



## **Copnor Primary School**

### **Charging and Remissions Policy**

#### **Rationale**

We use the school's budget to provide for the best possible education for the children in the school at any given time in line with the priorities in our School Improvement Plan. From time to time, the school may decide to ask parents for voluntary contributions to activities that are arranged to support our curriculum e.g. visiting theatres and museums. This policy sets out what the school charges for and is in line with the advice provided by the Department for Education in Charging for School Activities (May 2018) (available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities> ).

This advice is based on Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. This sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

#### **Aims**

1. To provide a rich and varied curriculum
2. To ensure the essential curriculum for all does not require any charging
3. To minimise the curriculum's dependency on any charges
4. To ensure any charging to our parents/carers covers costs only, and does not provide a "profit."

#### **School Charging: What a School Cannot Charge For**

School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

#### **School Charging: What a School Can Charge For**

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);
- community facilities (more information is available in the Lettings Policy).

#### **Optional Extras**

The limited number of optional extras a school can charge for include:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the national curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;or
  - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
  - board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

### **Music and Vocal Tuition Charging**

Charges are permitted for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum (i.e. normal music lessons for the whole class).

### **Voluntary contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body/the school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, then this will be made clear to parents/carers at the outset and will also make it clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents/carers. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be where there are limited places.

### **Day Visits and the Charging for these Visits**

There are three types of day visits (see the Education Visits and Visitors Policy for more details). Different voluntary contributions will be sought as appropriate.

Day visits might be:

1. An "essential curriculum visit"
2. A "supporting curriculum visit"
3. An "enrichment activity."

1. "Essential curriculum visits" are visits that will prove essential to all children to help them gain a better understanding about a subject. We really would be unable to provide this understanding in our school setting. These visits, including any transport, would be funded by the school. This will be made clear in the letter, with the following wording: *"As this visit is deemed to be essential to the curriculum, the costs associated with the visit have been met by the school. Were your child not to attend, then their normal curriculum will not be provided in school."*

2. A "supporting curriculum visit" are curriculum visits that would require a voluntary contribution. These are visits where the school would be able to provide an understanding of the topic in the school setting. For these visits, it will be made clear in the letter that should the amount contributed fall far short of the cost of the trip, then the trip may have to be cancelled. All letters about "supporting curriculum visits" should, therefore, include the phrase: *'In order to meet the costs of this curriculum visit we ask for voluntary payments of £x. Should there be a shortfall between contributions received and costs incurred, we may have to cancel the trip. At this point those that have made a contribution will be refunded. We thank you for your support in this regard and hope that you are able to support the school with this voluntary contribution.'*

3. "Enrichment activities" are visits which are in addition to the curriculum. Should parent/carers/carers wish their child to take part in these enrichment outings, the full cost of the visit must be paid. For those children not taking part, the full curriculum will continue at school. All letters about charged "enrichment activities" should include the phrase: *"An enrichment activity is one that enhances the child's experiences but is not essential. The child's normal curriculum will still be provided back at school. As this is an enrichment activity, full payment is needed to attend."*

### **Residential visits**

Where a visit is overnight (in the case of a residential), the school makes a charge for board and lodging. This is agreed between the centre where the residential is occurring and the school before the visit is booked. Where parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits which entitles them to Free School Meals, then the school will inform these parents/carers that they have the right to claim free boarding and lodging.

### **Visitors and the Charging for the Visitor to Attend**

Some visitors to the school do so at a financial cost. A visitor attending will be one of three types. These visitors might be:

1. An "essential curriculum visitor"
2. A "supporting the curriculum visitor"
3. An "enrichment visitor."

Different voluntary contributions will be sought as appropriate.

1. “An essential curriculum visitor” is a visitor who will prove essential to all children to help them gain a better understanding about a subject. We really would be unable to provide this understanding in our school setting without this visitor. These visitors would, where a cost is payable, be funded by the school. This will be made clear in the letter, with the following wording: *“As this visitor is deemed to be essential to the curriculum, the costs associated with the visitor have been met by the school. Were your child not to attend the session with the visitor, then their normal curriculum will not be provided in school.”*

2. A “supporting curriculum visitor” are curriculum visitors that would require a voluntary contribution, where there is a contribution required. These are visitors where the school would be able to provide an understanding of the topic in the school setting without this visitor. For these visitors, it will be made clear in the letter that should the amount contributed fall far short of the cost of the visitor, then the visitor’s visit to the school may have to be cancelled. All letters about “supporting curriculum visitors” should, therefore, include the phrase: *‘In order to meet the costs of this curriculum visitor we ask for voluntary payments of £x. Should there be a shortfall between contributions received and costs incurred, we may have to cancel the visitor. At this point those that have made a contribution will be refunded. We thank you for your support in this regard and hope that you are able to support the school with this voluntary contribution.’*

2. “Enrichment visitors” are visitors who are in addition to the curriculum. Should parent/carers wish their child to take part in an enrichment visitor’s visit, the full cost of the visit must be paid. For those children not taking part, the full curriculum will continue in school. All letters about “enrichment visitors” should include the phrase: *“An enrichment activity is one that enhances the child’s experiences but is not essential. The child’s normal curriculum will still be provided in school. As this is an enrichment visit, full payment is needed to attend.”* An example of an enriched visitor is Rocksteady (which is covered as part of the optional extras charges section of this document).

Policy Agreed: November 2023

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