



Queen's Inclosure Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

Status of the Policy: Statutory

Responsible Committee: Resources

Rationale

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Schools must comply with DfE guidance set out in the publication *Charging for School, Activities*. School governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment), but may charge for certain optional extras or ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or school activities.

Schools must ensure that they inform parents who are able to prove receipt of one of the benefits listed in DfE guidance of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits; no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents or carers are unwilling or unable to pay. Additionally, parents must be informed if insufficient voluntary contributions would result in cancellation of an activity.

Aim

This policy aims to ensure that all our pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from enriching activities and visits, independent of their parents/carers' financial means. It describes how we will endeavour to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered, while trying to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of the opportunities available.

Objectives

To (i) clearly define the optional extras that the school intends to charge for and our policy concerning remissions, and (ii) ensure that the school is compliant with the law on charging for activities in schools.

To ensure compliance, relevant staff and governors will be aware of and fulfil their responsibilities as outlined in this policy:

Head Teacher

- Has day to day responsibility for implementation of the Charging and Remissions policy.
- Ensure all relevant staff read and understand this policy.

Staff involved with Charging

- Read and be familiar with the policy.
- Abide by the policy at all times.

Governors

- Agree and review the policy every three years.
- Delegate day to day responsibility for implementation of the policy to the head teacher.
- Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of the policy.

Links with other Policies

Financial Management Policy
Equality Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy

Governor Allowances Policy
Freedom of Information Policy
Lettings Policy

Principles

- No charge will be made for any activities which relate to the national curriculum, whether during or outside of school hours.
- No charge will be made for the supply of any materials, books (text, guided reading and library books), instruments or other equipment used during school hours.
- No charge will be made for the cost of art, craft, design and food technology materials.
- No charge will be made for music tuition unless the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).
- Reimbursement of costs will be sought for the repair or replacement of lost or damaged school property or property belonging to a third party (see *Damage to/Loss of Property* below).
- A voluntary contribution may be sought towards the cost of enrichment activities or visits, wholly or partly in school hours, including any transport element, which would otherwise be prohibited by cost. Wherever possible, a breakdown of costs will be provided when requesting voluntary contributions. No child will be excluded from any activities on the basis of non-contribution. Should the activity be dependent on voluntary contributions, parents will be made aware in advance of the possibility of cancellation should sufficient contributions not be received.
- A charge may be levied for participation in extra-curricular clubs/activities to meet the costs of materials and staffing as required.
- Residential visits, unless these relate to the national curriculum, will be charged for on a board and lodging basis only at cost. No charge will be made for transport but a voluntary contribution may be requested. Families on low incomes and in receipt of defined benefits will be advised of provision which may be available from school contingency funds or grants (see *Remission of Charges* below).
- A charge will be made for any costs incurred by the school in providing information requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (see QI Publication Scheme) or the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Should facilities hire be approved, for non-profit making community activities or where it is felt that the activity would enhance children's learning, it will be offered at zero or minimal charge (see *Lettings Policy*).

Damage to/Loss of Property

Reimbursement of costs will be sought in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of either school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) or property belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be whichever is the lesser of the costs to replace or repair. In these circumstances:

- 1) A standard letter will be sent to the parent, advising that an item has been lost or damaged and requesting that it be returned, repaired or replaced. (The parent may also make a voluntary contribution not exceeding the replacement cost of the item.)
- 2) If necessary, a reminder from the Headteacher will be sent after two weeks.
- 3) If the item is still not returned, repaired, replaced or paid for within a further two weeks, a formal letter will be sent to the parent from the Headteacher, (where appropriate) advising that their child may not be allowed to take resources out of school in future.

See the Financial Management Policy for guidance on amounts to be written off and debt recovery procedures.

Refunds due to Illness

Day Visits: Where payment has been made, but a child is unable to participate due to illness, we will endeavour to be fair and reasonable when considering a refund for the cost of entrance fees only. Transport costs, such as coach travel, are non-refundable.

Residential Visits: Residential visit deposits are NON refundable. For the remainder of the payment, parents are able to make claims against the insurance offered by the institution providing the residential visit. Claims will need to be supported by a valid doctor's certificate. The school cannot take responsibility for the recovery of these costs.

Remission of Charges

If a family is unable to meet the full cost of voluntary contributions or charges and able to prove receipt of one of the benefits listed in the current publication of 'Charging for School Activities' (DfE), the Governing Body may provide part or full financial support from the school budget or external grants. Applications for assistance should be addressed to the Headteacher.

Review Period

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 3 years.

Review Date: March 2023