



# Somerville Primary School

## Charging & Remissions Policy

### Introduction

Somerville School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:

- participate fully in school curriculum;
- contribute to an aspects of school life; and
- be a valued partner in the process of education.

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parents/guardians who are on a low income. We aim:

- to make school activities- accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- to encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- to provide a procedure which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school; and
- to respond to the wide variation in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the School budget.

The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycle with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities.

It includes a number of key factors:

- the value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils;
- the cost of activity set against their educational value;
- how the activity will be paid for
- the appropriate process for raising funding;
- an assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way;
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved - for example, educational visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- reference to additional or hidden costs - for example, lunch money and pocket money; an assessment of local facilities.

## **Legislation - Education During School Hours**

*School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:*

- *an admission application to any state funded school- paragraph 1.9 (n) of the*

*'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;*

- *education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);*
- *education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;*
- *instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent; \**

## **Voluntary Contributions**

*Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.\**

## **Education Outside School Hours**

*Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents request them.\**

## **Residential Activity**

*For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the costs of travel. - However, the school can charge for board and lodgings and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.\**

## **Remission Policy**

To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions Somerville School will implement the following Remission Policy. 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. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children. Birmingham City Council defines people in receipt of Income Support and their dependants as living in poverty and people in receipt of Housing Benefit and their dependants as living on the margins of poverty.

As a result, children at Somerville from families in receipt of *Income Support, Working Tax Credit run-on, Universal Credit, Income based Job Seekers allowance, the guarantee element of State Pension Credit, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and Child Tax Credit (providing that working tax credit is not also received and the families income does not exceed £16,190 (2017-18))* are encouraged to speak to the Headteacher to establish alternative payment arrangement.

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges and school funds via an appointed person, possibly the Office Administrator, rather than in the classroom; by annualised or term time single payments to the school at the start of each term; and for example, by arranging for all children to receive a packed lunch from the school when on a visit.

### **Informing Parents**

Somerville School will follow the DFE Guidelines as well as the information stated in this policy.

School will inform parents through letter about any charges for educational visits and

*"If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual costs. If further funds need to be raised ... this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising."*

### **Implementation**

Planning, as part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy at Somerville School which recognises equality of access. We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school and taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), cost per head and a breakdown of transportation costs, entry fees, discounts, teacher costs etc.

Such a process however, should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities which arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way which is consistent with the school's overall policy.

**\*Charging for school activities Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities October 2014**

**Policy written by Shahin Fazil (January 2018)**