

Blowers Green Primary School

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BLOWERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS' POLICY

CHARGING & REMISSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England and, in line with the law, this policy sets out Blowers Green Primary School's policy on charging and remission for school activities and visits.

The school will ensure that:

- Families on low incomes or in receipt of relevant benefits are made aware of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of visits or activities;
- It does not pressure a parent to make a voluntary contribution for their child to attend a visit or activity; and
- A pupil is not excluded from a visit or activity because of a parent's unwillingness or inability to make a voluntary contribution.

However, it may be necessary to cancel a visit or activity if insufficient funds are received or available to meet its cost.

PURPOSE

To ensure that there is clarity for parents and staff about all of the visits, activities and items for which the school may charge.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The school will not charge for providing its pupils with a suitable education that complies with the National Curriculum, but it is entitled to charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;
- music and vocal tuition, when the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by a pupil;
- additional services, such as before & after school clubs, etc.; and
- optional extras (see below) and any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with them.

Therefore, to ensure that families have all of the information that they need, the school will inform parents in writing of the details of any activity or visit that requires either a voluntary contribution or payment from parents.

ACTIVITIES DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The school will provide to its pupils, **free of charge**, all activities that are:

- part of the National Curriculum, including religious education; and
- provided during the school day, i.e. between 8:50 a.m. and 3:15 p.m.

In addition, the school will not charge for any of the following supplied in connection with education provided during school hours:

- any materials, books, instruments or other equipment;
- transport arranged by the school to take a pupil between the school's premises and another place where the school is providing them with education; and
- external visits to museums, parks, theatres, sports grounds, etc.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

The school is entitled to charge and will usually charge in full for optional extras, which include:

- education that is provided outside of school time, but which is not:
 - part of the National Curriculum, including religious education; or
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
- an examination entry fee, if the pupil has not been prepared for the examination at the school;
- transport, other than transport required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or school have arranged for them 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, etc.; and
- external visits to museums, parks, theatres, sports grounds, etc., that is **not** supplied in connection with the provision of education.

As parents can choose to allow their child to participate in an optional extra activity, support is usually not available for these activities to children in receipt of the Pupil Premium.

CALCULATING CHARGES

Charges for activities will be calculated by subtracting any subsidy provided by the school's governing body from the costs that being incurred by the school and dividing the resulting figure by the total number of pupils intended to participate.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although, the school's governors will try to provide a subsidy, Voluntary Contributions may be sought for activities during the school day that could involve additional costs, for example, visits out of school and visitors to the school, such as theatre groups.

No pupil will be prevented from participating in an activity because their parents cannot or will not make a Voluntary Contribution, as parents are not obliged to make a contribution.

However, it may be necessary to cancel a visit or activity, if insufficient funds are received or available to meet its cost.

CANCELLING ACTIVITIES AND VISITS

Where insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity or visit the School Fund Committee will decide whether it will be cancelled.

In addition, a pupil may not be able to attend an activity or visit for a number of reasons, including:

- being unfit to attend due to illness;
- being withdrawn by their parents; or
- being prohibited from attending by the school due to their poor behaviour.

The school will endeavour refund all uncommitted funds to parents, if an activity or visit is cancelled or a pupil is unable to attend, but if the school has been required to pay a deposit or make some other such payment in advance, it will not be able to refund all of the voluntary contributions received.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS - OVERNIGHT STAY

Parents will be asked to submit an '*Expression of Interest*' for such visits, in order to enable the school determine the potential costs involved.

If the school decides that the visit is financially viable, on the basis of those '*Expressions of Interest*', the arrangements will be made and interested parents will be asked to pay:

- for their child's board, lodgings and transport; and
- an additional amount determined by using the process described in the paragraph on Calculating Charges (see above).

This means that the amount payable for the visit will never exceed its actual cost.

Children from families in receipt of Eligible Benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

ELIGIBLE BENEFITS

Families that are in receipt of Free School Meals or qualify for the Pupil Premium may be entitled to support for some school charges.

You will qualify for support if you receive:

- Universal Credit, but only in certain circumstances;
- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and

- 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.

Please note that, as the qualifying benefits may change from time to time, parents should visit www.dudley.gov.uk for details of the current qualifying benefits.

If you believe that your child qualifies for support, you must provide written proof that your family receives the qualifying benefit.

Support for students will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher and will be funded by the Pupil Premium.

All discussions relating to individual family circumstances will be confidential.

LATE COLLECTION/NON-COLLECTION AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY

School ends at 3:15 p.m. at which time all pupils should be collected.

A charge will be made for the cost of childcare provided by the school for any child not collected by 3:25 p.m., especially if no contact has been made with the school.

The payable will be £12.00 per child up until 4 p.m. and, if you still have not collected your child, there will be a further fee of £5.00 per child for every 15 minutes thereafter.

Please note that, that if the school is unable to contact you, if you are late on more than one occasion or the school begins to see a regular pattern emerging, the school's staff may conclude that it is necessary to report the matter to Social Services or the Police.

SCHOOL MEALS

School lunches consist of a healthy balanced meal, a pudding and a drink.

Children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 are all entitled to free school meals, whilst for children in Year 3 and upwards, a school lunch costs £2.30 per child per day.

The children of families who meet the government's eligibility criteria, will also be entitled to free school meals, but parents must apply directly to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council by completing a form that is available in the school office.

All dinner monies must be paid in advance; individuals that do not pay an amount that they owe to the school for any other reason will first be advised of what they owe by a letter and, if they still do not pay, will then have their case forwarded to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Debt Recovery Service.

MALICIOUS DAMAGE

If a child or a group of children have caused damage to school property or resources, their parents or carers may be charged a fee in order to replace or repair the damage.

LEARNING LOUNGE

The Learning Lounge is open each school day from 7:45 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. during term time, but is closed on school training days. As this facility is heavily subsidised by the school's governors, the current fee is £1.00 per session, which is payable on the day.

Pupils who eligible for Pupil Premium will be entitled to one free session per week.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Most after school clubs will run for around six weeks and places must be booked and paid for in advance for the full course. The school will not be able to refund payments received for sessions missed by pupils, but will endeavour to refund session(s) cancelled by the school.

The fees are:

- £1 per session for activities that do not entail additional costs, e.g. Homework;
- £1.50 per session for activities which entail some additional cost, e.g. Cookery Club and Art Club; and
- £3 per session for activities led by external providers;

Expressions of Interest will be sought, in order to determine the potential costs involved in providing a particular club.

NON PAYMENT

Parents who are experiencing difficulties making payments for a forthcoming visit should seek advice from the Head Teacher about the availability of instalment plan or whether their family's financial circumstances entitle them to support.

Individuals that do not pay an amount that they owe to the school for any other reason will first be advised of what they owe by a letter and, if they still do not pay, will then have their case forwarded to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Debt Recovery Service.

ACCESS TO DATA REQUESTS

The school may make a charge of £10 or more to provide copies of a large number of documents.