

Littledean C of E Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The school wishes for all pupils the best possible educational opportunities available within the funds allocated by the Local Education Authority. The law states very clearly that education during school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and the school endorses that principle and is committed to uphold the legal requirements.

It is recognised however, that many educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependant on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for the pupils. The school's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure as far as possible that all children are able to take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances – provided that each school has identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced or waived for certain pupils. The Governing Board of Littledean School has decided that until further notice its policy will be as follows:

Day Visits

For visits during school time the school will invite a voluntary contribution from parents to meet the costs. For visits outside of school time parents will be charged for all allowable costs*. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head Teacher.

Residential visits during school time

The school will invite voluntary contributions from parents to meet costs other than childrens board and lodgings. Parents will be charged for the full cost of childrens board and lodgings. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head Teacher.

Residential visits outside school time

Parents will be charged for the full cost of the visit, including all allowable costs* and board and lodgings. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head Teacher.

*Allowable costs include:

- The pupils travel and subsistence costs;
- Materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- Non teaching staff;
- Costs of teaching staff where separately engaged under a contract for services for the visit or activity;
- Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc.
- Insurance costs

Instrumental music on an individual basis

Any tuition provided during school hours is currently charged to parents and a charge is made for the hire of the musical instruments used in individual (or small group) tuition. A Bursary toward the tuition fee is given in respect of children who are entitled to free school meals.

Classroom Materials

At present we do not intend that any charge will be made for material or equipment. However for certain practical activities (technology, cookery etc.) parents may be invited to provide material or ingredients on a voluntary basis. Where the parents would like to possess the finished product, the school reserves the right to charge the cost or require the supply of the necessary materials.

Activities Outside School Hours

No charge will be made for activities outside school hours that are part of the National Curriculum or religious education, or that form an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. For all other activities outside of school hours, the school reserves the right to charge up to the cost of the activity.

Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head Teacher may decide.

Voluntary Contributions

Where the school cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of a visit which may include specific costs in relation to pupils with special needs. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it may be cancelled.

Remissions Policy

The Head Teacher, Leadership Committee or Governing Board may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances. The Head Teacher, Leadership Committee or Governing Board may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

School Visit Refunds

All initial deposits for school visits will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the visit.

In the event that the school has to cancel a visit due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school visit is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a visit,, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the visit, and whether the place on the visit can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a visit and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a visit at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the visit and whether the place on the visit can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school visit is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the visit. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the visit takes place, transferring the money to another visit, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a visit due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the visit. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the visit takes place, transferring the money to another visit, or refunding parents.

Once visit arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the visit, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £5.00 per pupil.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Finance Policy

Pre-School Pupils

All visits for children attending the pre-school ie aged three and four are optional and therefore will be charged in full for all visits and activities. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head Teacher.

Cashless School

We are a cashless school and parents are advised to use our online payment system www.parentpay.com for all payments into school including Dinner Money and voluntary contributions towards school visits and events. If parents are unable to use the online system they will be offered a barcode letter or paypoint card to use at the local paypoint station the nearest located in Littledean Stores.

The Governors of the school are required to keep their policy under review. The review will take place annually.

Date of policy review: March 2024

Date of next policy review: March 2025