

# Atwood Primary School



## Charging Policy

July 2011 Review July 2013

### **Policy on charging for and remissions for school activities, including voluntary contributions**

Governors at Atwood Primary School believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means (the use of 'parent' in this document refers to the parent/carer of a child attending Atwood Primary School). 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 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. This policy was written with reference to the DfE Fair Access Division document, 'Charging for School Activities' (2009). The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

#### **The policy identifies activities for which:**

- **charges will not be made;**
- **charges will be made;**
- **charges may be waived.**

#### **Voluntary contributions**

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have. See Section 6 below for information about voluntary contributions.

#### *The Law says:*

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

#### **1 No charges will be made for**

- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education;

- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

## **2 Activities for which charges may be made**

### **a) Activities outside school hours**

- Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

### **b) Residential activities**

- Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.
- Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

### **c) Music tuition**

- Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 4 pupils.

### **d) Loss and Damage to School Property**

- Parents of a pupil who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, computer software, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement. This formal statement has to be made available to all parents. In reality, any problems are usually resolved very amicably.

## **3 Residential Visits**

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

### **Is a residential trip in or out of school time?**

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

## 4 Charges

It is the policy of Atwood Primary School that **charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made. Where payment is not made, the child will not take part in the activity.**

Activities for which a **charge** can be made (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as 'optional extras'. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Activity or thing for which a charge will or may be made	Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, <i>where a parent wishes their child to own them.</i>	eg A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay, or a revision book supplied at cost.	None available.
Charges will be made for music tuition.	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils.	80% reduction for Category A (see below) and Remitted for Category C (see below) <b>only</b> for those pupils learning through Croydon Music and Arts (CMA).
Charges will/may be made for the hire of musical instruments.	For instruments hired from CMA: £5 for the first term £10 per term for rest of first school year £20 per term thereafter No charge for instruments 'borrowed' from school (however, loss/damage as below applies).	For CMA instruments: £5 per term for Category A (see below), Remitted for Category C.
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips.	The charge will not exceed the actual cost.	Remission for Category A and C (see below). 25% reduction for Category B (see below).
Breakfast Club.	Parents are charged £4 per session attended by their child, which includes the cost of food.	Parents may use childcare vouchers to fund the cost of breakfast club.
After-school Clubs.	eg Art clubs, music activities, sport activities (not as part of the National Curriculum). Each session attended is currently £1.50.	Remitted for Category C (see below).
After-school Care.	Care up to 6pm, including tea currently charged at £9. A late pick-up charge is also levied at £10 per family for each additional 15 minutes after 6pm.	Parents may use childcare vouchers to fund the cost of care.
Loss and damage to school property.		None available.

## 5 Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

### **Families qualifying for remission or help with charges.**

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

#### **Category A**

Parents in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190 (figure correct for 2011/12);
- Guaranteed State Pension.

#### **Category B**

The household income is more than £16,190 (ie Category A does not apply), but less than £22,000.

#### **Category C**

Children in Care ('Looked after').

### **Additional considerations**

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

- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments;
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip;
- 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.

Parents should speak to the head teacher confidentially to discuss remissions and reductions as above, and the head teacher will apply this policy consistently and fairly. The Head Teacher may ask to see evidence to meet the criteria, but will not keep a copy.

The head teacher will use the school budget funding to make these remissions and reductions, and the Resources Committee will ensure that adequate resources are allocated for this purpose.

## 5 Voluntary Contributions

In order to provide additional opportunities for learning, parents are invited to make voluntary contributions to the school. Rather than ask for contributions each time additional opportunities are provided governors have chosen to invite parents to make a one-off annual payment for each child. **These payments are entirely voluntary and pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.**

Contributions are invited to support:

- a proportion of the cost of visiting authors and other groups that the school organises, including workshop-type activities, not funded from the school's funding;
- day trips off the school premises that may or may not include using either public transport, hired coach, or school minibus;
- additional resources for class-based activities, such as art materials or cooking ingredients.

Governors have asked the Head Teacher to ask parents for this voluntary contribution each September (or when the child joins the school), and to offer the option to pay in instalments:

Nursery and Reception pupils	£20*
KS1/KS2	£35* for the first child and £25* for siblings (ie two children in KS1/2 £60, child in KS1 and Nursery £55)

\* Governors would welcome *more* than this amount!

**Where insufficient contributions are raised, some planned trips or activities for a year group may have to be cancelled.**

Any unspent contributions within a year group will be added to the contributions of the same cohort of children in the following year, so that the fund is 'built up' for those children. The costs associated with the children tend to be higher for the older children anyway, but in practice the governors have set the amount above so as not to build a 'reserve'. Any unspent contributions will be reported to Governors as below.

It is not expected that any other voluntary contribution will be requested during the year, except:

- **Y5** – a voluntary contribution towards the travel expenses and activities associated with a three-day residential school journey (ie not the board and lodging charge as in '4' above).
- **Y6** - a voluntary contribution towards the travel expenses and activities associated with a five-day residential school journey (ie not the board and lodging charge as in '4' above); a voluntary contribution towards the travel expenses and entry ticket for a day at Chessington World of Adventures at the end of Y6.

Similar to remissions and reductions in '5' above, the head teacher may apply the following to the Y5/6 additional voluntary contributions above:

- Remission for Category C (see Section '5' above);
- Up to 50% reduction for Category A (see Section '5' above);
- Up to 25% reduction for Category B (see Section '5' above).

Parents should speak to the head teacher confidentially to discuss remissions and reductions as above, and the head teacher will apply this policy consistently and fairly. The Head Teacher may ask to see evidence to meet the criteria, but will not keep a copy. The head teacher will use the school budget funding to make these remissions and reductions, and the Resources Committee will ensure that adequate resources are allocated for this purpose.

If the total voluntary contributions expected for the individual residential school journeys or Chessington World of Adventures trip, excluding the use of the school's budget for the above remissions and reductions, requires more than £200 from the normal school's budget, then the Head Teacher should consider cancelling the activity if no non-returnable deposit has been paid. If further expense would be incurred by cancelling, then the activity should take place, but governors will consider not repeating the same activity the following year for the next cohort of children.

The Head Teacher will report to the governing body once a year to inform them of:

- the total income contributed for both **charges** and **voluntary contributions**, broken down by year group only;
- the trips and activities organised for that year group and costs involved for each activity;
- a list of any activities cancelled (or not organised due to lack of contributions) for each year group;
- the total amount of any remissions or reductions given during the year for **charges**, broken down by activity only and without any identification of individuals;
- the total amount of any remissions or reductions given during the year for **voluntary contributions** relating to Y5/6 residential school journeys or Y6 Chessington World of Adventures trip, broken down by activity only and without any identification of individuals.

**Policy Agreed and minuted by the Governing Body on: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

**Next review date: July 2013**