



Gilbert Colvin Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on 06th November 2024

Signed

(Chair of Governors)

To be reviewed annually

Charging and Remissions Policy



Introduction

The Headteacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Headteacher and Governing Body aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Purpose and Aims

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

Where 'parent' is referred to, this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim to:

- Make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income
- Encourage and promote external activities to take place at a minimum cost to the curriculum
- Provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- Respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget

Legislation – Education During School Hours

The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that "Education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity". It goes on to advise that "Although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or kind)".

When additional costs are incurred by Gilbert Colvin Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils; parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Education Outside School Hours

The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that “Parents can only be charged for the activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intention, Gilbert Colvin Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply, in confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. The Headteacher or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

If the parent of a pupil is in receipt of income support, family credit, income based jobseekers’ allowance or disability working allowance, charges for materials and charges for activities outside school hours may be reduced.

Data Protection of Pupils and Families

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

Contributions

Voluntary contributions will be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity, it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled and the range of activities may be curtailed.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (i.e. weekend residential)
- After-school and pre-school clubs
- Music tuition if it is not required for the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or groups of pupils
- Damage to school property – the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's actions
- Visit to school by professionals, e.g. authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists, etc.

Music Tuition

At present, Redbridge Music School levies charges in respect of individual music tuition and group tuition up to and including four persons. The school acts as a broker passing on the cost of such tuition to the parents. The school meets the cost of any loss incurred. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before the tuition is provided.

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects

Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc, needed for practical subjects, such as Technology. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.

Lost School Books

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school property.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture and Property

Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's actions.

Residential Activity

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors¹ states that:

“For residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel.

However, charges will be made for board and/or lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving income Support or Family Credit. The Headteacher will tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.”

Field Courses/Residential Visits: The school will charge for board and lodging for those pupils involved in field trips (which are not compulsory, though children are encouraged to attend as part of the inclusion policy of the school), in line with sections 29- 35 of DFE Circular 2/89. In addition, voluntary contributions may be requested to cover the cost of travel.

(Gilbert Colvin Primary School will follow the relevant legislation as contained in the Education Reform Act 1988: Section 106 – 111, 117 and 118. The guidance is contained in the DCSF circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities).

¹Department for Education 'Charging for School Activities' October 2014 under Residential Visits.

Penalty for Late Collection

If a child is collected more than 15 minutes after their set collection time on more than one occasion within a rolling 4 week period (excluding holiday periods); then the school will apply a child care fee of £15 per quarter of an hour (or part thereof). The Headteacher will have the discretion to waive or reduce this in the case of genuine emergencies, e.g. hospitalisation of a parent or sibling. Where a child is attending an after-school club, this late collection fee will apply if he/she is collected later than **15 minutes** after the close of the club.

Photocopying

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', will be charged at **10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing**.

Private Fees

A standardised report will be made available to parents for the purpose of a third party private assessment (e.g. year 6 to year 7 transition to private school, mid-year pupil progress report for private schools, solicitors or private psychologist reports) at a cost of £25 per child per report. For passport applications, nationalisation or confirmation of school attendance letters a charge of £25 per child will be applied.

Conclusion

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

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.