



CHARGING POLICY

Date Approved by Governing Body (Personnel & Finance Committee): 12 March 2013

1. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Southville Primary School that it should provide clear information for parents about any charges or associated costs that may apply to activities that are provided at the school or costs that apply to extra-curricular activities.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy makes clear the school's position in regard to charges it may need to request as a voluntary contribution from parents/carers to carry out a particular activity.

Under the terms of the 1996 Education Act, the principle is that education provided should be free of charge if it is provided wholly or mainly within school hours. Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, the Act prescribes a basis for determining whether any charge can be levied. Primarily, this means that most trips and outings must be funded on the basis of voluntary contributions.

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 the trip. 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 will be cancelled.

Parents and Carers may through genuine hardship feel unable to make a voluntary contribution. All Parents and Carers should be made aware that financial support may be made available providing they fulfil the specified criteria. The school will use information that a child is in receipt of free school meals as a starting point and all parents should be advised annually that failure to take up benefits for which they may be eligible may mean that their child does not have access to available funding.

Parents or carers in receipt of:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support under Part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190 (current November 2011) |

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An income related employment and support allowance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

No child will be treated differently if a contribution is not made towards the cost of an activity. However, it might be necessary to cancel an activity if there are not adequate contributions towards the full cost.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Parents must pay in advance for music tuition or their child will be withdrawn from lessons. The school will invoice parents clearly stating when payment is due.

3. Charges for School Activities

Activity	Full charge	Partial charges to the overall costs of the activity may be required	Voluntary contribution
Music tuition via external music tutors	x		
Practical subjects e.g. cooking, pottery		x	
Theatre visits			x
Visiting groups			x
Educational day visits			x
Residential school visit	x	x This will depend on whether the purpose of the visit is to teach the curriculum	
After school clubs (External organisation)	x		

Damage to property	x		
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The above list may be added to.

- The Governing Body wishes to make clear that under the terms of the 1996 Education Act all contributions are genuinely voluntary. If the school has an overnight trip or residential activity planned, parents/carers in receipt of Income Support, Job Seekers' Allowance or similar benefit may apply to the Head Teacher for a remission of the cost of activities. However a contribution should be made towards the cost of the board and lodging. If there is insufficient voluntary contributions from parents / carers to cover the cost of the activity then the school may be unable to continue with the arrangements and the activity cancelled. (Please see the attached sheet for the procedures for claiming financial support)

Practice

School Visits

The school values the part visits play to enrich the curriculum for our pupils. However, in the interest of all pupils, parents will be asked to contribute to some or all of the costs involved in line with the guidelines below.

i) **Day Visits**

For day visits mainly during the school day, our parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover the full cost of transport, entrance fees, insurance costs, equipment/resources and some or all of the additional staffing costs. The visit will go ahead if 'the vast majority' of the costs are raised by parents' voluntary contributions. The School's Remission Policy will apply for day visits (see below).

ii) **Residential Visits**

For residential visits our parents will be asked to make a contribution towards the overall cost of the residential visit. The contribution will cover the cost of transport, insurance costs, equipment/resources, activity costs, board and lodging and some or all of the additional staffing costs. The visit will go ahead if 'the vast majority' of the costs are raised by parents' contributions. The School's Remission Policy (See below) will apply for residential visits.

The above calculations are based on visits aiming for maximum teacher pupil ratios to reduce the overall costs per pupil, in line with the LEA's guidelines. The use of non-teachers to accompany visits will be considered to reduce costs. The LEA does not require us to inform them of these people providing they are accompanied by staff of the school at all times.

The school cannot charge for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Remissions Policy

Remission on visits will be considered for pupils whose parents receive Income Support, Family Credit or any other extreme hardship deemed appropriate by the Headteacher.

Visits that enrich and enhance pupils learning but do not form an integral part of the school schemes of work then remission will only be available to parents whose child has not received remission, using the criteria above, during that school year (sibling treated separately) for other visits.

Where a child has the opportunity to take part in an activity two years in succession such as a residential non curriculum based camp for year 5/6, which involves a substantial cost, they must decide which year they wish to attend and claim funding if this is to be provided by the school. The decision to limit is in line with the choice made by most parents who pay and are not eligible for remission.

If additional targeted funding is received eg 'School's out money' then there may be a possibility that a child can attend in both years. If they are not eligible for the second year, funding cannot be carried forward from the previous year. Parents must be informed about this when they request remission.

The school reserves the right to ask all parents to pay a deposit to secure their place for school camp.

For visits that have only limited curriculum based learning but are valuable opportunities to enhance the pupil's personal development (eg. Residential visits) then the full cost outlined above will be requested from the parents. Remission for any proportion of the cost will only be considered through direct contact (letter, phone, meeting) to the Headteacher explaining why the full cost cannot be met and why it is important their child joins in this particular activity at this time.

In all cases parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution to any such visits and they will not go ahead unless the 'vast majority' of the costs are raised by parents' voluntary contributions.

For residential visits the school will provide opportunities for parents to pay by installments as long as the full amount is paid by the date determined by the school. The headteacher in consultation with governors may decide that in very exceptional circumstances this date may be extended and a written agreement put in place.

In all cases parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution to any such visits and they will not go ahead unless 'the vast majority' of the costs are raised by parents voluntary contributions.

Every effort will be made to explore funding opportunities for children eligible for free school meals or families on low incomes eg grants and 'School's out' money

Appeal

If a parent feels the Headteacher has dismissed their request in a manner that falls outside the bounds of this policy they can appeal to the Chair of Governors (via the school) for their case to

be reconsidered. If the Chair of Governors feels the parents claim needs further investigation he will nominate a Governor to review the case. His/her decision will be final.

Headteacher:

Chair of Governors: