



*Section 449-562 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England*

## **Introduction**

At Kirk Merrington Primary School we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curriculum and extra-curricular) independent of their parents financial means.

This Charging and Remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

All the education we provide during normal school hours is at no charge to pupils. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, with the exception of some individual or small-group music tuition.

## **Legislation**

The legislation:

- + enables charges for education activities to be raised only in certain circumstances;
- + enables voluntary contributions in support of any activity to be sought;
- + requires a policy which, as a minimum, provides for complete remission of any charges otherwise payable in respect of board and lodging provided for a pupil on a residential trip where it takes place within specific criteria referred to in the legislation and where the pupil's parent(s) are in receipt of specified state benefits.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

When organising school visitors or educational visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents/carers to contribute to the cost.

Some pupils are in receipt of free school meals and so come from low income families, school works hard to try and ensure all visits are the best value possible. School does not ask for voluntary contributions for the majority of activities in school, just for approximately one to two visits each year.

All contributions are voluntary and this is made clear on the letters that go to parents/carers. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may need to cancel a visit but usually school subsidises the costs from school fund or using Pupil Premium money. If a visit goes ahead, it may include children whose parents/carers have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in a school visit or event, but is unable to make a voluntary contribution, we allow the child to participate fully in the visit or activity. School pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents/carers have a right to know how each visit is funded, and the school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- + visits to museums; places of interest
- + outdoor adventure activities;
- + visits to or by a theatre company;
- + musical events;
- + visitors delivering workshops to the pupils.

### ***Residential Visits***

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board, lodging and travel expenses. If parents are experiencing financial difficulty they are invited to write in confidence to the Head Teacher. If we cannot raise sufficient funding through these voluntary contributions, the visit may have to be cancelled. If the trip goes ahead it may include those whose parents or carers have not paid any contribution, we do not treat those children differently from any others.

### ***Music Tuition***

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by county peripatetic music teachers. A contract between the county music service and individuals parents is then issued. There is a cost for such tuition which is charged directly to parents from the county peripatetic music service. School does not enter into this contract other than to give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

If a small number of pupils require payment for a music tuition activity, then school may fund this from budget to remove a barrier to participation.

### ***Materials, Books, Instruments or Other Equipment***

School provides all material, books and equipment needed for school and homework purposes at no charge to parents/carers. However if a book is lost or deliberately spoilt then parents would be asked to contribute towards the cost of replacing the book.

### ***Swimming***

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

### ***Buses***

For many activities transport is required, we normally charge, however, we use these charges only to cover the expenses of the visit, and not to make a profit.

### ***Fundraising Days***

Throughout the year the school hold a range of fundraising days, e.g. Non-school uniform or dressing up days.

Parents are expected to send £1 donation into school to support these initiatives if they can. If a child or parent does not want to participate in the day then they are not obliged to.

### ***Damage to Property***

The Governing Body may reserve the right to ask parents/carers to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is a result of a pupil's inappropriate behaviour.

## ***Monitoring and review***

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

