



WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING, REMISSIONS & REFUND POLICY

June 2015

Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that additional activities can make towards the children's personal and social education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of the school and as additional activities. We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits, independent of their parents' financial means.

1. **No Charges will be made for**

Education provided during school hours including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.

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

The Governing Body **RESERVES THE RIGHT** to authorise a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

i) **Activities outside school hours**

The full cost for each parent for activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours such as Theatre and Concert visits.

ii) **Residential Trips**

The cost of board and lodging of educational/residential school trips, even if they occur during school hours. Such charges to be less any subsidy offered by the school.

iii) **Charging in kind**

The Governing Body may charge for ingredients and materials or require them to be provided, if parents wish to own the finished product.

iv) **Instrumental Music Lessons**

A charge is permitted for optional instrumental music tuition undertaken in school hours. The charge for tuition is paid a term in advance.

The Governing Body may also charge for the cost of repair and/or replacement of items wilfully damaged or loaned and subsequently damaged or lost.

3. Remission or help with charges

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.

The school will aim to provide assistance for children from families in financial need and parents are advised to contact the Headteacher in confidence.

4. Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Educational visits to museums, theatres and other sites of interest which support the children's learning
- Visits by authors, poets, environmentalists, puppeteers, theatre groups and other experts who come into school to extend the children's knowledge and experience.
- Materials that enhance learning or personal, social and emotional development.
- Swimming tuition that is deemed to be required by the National Curriculum.
- Foundation Stage voluntary contributions.

The Governing Body may from time to time, amend the categories of activities for which a voluntary contribution of charge be made.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against.

It must be made clear in all letters to Parents where the school is requesting a voluntary contribution towards the cost of visitors, items, events and materials. Parents should be informed in such a way that they are aware it is a contribution and that they are welcome to discuss the voluntary contribution with the Headteacher should circumstances be such that the contribution causes some kind of difficulty.

A standard paragraph will be appended to all letters to parents regarding school outings where voluntary contributions are applicable:

We are requesting a voluntary contribution of £..... to be paid by, however if insufficient contributions are received we will have no option but to cancel this activity. If you think you may have difficulty making this contribution please contact Mrs Stace in confidence as soon as possible.

The school looks forward to the support, understanding and generosity of parents.

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 we shall publish a list of residential visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead.

- Have an established system for parents to pay in instalments: Wisepay or via the school office.

6. Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. Following guidance set out in the HCC Financial Handbook for Schools', the school will offer a refund if the surplus is either:

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

Surpluses will be reimbursed in whole pounds only.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that *'a surplus of £x has been made and if the parent/guardian would like to take advantage of it they should contact the school office by a date 'x' weeks in advance. If the school is not contacted by that date it will assume that the refund has been donated to school funds.'* All refunds will be paid by cheque in order to maintain a clear audit trail. Refunds donated to the school will be transferred to an appropriate budget heading.

Policy Reviewed: June 2015

Date of Next Review: June 2017