



**THE FEDERATION OF
LOWER HALSTOW & NEWINGTON CEP SCHOOLS**

Charging and Remissions Policy

| Approved | Coordinator | Review Date |
|----------|-------------|-------------|
| Oct 12 | | Spring 2014 |
| Oct 13 | | Autumn 2014 |
| Oct 14 | | Autumn 2015 |
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Introduction

All visits, journeys and trips must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the LA's regulations and guidelines "Management and Leadership of Offsite Work".

Rationale

The law regarding what may, and may not, be charged in respect of activities provided by the school within and outside the school day has always been difficult to interpret and apply fairly to all pupils. The government have set out the law on charges for school activities in Sections 449-462 and of the Education Act 1996. DFES Circular 2/89 explains and provides guidance on those sections. The LEA set down its charging policy in April 1989. In accordance with the requirement of the 1996 Act governors are required to state their policy with regard to charges and their policy in respect of any circumstances in which their purpose to remit (in whole, or in part) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging and remissions policy that apply in the school.

Aims

The aims of the charging and remissions policy are to:

- Maintain the right to free school education
- Enable all pupils to take full advantage of the activities provided by the school

Objectives

The objectives of the charging and remissions policy are:

- To ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parent's ability or willingness to help meet the cost
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school either during or outside school hours
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging and remissions policy are clearly and appropriately allocated to ensure that the operation of the policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.

Policy Statement for activities during school hours

It is the policy of the governing body:

- to levy a charge for the provision of music tuition to pupils, either individually or in groups of four or less except where it is provided to fulfill any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination; or specifically to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
- to levy a charge for the board and lodging element of a residential activity. Governors will look sympathetically at any request for financial assistance using any information supplied, together with any information already held at the school, to ensure children do not miss out on their education.

For activities Outside school hours

- to levy a charge for all activities provided outside school with the following exceptions
- no charge will be made if the activity is an essential part of the basic curriculum the board and lodging element of a residential activity will be remitted wholly or partly, based on each individual case and using any information supplied, together with any information already held at the school.
- education outside school hours other than education which is an essential part of the curriculum is defined in the Education Act as an 'optional extra' and participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made, and the agreement of the parents is therefore an essential prerequisite for the provision of optional extras for which charges are made.

For all activities

To request voluntary contributions from all parents for school activities in or out of school time which can only be provided if there is sufficient voluntary funding.

Remission

It is the policy of the governing body:

- to look at individual cases and where genuine hardship exists, subject to funding being available, will remit charges, wholly or in part, for board and lodging to parents/carers.
- to delegate to the chairman and the Executive Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of the policy.

Note: The governing body may remit in full or in part the charge for music tuition in respect of parents experiencing hardship.

Resources

The governing body will agree a fund with the budget to support this policy. The Executive Headteacher will investigate accessing funds available through the Local Authority, i.e. Your Choice Funding and the Hardship Fund.

Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of the fund will be devolved to the head teacher who will determine the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds.

Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans, at the draft stage, should be submitted to the senior management team for consideration and approval.

Monitoring & evaluation

The head teacher has the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.

The Head teacher will monitor the implementation of the policy and provide the governing body with a financial report as part of the normal termly reconciliation of the school budget. Every three years the implementation of the policy will be evaluated and the views sought of parents, pupils, teachers and governors.

During school hours

Parents may make a voluntary contribution to:

- individual music tuition except where it is provided to fulfill any requirements specified in the syllabus for described public examination; or specifically to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
- the board and lodging element of all residential trips and visits except in the case of pupils whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit
- the cost of transport direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by the LEA or school, such as work experience
- the cost of ingredients or materials if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product

Outside school hours

Charges may be made for 'optional extras' defined as falling wholly or mainly outside of school hours provided that the activities are not:

- to fulfill any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
- specifically to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
- specifically fulfill statutory duties relating to religious education.

Participation in the optional extra activity is on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

Note: The terms above do not prohibit charging for board and lodging except where the Governing Body hold information to support remission of charges wholly or in part.

The charges may include an element for:

- a pupil's travel costs
- a pupil's board and lodging costs, except where the parents are in receipt of income support or family credit, job seekers allowance or disability working allowance
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- non-teaching staff costs
- entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc
- insurance costs
- the engagement of teaching staff specifically for providing the activity and supplying such staff with travel, board and lodging, providing that if they are employed by the LEA or governors, they are employed to provide individual music tuition and engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra.

The contract may take the form of a letter inviting the teacher to provide certain services for a specific activity taking place at a specified time, in return for payment of expenses and, where appropriate, a fee.

Charges for individual pupils may not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of pupils willing participate
- include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parents wish them to participate but are unwilling or able to apply
- include the cost of alternative provision for more pupils who do not wish to participate, where a small part of the activity take place in school hours.

Voluntary contributions

The school may seek voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities from parents to include the costs for accompanying teachers for any school activity but:

- such contributions are genuinely voluntary and there is no obligation on a parent to make any contribution
- pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not parents have made a contribution
- parents will be informed of the level of contribution and whether the activity could take place if parents were reluctant to support it.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contributions sought.

The statutory minimum remissions policy must provide for complete remission of board and lodging charges to pupils whose parents provide supportive information, if an activity takes place during school hours; or is out of school hours but covered by requirements relating to prescribed examinations syllabuses or duties relating to the National Curriculum or duties relating to religious education. The remissions policy must be kept under review by the governing body or LEA by whom it was determined.

TEMPLATE OF LETTER TO BE USED FOR VISITS

Dear Parent/Guardian

Introduction to trip

We are asking parents to make a voluntary contribution of £... per child to cover the cost of the travel and entrance fee to the Once again, we rely on the full support of parents making the contributions in order that these trips can go ahead. If there are not enough voluntary contributions, and the school is unable to meet the cost, then the trip will be cancelled.

If you are in receipt of benefits which prevent you from being able to make a voluntary contribution, please talk in confidence to the Executive Headteacher.

Yours sincerely,

I consent to my child _____ attending the on June 2009.

I enclose a voluntary contribution of £.....

Should the necessity arise, I agree to the person in charge of the party giving consent on my behalf for an anaesthetic to be administered or for any other urgent medical treatment to be given.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Parent/Carer