



Charging and Remissions Policy

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Approved by: Full Governing Board 27.3.19

1. Introduction

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

- participate fully in school curriculum,
- contribute to all 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 low incomes.

We aim to:-

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

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

2. Legislation - Education during School Hours

The DfES in its guidance to School Governors states that; "education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in Charging & Remissions Policy 2016 school hours by the LEA or the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity." It goes on to advise that; "although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or kind)....the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind."

3. Legislation - Outside of 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 agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1998 described activities which can be charged for as ‘optional extras’. It is up to the LEA or the school’s Governing Body to decide whether or not to make a charge.” All these payments for additional activities offered either before/after school must be paid using the school’s online cashless payment system.

4. Legislation - Residential activities

“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, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving the following:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Support under section 6 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1996
- Working Tax Credit and an annual income not exceeding the published Inland Revenue threshold.

Walmley Junior School Prospectus informs parents that are in receipt of the above benefits that there is support available and how to apply.

All the relevant legislation is contained in the Educational Reform Act 1988; sections 106 – 111, 117 and 118. Guidance is contained in the DfES circular 2/89; Charges for School Activities.

5. Remissions

To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions, Walmley Junior School will implement the following Remissions 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.

Children at Walmley Junior School, who are in receipt of: Pupil Premium funding; Income Support; Income based Job Seekers Allowance; Support under section 6 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1996; Working Tax Credit and an annual income not exceeding the published Inland Revenue threshold; parents and carers may request financial support for education visits and school trips by making an appointment to speak to the Headteacher.

6. Voluntary Contributions

a) When organising school trips or visits, which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution because we do not exclude any pupil on the grounds that a contribution cannot be made.

b) If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

c) The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as educational visits or enrichment opportunities. This list is not exhaustive: **VISITS TO MUSEUMS, SPORTING ACTIVITIES WHICH REQUIRE TRANSPORT EXPENSES, OUTDOOR ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES, VISITS TO THE THEATRE, SCHOOL TRIPS and MUSICAL EVENTS.**

The Headteacher annually reviews the MAXIMUM contribution for all visits. The school also acknowledge the expense involved when there are twins or triplets and special arrangements are made in consultation with the Headteacher.

7. Informing Parents

Walmley Junior School follow the DfES guidelines which state that; “ The LEA or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of General Policy on Charging....A Policy Statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explain when charges will be made.... Parents need to know how the charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs (or even get it free). A summary of ‘this information’ must be included in the prospectus published by the school. “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.”

8. Implementation

Planning as part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy 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, taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), costs per head and a breakdown of transportation costs entry fees, teacher costs etc. Such a process however should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities that arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way that is consistent with the school’s overall policy.