

Ashford CE Primary School



Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by: Resources Committee 20 June 2013

Ratification by FGB: 2 July 2013

Reviewed: FGB 22.2.18

Policy for Charging and Remissions

At Ashford Church of England Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to equal access to learning in accordance with their needs regardless of race, sex, creed, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Where education is provided in maintained schools wholly or mainly during school hours, it should legally be free of charge. Thus it is not possible to levy compulsory charges for activities which take place wholly or mainly during school hours.

However the Governing Body recognises that some worthwhile activities which enrich the curriculum can be arranged for the children which may not be afforded from the delegated budget. Thus the Governing Body allows the school, at the discretion of the headteacher, to ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions towards the cost of an activity which takes place during school hours. Voluntary contributions may also be sought from parents or carers towards the cost of school equipment or school funds generally. Again such requests should be at the discretion of the headteacher.

The headteacher should exercise reasonable caution over the frequency and level of requests for contributions, bearing in mind the total amounts requested during the course of each academic year in the different year groups.

All requests should make it clear that the contributions are voluntary. Children whose parents or carers are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Those children should be allowed to take part in the proposed activities.

However where there are not sufficient voluntary contributions to fund an activity it may be cancelled. The possibility of this outcome should be explained to parents and carers as part of the initial request for voluntary contributions. Standard wording as follows should be used in the letters which request contributions to maintain consistency and avoid ambiguity:

Under the Governors' policy we request a voluntary contribution of [insert amount] for each child to cover the cost of this activity. A parental contribution is not a condition for a child's participation. However if insufficient contributions are received then the activity may have to be cancelled.

The school is able to request the full cost of any daytime activity which takes place wholly out of school hours. This charge can be a compulsory one with payment a condition of participation.

The portion of a residential visit which relates to board and lodging can also be a compulsory charge. However as a statutory minimum the school will arrange complete remission of board and lodging charges to pupils whose parents provide the school at the time of booking with evidence that they receive:

- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Support under part of Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

These parents must have board and lodging costs remitted to them if the visit takes place mainly during school hours. Neither must these parents be charged for the costs of a residential visit outside school hours other than for board and lodging if the visit forms part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus for religious education.

A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition for up to and including four pupils, unless the tuition forms part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus for religious education.

In addition to the above policy statements the Governing Body will be guided by regulations and advice on Charging and Remissions contained in the latest edition of the Finance Manual for schools issued by FourS/Babcock on behalf of Surrey County Council. This includes guidance on charging in kind for expenses related to school activities such as pottery and cooking where pupils have ownership of a finished product. The manual also covers charging for damage to school premises or resources.

Queries from parents about how any aspect of our charging and remissions policy operates in particular cases should be referred to the headteacher.