cancelled.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body's responsibility to ensure that income is collected promptly and in full, that it is properly recorded and that it is banked intact is delegated to the head teacher (see Schedule of Delegation), and these tasks are carried out by the school office ~~or finance staff~~.

~~Communication to Parents~~

~~Parents are informed of residential school journeys at least 10 months in advance, to provide the maximum time for saving. Savings cards are issued.~~

~~Reminders about the cost of school dinners are put in the last Newsletter of each term for the following term. Dinners are paid for weekly, half-termly or termly in advance.~~

~~Milk slips are sent out in the second half of the previous term.~~

Outstanding debts ~~(Also see Bad Debts Policy)~~

In the case of curricula and extra-curricula activities, before payment is requested, the School will have ascertained that it is appropriate that such charges are properly payable by the debtor.

Outstanding income amounts should be followed up on an ongoing basis, initially informally by a general reminder email, sent via Arbor. ~~telephone to the parents, or by speaking to the parents in person~~.

If the income due is not received within a week, the office team ~~Administrator~~ will send another reminder email and inform the ~~out a first reminder letter, and inform the Head~~ class teacher to remind children and parents at the door.~~if necessary~~.

~~The Office Administrator to send out a second reminder letter, if the debt is still outstanding, after 2 weeks.~~
In the case of school dinners; if the debt is not cleared after the office sending emails, parents will be called/emailed to request that a home packed lunch is provided until the debt is cleared. If the debt is still not cleared, the office will contact SchoolGrid (school dinner ordering system).

~~The Head Teacher will then write formally to the parents requesting immediate payment, and making it clear what the next step will be.~~

NB. For voluntary contributions, Governors respect that these are voluntary, but that informal follow up may be necessary incase the request for contribution has been overlooked.