St Paul's CE Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Contents:

1. Charging for education
2. Optional extras
3. Voluntary contributions
4. Music tuition
5. Transport
6. Residential visits
7. Education partly during school hours
8. Damaged or lost items
9. Remissions
10. School trip refunds
11. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
12. Monitoring and review

Introduction

St Paul's CE Primary School provides many opportunities for its pupils to enrich and enhance their experience, through Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) and outdoor education. This includes onsite and offsite learning, residential activities, field trips, sports, physical and cultural activities and adventure education.

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information about charging and voluntary contributions for the school's activities. Also, to ensure that no child is discriminated against, by our offering of these activities.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements for charging for school activities. We follow the Brighton & Hove City Council policy that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education's advice document published in May 2018 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities) and should be read in conjunction with the information provided in the National Guidance www.oeapng.info, document 3.2c – Charging for school activities.

1. Charging for education

We will not charge for:

- Admission applications;
- Education or activities provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education or activities provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of Religious Education;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, if the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil and is not being provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school;
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school;
- Transport during school hours to school organised activities.

We may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, that the parent/carer wishes their child to keep;
- Education or activities provided outside of school hours, if it is not part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of Religious Education;
- Optional extras (see section 2);
- Music or vocal tuition in certain circumstances (see section 4);
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities;
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information;
- The cost of employing qualified swimming instructors and lifeguards to assist with swimming lessons for pupils.

Examination fees and resits:

We may charge for examination fees if:

a) The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
b) The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it;
c) A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, we will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.

If a parent/carer considers it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by them. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/carer will have their fees refunded.

2. Optional extras

We will charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - Part of the national curriculum;
  - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
  - Part of Religious Education;
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school;
- Transport that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit (section 6);
- Materials and other equipment;
- Non-teaching and teaching costs;
- Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast club and after school clubs run by teachers, specialist coaches or people within the community.

St Paul's CE Primary School is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our pupils which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These services enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day;
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services;
- ways of increasing pupil engagement;
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

The cost of optional extras

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity, but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. **(See section 9 on remission of charges to parents/carers who receive government support payments).**

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra;
- Non-teaching staff (including TAs);
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra);
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra;
- The costs of buildings and accommodation;
- Transaction charges for online payment systems.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents/carers before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

3. Voluntary contributions

We may ask for voluntary contributions to the general school funds and also to fund activities during school hours, that will enrich our pupils' education and which would otherwise not be possible.

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the pupils, we will invite parents/carers to contribute to the cost. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear at the outset. There is no obligation for parents/carers to make contributions and they will be notified whether assistance is available. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether a contribution has been made or not.

St Paul's CE Primary School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils and this means that no pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and we cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and all monies paid will be returned.

We will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

The Voluntary Contributions will be used to:

- provide resources and materials for activities not associated with the National Curriculum and which are run by the school;
- provide travel to/from events which may be associated with activities run by the school;
- provide travel and entrance fees/charges for educational visits/visitors both on and off the school premises;
- pay for transaction charges for payments made via ParentPay or any other online payment system;
- pay for insurance costs.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents/carers. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums/galleries;
- visits to the theatres/musical events;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- residential school trips;
- workshops/performances provided by external professionals.

4. Music tuition

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made

for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents/carers. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge will be made for vocal or instrumental tuition for pupils who are looked after by the Local Authority.

5. Transport

We will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport;
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school;
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

6. Residential visits

We will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education;
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We will charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs, if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the benefits mentioned in section 9.

If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for the activity.

Voluntary contributions will be requested to cover all other costs.

7. Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a specific basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

If 50% or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling, if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50% of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

8. Damaged or lost items

We will charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their families.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged or lost by a pupil and the school has been charged, we may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

9. Remissions

Parents/Carers in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Subsidies Available:

- For residential trips, parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodgings costs, if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the benefits mentioned above.

- A pupil who is in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM), will be entitled to a 50% discount towards the cost of a school trip. To receive this offer, parents/carers must contact the school office, stating they would like this reduction; the remainder of the contributions towards their child's school trip will be voluntary.

Parents/carers who request assistance will be dealt with confidentially and will need to send a written request to the Headteacher.

10. School trip refunds

All initial deposits for residential school trips will be non-refundable. Parents/Carers will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip 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/carers.

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

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

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

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

We will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their parents/carers are treated equally.

If a parent/carer wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

11. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

12. Monitoring and review

The Governing Body will review this policy every 3 years and, as necessary, following any changes in legistlation.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Governing Body through Parent consultation, review of any complaints with regard to the policy and through general monitoring of the school budget.