

Robert Arkenstall Primary School

Charges and Remissions Policy

It is the aim of Robert Arkenstall Primary School to provide a broad curriculum and education of the highest quality within a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment, which enables each child to experience success; to equip them with skills as thoughtful, caring and active citizens, eager to explore the possibilities of the world.

Pursue possibilities; love learning

This policy is published on the School website, stored on the Shared Drive and is available on request from the school office

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Governor Committee | Finance and Personnel |
| Reviewer | K Bonney |
| Ratified | March 2022 |
| Review period | 1 year |
| Next review due | March 2023 |

Our School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Introduction

We recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. We 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.

Statement:

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
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget

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 in kind)."

When additional costs are incurred by Robert Arkenstall Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. However, if not enough voluntary contributions are received activities may not be able to go ahead.

Education Outside School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that: "Parents can only be charged for 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. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as "optional extras".

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Robert Arkenstall Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy.

Where pupils are currently eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or their parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see Appendix A) the Governing Body will observe its statutory requirement to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within school term time.

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 parents are invited 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.

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.

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. Parent of pupils in receipt of FSM will not be asked for contributions to day trips and swimming lessons in accordance with our spending plans for Pupil Premium Funding.

*** If sufficient contributions are not received an activity may be cancelled. ***

Charges:

The school reserves the right to make a charge (for which remission may be available for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding or if parents are in receipt of certain benefits *see appendix A) for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (considered as Optional Extras under DfE Guidance)
- 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 for groups of pupils.

The school reserves the right to make a charge (for which remission may not be available) for the items below:

- 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 behaviour.
- Damage to school books (Reading scheme)
- Damage to school I.T. equipment including Chromebooks which are loaned for use at home

Residential Activity

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that: “For a 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.”

In any year the cost of our regular Year 6 Residential may include a combination of chargeable and contributory costs for:

- board and lodging,
- Optional Extras (as defined by DfE *Charging for School Activities* Oct 2014)
- the cost of travel

We operate staged payments through the year for residential visits to spread the cost. As with all trips we reserve the right to cancel the trip if we do not receive enough contributions to cover the majority of the costs.

We communicate clearly that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the benefits listed in Appendix A will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. Further remissions may be applied for in confidence, as above.

Reports and Letters

During the summer term, all children receive an annual report on their progress, for which no charge is made, and if children transfer to another school their files will be sent to their new school.

However, the school will charge if you request additional reports, letters or completion of forms such as in support of your child(ren)’s application to a private or non-UK school or application for a passport. This is to cover the cost of staff time to prepare such documents.

This is a fixed charge for each report or letter sent, regardless of the length of time it takes for staff to prepare the document. The charge is fixed for the academic year and is reviewed annually during the summer term.

For details of current charges, please refer to the schedule of charges at the end of this policy.

School Dinners

School dinner money must be paid in advance. It can be paid daily, weekly or half-termly.

Robert Arkenstall Primary School’s online payment provider is **My Child At School**. It is possible to pay via My Child At School App or by logging on to the website www.mychildatschool.com . To access your child(ren)’s online account you will need a unique activation code. Please contact the Finance Officer at finance@robertarkenstall.co.uk if you have not received your activation code.

Payment of charges and voluntary contributions

All charges are payable in advance.

The school ONLY accepts online payment for all charges and voluntary contributions.

For reasons of cash security, please do not hand cash or cheques to staff and do not leave loose cash or cheques on desks in the office.

The school will not pursue parents for the non-payment of voluntary contributions.

Non-payment of charges will be pursued. Children's accounts will be monitored weekly and parents/carers will be contacted to advise them of any arrears.

Failure to respond to such communication and to settle the arrears may result in your child not being able to take school dinners or participate in chargeable activities.

Materials and equipment will not be issued until payment has been received.

If you are having difficulty in paying arrears you are strongly encouraged to discuss the matter, in confidence, with the Headteacher or one of the office staff.

Divorced and Separated Parents

Financial arrangements between divorced and separated parents are a private matter for the individuals concerned. To avoid unnecessary intrusion by the school into these private matters, all correspondence regarding permissions and charges will be addressed to the parent residing at the child's registered address as recorded in the school's database. It will be the responsibility of that parent to pay any charges to the school and, if they wish to do so, to seek a contribution from the other parent towards those charges. This applies to all chargeable activities, including school meals.

Should parents wish the school to deviate from this policy, for example if parents have been awarded joint custody, the parents should jointly make a written request to the Headteacher proposing how they would like any charges to be split between them.

Hire of Community Facilities

Under Section 27(1) of the Education Act the school makes charges for the provision of community facilities. *See Lettings Policy for details of charges.*

(Robert Arkenstall 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).

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

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

Appendix A

Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

Schedule of Standing Charges

Academic Year: 2021 / 2022

School Dinners

| | |
|--|-------|
| Pupil meal (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) | FREE |
| Pupil meal (Year 3 to Year 6) | £2.40 |
| Child's meal (non-pupil, by invitation only) | £2.40 |
| Staff meal | £3.00 |
| Parent / carer meal (by invitation only) | £3.00 |

Reports

| | |
|---|--------|
| School application report | £50.00 |
| Other letters / forms e.g. passport application | £25.00 |

Approved by Full Governing Body – 22nd March 2022