

FOREST WAY SCHOOL

CHARGING POLICY

Adopted by Governors: May 2015

Reviewed: May 2017

Signed: _____



Chairman of Governors

Background

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those activities which the school will provide free of charge and for those where there may be a charge.

Main Points

The main points for consideration are:-

- Schools cannot charge for education provided during school hours including the supply of materials, books etc.
- Schools must ensure that parent/carers on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits are made aware of support that may be available when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- Schools cannot charge for education outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum

Charges are allowed to be made for the cost of providing “Optional Extras”. These are:-

- Education that is not part of the national curriculum
- Transport other than transport to and from school or to other places where they will be educated
- Board and Lodging for a pupil on residential visits
- Extended day services offered to pupils

Calculating Charges

The following points must be taken into account:-

- The cost cannot include an element of subsidy for other pupils or alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate
- Parental agreement is required for the provision of an optional extra that incurs a charge
- Voluntary contributions can be asked for provided that it is made clear that there is no obligation and parent/carers are not placed under any undue pressure to contribute
- No pupil should be excluded from the activity because parent/carers refuse or are unwilling to pay
- No charge shall be made for transport costs involving any educational element.
- Parent/Carers in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from the cost of board and lodging payments incurred on a residential trip. The following is a list of relevant benefits involved:-
 - Income Support
 - Income based Job Seekers Allowance
 - Child Tax Credit (Subject to non-receipt of Working Tax Credit and family's income does not exceed a certain level (£16190 2013-14))
 - The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
 - Income related employment and support allowance

2. Educational Activities for Students at Forest Way School

2.1 Guiding Principle

During the school day, all activities that are a necessary part of the curriculum (including musical instrument tuition), plus Religious Education, will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport where applicable.

2.2 Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs – e.g. field trips. If these are a necessary part of curriculum studies, no student will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if insufficient funds are available overall, then it may be necessary to review the activities offered.

2.3 Calculating of Voluntary Contributions

The rate of voluntary contributions requested for necessary educational activities will be no more than the total costs of the activity divided by the number of participating students.

2.4 All pupils have regular visits on the school minibuses as part of the curriculum. We may request voluntary contributions for special visits such as museums or for visiting theatre or musical groups. Inability to contribute will not affect whether a pupil takes part in an activity.

2.5 Voluntary contributions will also be requested for daily refreshments and weekly food-technology.

3. Optional Activities for Students

3.1 Hardship

In cases of hardship, financial support for participation in optional activities will be at the discretion of the governors and/or headteacher. If payment for participation in activities causes financial difficulties for parent/carers they should contact the headteacher in the first instance in order to discuss what support may be available.

4. Out-of-hours Activities

4.1 Definition of out-of-hours activities

The school may provide opportunities for pupils, parents and members of the wider community to participate in a range of activities.

4.2 Charging for out-of-hours activities

Where activities are not fully funded by external sources, the school reserves the right to charge an appropriate fee for participation. This excludes activities that are part of the national curriculum

5. Loss/Damage to School Property

5.1 Charges

If school property is lost or damaged as a result of pupil misbehaviour and/or negligence, parents may be asked to meet all or part of the cost of replacement. In such cases, the charge made will be calculated in consultation with appropriate senior staff who have knowledge of the pupil and of the incident concerned.

6. Refunds

- 6.1 In the event of unforeseen absence or circumstances, refunds of amounts collected from pupils relating to educational visits/trips away from school will be made, unless instructed otherwise by parents/carers (i.e. donations to school funds).