

Marden Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have an equal opportunity to full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school day is defined as: 8.45-3.00pm. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The policy has been informed by A Guide to the Law for School Governors

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's equal opportunities policy, curriculum policy, educational visits policy and the teaching and learning policy.

Roles and responsibilities of headteacher, other staff, governors

The headteacher will ensure that the following applies:

During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

The staff and governors recognise the importance of activities that, while not an essential part of the curriculum, add value and enjoyment to the experiences of the children. Voluntary contributions may be sought for such activities during the school day which entail additional costs.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day.

Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made where the activity is not part of the national curriculum. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Residential visits

Charges will be made on residential visits which are part of the national curriculum for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the pupils total half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity and where the visit is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or part of an examination syllabus. In such cases parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Music Tuition

Charges will be made for teaching an individual or group to play a musical instrument or to sing where the activity is not an essential part of the national curriculum or public examination syllabus, for example piano, woodwind or drum where a peripatetic teacher visits and instructs.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example after school clubs that are not school run e.g. Dance Club, Spanish Club, Karate Club. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

We will also charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example sports clubs run by teachers £6.00 per term for most clubs although some clubs are more expensive to cover costs of consumable resources. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a parental agreement will be a pre-requisite for the provision of any optional extra activity

Breakfast Club: The school runs a breakfast club as a not for profit venture. The club is free to pupils in receipt of pupil premium but a charge of £2.50 a day in advance is administered for all other children. This is to cover the costs of equipment, staffing and food. The financial position of the breakfast club is kept under review and charges may be adjusted periodically. If a surplus builds up it will be spent on resources for the club. Apart from pupil premium funding the club needs to be self-financing and should not require funding from the schools budget.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't.

Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising or in certain circumstances through the Pupil Premium Grant for eligible pupils (refer to Pupil Premium Policy).

Parents who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed state pension credit

Other parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the Headteacher, in consultation with the governing body, on a case by case basis. Parents should contact the Headteacher to discuss their individual circumstances if they are struggling to fund activities.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Voluntary Contributions

The staff and governors recognise the importance of activities that, while not necessarily an essential part of the curriculum, add value and enjoyment to the experiences of the children. However it may be necessary for voluntary contributions to be sought for such activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example a visit to a museum.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage.

An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

Additional Considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits do not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- We give as much notice of visits as is reasonably practicable (and their approximate cost) so that parents can plan ahead;
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for more expensive visits;
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it may be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip on request;
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The finance governors will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a termly basis, a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.

Last reviewed July 2019

To be reviewed July 2020