



Mill Water School

Preparation for *their* best future

CHARGING AND PARENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and those items where there may be a charge. It is the Governors' hope that parental contributions will be kept as few and as low as possible.

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply this policy. Governors will review this policy every year.

Background

School governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum; part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a pupil is being prepared for at the school; part of religious education
- instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning individually or in groups unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer
- entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- examination re-sits if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit at the school

Voluntary contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities that entail additional costs such as field trips and residential. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be made clear to parents/carers at the outset. It will also be made clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No pupil will be prevented from participating because their parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution. If insufficient funds are available from voluntary contributions and an activity cannot be funded from other sources it may be necessary to curtail or cancel the activity.

Residential

Schools cannot charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum; part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or part of religious education

- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools can charge for:

- board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When informing parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, it will be made clear that those who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)
- 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 HMRC) does not exceed £16190
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on'- the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Education partly during the school day

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for an activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum; not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a pupil is being prepared for at the school; and not part of religious education.

For non-residential activities, if 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to take place outside school hours.

For residentials, if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.