



OVERBURY C E FIRST SCHOOL CHARGING and REMISSIONS POLICY

September 2015

Context

It is part of the school ethos, encouraged by the Governors, to take children on educational visits and enrich their curriculum and learning experiences through 'experts'.

Whilst no formal charge for enrichment activities, including school visits can be made, voluntary contributions are sought from all families. These subsidise the costs to enable these experiences to take place, as insufficient contributions can jeopardise the event or trip. No pupil will be prevented from participating in an activity because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution (except for Residential trips which are outside of school time). Furthermore, the 'Friends of Overbury School' try to subsidise events and trips to keep the individual cost down as much as possible. Parents in financial hardship can discuss this with the Head Teacher, and no charge may be made. Additional charges are expressly mentioned to parents, who consent to be charged the agreed amount by signing acknowledgement forms and sending in money prior to the event or paying through the School Money website.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is clarity regarding which items the school will provide free of charge and which items there may be a charge for and the procedures which are in place.

2. Activities not charged for

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 and equipment required. On line homework on Education City and Bug Club are also not charged for.

3. Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs. The governors have agreed that voluntary contributions can be sought from parents for:

- Transport for swimming lessons and swimming lessons themselves may be charged for, dependent on the school's financial situation from Spring 2016 as these are provided above the expectations in the National Curriculum.
- Transport and entry fees for educational visits
- Transport to cluster sport events
- In-school events such as theatre companies
- Extra provision in Topic and Arts Weeks - including outside experts

4. Other charges

4.1 Peripatetic music lessons in groups up to 4 pupils are charged at the rates set by Worcester Youth Music - the total cost of the lesson being split between the number of pupils taking part. The school pays the teacher through Worcestershire Youth Music and is reimbursed by the parents, with payment being $\frac{1}{2}$ a

term in advance. The school reserves the right to cancel further lessons if parents are in arrears for more than one term.

Payments for guitar and piano lessons are paid direct by the parents to the peripatetic teacher involved - when this is not through Worcestershire Youth Music.

4.2 Breakages and Damage to School Property - The Governing Body reserves the right to seek reparation from parents where their children cause breakages or damage school property including musical instruments.

4.3 Hot School Dinners - These are on-site through Class Catering. All payments are made through School Money to the School. Class Catering are then paid by the school. The school is not involved in counting or handling the money, unless there are administrative issues with School Money - such as at the beginning of a new school year.

4.4 After School Clubs - School run after school clubs are charged at a current rate of £10 per half term. Parents in financial hardship can discuss this with the Head Teacher, and no charge may be made. No charge is also made for Pupil Premium pupils, which are offset against the Pupil Premium grant. Clubs run by outside providers are set at their own rate which is collected directly by the club; the school can provide no assistance in the payment of these clubs.

4.5 Merchandise - School provides a very small range of merchandise including wellie bags, PE bags and CDs of photos which are charged at cost price. (School uniform is supplied direct to the parents through Tesco.) A selection of second hand uniform is available on request, sold for a small donation.

4.6 Residential Trips - These are charged at cost price to parents on an instalment basis. Parents in financial hardship may receive assistance from Bredon Rotary through a letter of application from the Head Teacher; remaining instalments can then be spread over a longer period of time at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

4.7 School Milk - Parents order and pay on-line through Cool Milk - the school is not involved in this process.

5. Procedures

5.1 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. The charges are broken down for the parents on their acknowledgement letter.

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

5.2 Refunds - Voluntary contributions can only be refunded when the total amount enables individual charges to be removed ie contributions for entrance fees if any child is absent on the day of the visits; however, coach fares cannot be refunded.

5.3 School Money

This system is the school's preferred payment system- it is easier to negotiate, easier to maintain, enables parental permission to be given on line for trips (reducing administration time), and sends out automatic monies owed reminders by email and text. All transactions receive an automatic receipt by email including cash payments entered by school staff, so physical receipts are no longer provided by the office.

5.4 Charging Costs to parents

Currently, the costs are charged on a per item basis - whenever possible half a term at a time payments are set up to minimise transaction costs for parents - with payment expected through School Money - paying cash is discouraged.

If cash is handed in, the payment is recorded onto School Money and an automated receipt is sent direct.

5.5 Procedures

These are set out in detail within the school Financial Procedures Policy and the Office Procedure Manual, including chasing unpaid costs.

6. Inability to pay

Parents/Carers are asked to speak in confidence to the office/Head Teacher should this need arise. Unless the amount outstanding is a 'debt' and not a voluntary contribution, terms can be agreed at the Head Teacher's discretion and, if deemed necessary and appropriate, the voluntary contribution can be waived.

If the amount outstanding is a 'debt' then the procedure in the School Finance Policy should be followed.

7. School Fund

Whilst the use of the School Fund is diminishing, there are occasions when access to School Fund is still important. If VAT is to be claimed back, Imprest must be used.

Payments are made into school fund including cheques made payable to Overbury First School which may include:

- Donations
- Fundraising
- A small amount of miscellaneous is received every year ie Devises/photographs
- Insurance payments
- Clubs through school money

Cash may be banked if this is at the request of the Heather Teacher particularly fundraising going in and out.

The procedure is set out in detail in the Office Procedure Manual.

8. Charges Direct to Worcestershire County Council (WCC)

These are diminishing as school transfers money received from School Money into the budget. Nevertheless there may be direct payments to WCC to include:

- Trips involving coach transportation
- Peripatetic music tuition

- Residential Trips
- Uniform - second hand and bags
- Swimming Transport and lessons
- Donations
- Fundraising

If a pupil cancels their place for a residential trip, they will automatically lose their deposit. Refund of the other amounts of money will be dependent upon the conditions laid down by the supplier of the Residential Trip, and therefore, a refund cannot be guaranteed.

9. Role of the Governors

Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and annually review the charging and remissions policy (which is précised within the school prospectus). The Resources Committee, due to their combined expertise, offer specific guidance in this area.

10. Monitoring and review

The office staff and Head Teacher are responsible for ensuring this policy is maintained from day to day. This policy is reviewed annually with the school prospectus.