

Coppermill Primary School



Charging Policy

Ratified by the Resources Committee: 12 October 2017

To be reviewed: Every three years

Introduction

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head Teacher and Governing Body aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Purpose

We aim to:

- Make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income
- Encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- Provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- Respond to the wide variations in family income while not addition additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Non-Chargeable activities

During the school day all education or activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum or the school's curriculum for religious education will be provided free of charge.

This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.

Education provided outside of the school day will be provided free of charge if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's curriculum for religious education.

Swimming lessons

The school organises swimming lessons for each class at some point during their time in Key Stage 2. These take place within the school day and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips, visits or activities which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school may seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of these trips and activities in order to offer the widest possible variety of experiences to pupils.

All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset
- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Therefore, if insufficient funds are available within the school's delegated budget and the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions from parents it may be necessary to curtail or cancel the planned activity.

If the activity goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

The following, non-exhaustive list, gives examples of types of additional activities which may be organised by the school within the school day and for which the school may request voluntary contributions from parents:

- Visits to museums for which there is an entrance fee; transportation or workshop costs
- Sporting activities, which require transport expenses
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to the theatre
- Musical events
- Visiting drama/theatre groups
- Visiting storytellers

Chargeable Activities

Before/After school extracurricular clubs

The school offers a number of additional before and after school clubs, some of which are run and organised by adults who are not members of the school staff.

Activities and clubs which take place outside school hours will be chargeable. Charges will vary dependant on the cost to run the club. We will always provide high standard clubs that are run by vetted and qualified professionals at a reasonable rate. All our clubs are quality assured by a member of our senior leadership team.

Residential Activities

When the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly in school time which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education provided by school staff. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of transport, board, lodging and additional activities provided by specialist staff. Parents who receive state benefits may be eligible for assistance towards payment and should speak to the Headteacher about their personal circumstances in the strictest confidence.

Music Tuition

All children study music as part of the National Curriculum. We do not charge for this. There is a charge for individual or small-group instrumental tuition through employing peripatetic music teachers from the borough's Music Service. There is a charge for these lessons and the all fees are paid direct to the Music Service. We provide parents of eligible children information about additional music tuition and its associated costs at the start of each school year.

School Lunches

All children attending the school may opt to take a cooked lunch during the midday break; the cost of the lunch is the standard charge across the Borough applying at the time.

With the introduction of Universal Free School Meals, all Reception and Key Stage 1 children and those who qualify for Free School Meals are exempt from this charge.

The School reserves the right to reduce payments on a temporary basis for a family in crisis at the Headteacher's discretion.

Extended school provision

Coppermill provides a Breakfast and Tea Time club before and after school for its own pupils. There is a charge to parents for this provision. Parents can obtain more details from the school office.

Remissions

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Headteacher and the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances.

For the purposes of applying this remissions policy, these circumstances are deemed to apply for any parent who is in receipt of an 'eligible benefit'. A parent will be deemed to be in receipt of an eligible benefit if they receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under part IV of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (providing they do not also receive Working Tax Credit)

Additional considerations

The school recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits, giving parents as much notice as possible
- We shall establish a system for parents to pay in instalments where this is more convenient to them
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid this method of selection where possible
- The Headteacher and Governing Body will take into account the very real and persistent financial difficulties which families on low incomes have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their child/children
- When arranging a chargeable activity the school will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full and authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher
- Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified or stigmatised.

Full details of all charges explained in this policy are outlined in writing at the time the activity is taking place.