



## **CHARGING, REMISSIONS AND AREARS POLICY**

Agreed by Governors on: 6.3.18

Review Date: January 2020

### **Charging and remissions**

All education during school hours is free. 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.

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed annually, or earlier if necessary.

#### Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity.

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;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- musical events.

#### Residential visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the educational element. However, parents are obliged to at least pay for the residential expenses of such trips, and we also ask parents to contribute to the full cost of the travel and activity expenses as these are beyond the scope of our main school budget.

The default position of the school is that all deposits for residential trips will be non-refundable.

Special consideration will be given to a family in financial difficulty (in the form of requesting grants)

A savings scheme will operate to allow parents to spread the cost of such trips over a longer period of time.

Pupil premium funds may be considered for eligible pupils, depending upon other provision for the child. A maximum of 50% may be subsidized for trips. This will be at the discretion of the Head Teacher and must be formally requested.

## **Arrears:**

### **Pre-school, After School Care, Dinners and Trips/Visitors**

This Policy recognises the difficulties placed on schools in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the management of the County Council's money. If debts are incurred then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that funds which should be spent on the children's education are used to pay debts incurred by parents, most people in the school or Pre-School community would find this unacceptable.

- Fees / money owing should be paid within 7 days of receiving the invoice.
- Preferred method of payment is via 'school money' or by cheque made payable to Devon County Council. If cash payments need to be made, they should be put in a clearly named envelope and posted in the secure box provided.  
All payments are recorded.
- We appreciate that circumstances change. Parents are encouraged to contact the office staff as soon as possible to enable all parties to come to an agreement regarding payment. Confidentiality will be assured.
- Where payment is not made as requested above, a reminder will be sent to the Parent/carer by the administrator. If payment is still not forthcoming a weekly reminder will be sent by e-mail or a letter sent home via the child. If after 4 weekly reminders the balance of the debt has not been reduced, a formal letter from the Head Teacher will be sent to the parent requesting that the child either:
  - brings a packed lunch to school
  - no additional pre-school hours will be available
  - no additional after school care hours will be available
  - the child will not be allowed to attend trips unless full payment is made up front ...until the debt is cleared or a payment plan is agreed.
- If the debt reaches a figure of £100 or more a formal letter from the Head Teacher will be sent irrespective of weekly reminders
- If all attempts to recover the debt are unsuccessful the parents will be advised that the school will need to refer the matter to the Devon County Council Client Support who will follow up with the appropriate action to recover the arrears

#### **\*\*APPLIES TO PRE-SCHOOL\*\***

- If a child is absent due to sickness or holiday any non funded hours will be charged at 50% of the hourly rate.
- In the case of long term sickness - 7 days + their place will be kept open.

\*Please note that good communication is the key factor in managing payments and we ask that Parents and carers communicate openly with the school in order for arrears to be managed.

#### **Residential trips:**

A non-refundable deposit is required before a place is booked.

All outstanding balances need to be paid 2 weeks before the trip.

All residential trips are voluntary and if financial assistance is required we contact local charities. Instalment plans are in place with regular reminders by e-mail or letter home.

- We appreciate that circumstances change. Parents are encouraged to contact the office staff as soon as possible to enable all parties to come to an agreement regarding payment. Confidentiality will be assured.

\* Where no contact has been made regarding the outstanding balance we assume the child no longer wants to take part and their place is cancelled.

Bishops Tawton Primary