



“CREATIVITY, RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT, AND HAPPINESS”

BLUE COAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL
CHARGING AND REMISSIONS Policy

Committee responsible for this policy	Resources committee
Policy initially approved by FGB	6 th November 2012
Policy reviewed/amended	3 rd December 2013 4 th July 2014 12 th June 2017 11 th September 2018
Policy review term	Triennial
Policy due for review	2021



Statement of Intent / Scope of the Policy

The Governors wish to provide for all pupils the best possible educational opportunities available within its resource. The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and the Governors warmly endorse that principle and are committed to uphold all legal requirements. It is recognised, however, that many other educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependent on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme for pupils that these additional activities can provide.

Financial monitoring is a core duty for all school governing bodies but developments; locally and nationally continue to present significant challenges. For example:

- Costs within education continue to rise whilst school funding remains essentially static.
- The school's overall income has also decreased due to a continuing trend of a low local birth rate, meaning fewer pupils now enter our Reception classes. The school's budget falls with a falling number of pupils on roll.
- The school's spending has risen significantly due to additional (compulsory) pension contributions and the increase in the living wage; the Governing Body wholeheartedly supports these costs as being necessary and fair.

This policy intends to set out the circumstances and procedures involved when the school applies a charge or remission to parents of pupils at the school.

Enrichment is defined as those activities which go beyond the remit of the National Curriculum and enhance pupil experience.

Aims of the Policy

The school's aim is to keep financial contributions from parents to a reasonable minimum and to ensure as far as possible that all children are able to take part in an activity, irrespective of their parents' financial circumstances. The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances – provided that the school has identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced or waived for certain pupils. Further information about charges and remissions in state schools can be found on the Department of Education's website (www.education.gov.uk). The Governing Body regularly engage with the parent community in respect of the school's financial position and has decided that until further notice its policy will be as follows:

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organized by the school.

- School Excursions in School Hours and external visitors providing enrichment to pupils.

- The board and lodging element of any residential trip organized by the school.
- Activities outside school hours also known as “optional extras.”

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge will be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

1. 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.
2. Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
3. Transport that is not 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;
4. Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit. (See above);
5. Fees associated with after-school clubs.

In calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount will be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- Non-teaching staff;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;
- The cost or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra;
- The cost associated with the operation of after-school clubs. *Note: We do not aim to make a profit, just cover costs to the school*

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will 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.

A charge will also be made for any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child’s parent / carer wish them to own them.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Costs associated with School Excursions must be fully funded, prior to the trip date, by sufficient contributions from parents, or will otherwise be postponed or cancelled.



Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, peripatetic music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for peripatetic music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

At Blue Coat CE VA Primary School, we are able to offer individual musical tuition. When such provision is made available, the cost to the pupil for providing the individual instrumental tuition, will apply. Charges will not exceed the cost to the school of such tuition.

Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum.

Support may be available at the discretion of the Governing Body for pupils whose parents or carers are in receipt of certain statutory benefits or in other exceptional circumstances on a case by case basis. Application should be made via the School office.”

Breakages

In cases of willful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books or equipment on loan to pupils, the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school Governing Body or Local Authority 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, the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Headteacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

Blue Coat CE VA Primary School would not wish any child to be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents or carers are unable to pay. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, then it must be cancelled. If a parent or carer is unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to participate in that activity, if it proceeds, however it is essential that the parent or carer speak confidentially with the school in these circumstances. As indicated earlier in this policy, parental subsidy will not be used as a means of ensuring the activity's viability.



Remissions Policy

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of state benefits which would entitle their child to receive free school meals together with eligibility for Pupil Premium, the Governing Body may upon the request of a parent will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity (classed as an optional extras taking place outside school hours).

Similarly, where parents of a pupil meet the above eligibility criteria, application may be made for financial assistance from the school with payment towards the cost of educational visits/enrichment activities and/or school uniform. Such applications, if granted, will endure for the whole of the current academic year in which they have been made so long as the applicant fulfills the criteria of eligibility.

Applications should be made in writing, addressed to the Headteacher and handed in to the School Office. All applications will be treated in complete confidence and in line with data protection legislation (see the school's Data Protection Policy).

The determination of such applications is delegated to the discretion of the Headteacher with effect from 1st September 2018.

General

The Governing Body may, from time to time amend the categories for which a charge may be made and reserves the right to review the Charging and Remissions Policy as necessary.

Cross Referenced: Data Protection Policy, Complaints Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy