



REDBOURN JUNIOR SCHOOL CHARGING, REFUNDS AND REMISSIONS

REVIEW RECORD

Name of Policy	
Charging, Refunds and Remissions	
Staff Responsible for Review (e.g. Headteacher, Subject Leader)	Date presented to staff
Headteacher	
Committee Responsible for Review	Date of Review
Resources	Spring 2016
Date of Adoption in Resources Committee Minutes	Date of Next Review
18 th Jan 2016	Spring 2018

COPY OF POLICY KEPT IN POLICIES FOLDER IN SCHOOL OFFICE

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS	
Page/Clause Amended	Brief Details of Changes

1 PURPOSE

The Education Act 1996 requires governing bodies to determine policies on charging and on remissions.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits can make towards a pupil's education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of Redbourn Junior School and as additional optional activities. This policy will ensure that charges and remissions are applied consistently and fairly, and that they enable all pupils to access provision regardless of their families' financial circumstances.

2 SCOPE

The law does not permit any charge to be made for education provided during school hours (not including the midday break), nor for education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. The Year 5 and Year 6 school journeys that Redbourn Junior School facilitates are deemed to take place during school hours.

The prohibition on charging applies equally to the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment and also to the cost of transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

There are two types of financial contribution for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities

- **Voluntary contributions:** There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution that may be asked for or any restriction on the way in which it is used
- **Permitted charges:** These are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit and 'optional extras'

3 POLICY

3.1 Best value will be sought in planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

3.2 Permitted Charges

A charge will be made for:

- Board and lodging during residential school trips; this cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision (but see Remissions below).
- Music tuition
- Materials/ingredients used in school clubs
- Optional extras taking place out of school hours
- Clubs facilitated by external providers

A charge may be made (either in cost or in kind) in respect of the materials used in some curriculum activities (for example cookery, or design and technology) if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

When charges are made for any activity 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 cannot.

3.3 Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of activities which take place during the school day and which incur additional costs, for example day trips or visits from external providers.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against: no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution.

Letters requesting a voluntary contribution for an activity must indicate that there is no obligation to contribute and that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

Where the shortfall from contributions towards the cost of day activities or visits is 5% or more, then the activity will be cancelled.

Residential trips

Although the school can charge for board and lodging on residential visits (see above), no charge is permitted for the educational or travel elements. A voluntary contribution will therefore be sought to cover these costs.

3.4 Remissions

Residential trips

Children will be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging if their parents are in receipt of the following support payments:

- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed State Pension

The Headteacher will use their discretion in offering remissions and subsidies to additional categories of parents. In particular, parents who have explained genuine financial difficulties, which in the opinion of the Head Teacher (and through consultation with Governors if deemed appropriate) justifies a subsidy towards these costs, may claim help with some costs

Music tuition

The Authority operates a remission policy in relation to individual tuition in playing a musical instrument provided by the Herts Music Service.

3.5 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:

- where possible a list of visits (and their approximate cost) will be published at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- parents will be given the option to pay in instalments for residential trips
- 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.

Instrumental Music Lessons

As part of the conditions of allowing the school to be used for these lessons the school has reserved the right to ask for payment/contribution in the event of any breakage or damage to school property/equipment.

3.6 Refunds

In accordance with the guidance set out within the HCC Financial Handbook for Schools, where an activity makes an unexpected surplus Redbourn Junior School will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
- £5 or more per person

Surpluses will be reimbursed in ‘round amounts’ only, e.g. £3 not £3.29.

If the journey or visit makes a surplus, then parents and guardians should be offered a refund where the sum involved per pupil might reasonably be expected to be refunded. As a guideline, any surplus of 5% or more of the contribution per head (or proportionate amount where full per head costs was not paid), should be offered as a refund (or whole pounds below this amount). Five pounds is regarded as a reasonable threshold to warrant refunds.

Any refunds should be made as soon as possible after the visit, either to pupils or parents by cheque or cash against signed receipts.

Where a pupil is unable to participate in an activity due to illness, the school will refund any marginal cost of the activity and, taking into consideration the overall cost of the trip, will consider making a full refund to the parents. Where a pupil drops out from an activity for any reason other than illness, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher whether a refund will be made.

In the event of the cancellation of the journey, the school will provide a full refund to parents.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Finance governors from the Resources Committee shall be responsible for periodic review of the charges made and contributions sought under the terms of this policy.

The Finance Committee of the governing body 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), the source of those subsidies, and evidence of impact on pupils' learning.

It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

This policy shall be reviewed annually.