



## Charging & Remissions Policy 2015

### 1. Introduction

Little Sutton Primary School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means that the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:-

- participate fully in school curriculum,
- contribute to all aspects of school life, and
- be a valued partner in the process of education

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parents/guardians who are on low incomes. We aim to:-

- make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income,
- encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum,
- provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school,
- respond to the wide variations in family income while not subjecting the school budget to additional unexpected burdens.

The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycle, with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities.

It includes a number of key factors:-

- the value of certain activities in relation to the ages/needs of the pupils,
- the cost of the activity set against their educational value,
- how the activity will be paid for,
- the appropriate process for raising funds,
- an assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way,
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved e.g. educational visits, music tuition, materials for practical work,
- reference to additional or hidden costs e.g. lunch money or pocket money,
- an assessment of local facilities.

### 2. Legislation

#### i) Education during School Hours

The DfES in its guidance to School Governors states that;

**“ education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of ‘education’ includes materials, equipment and transport provided in**

**school hours by the LEA or the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.”**

**It goes on to advise that;**

**“ although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or kind)....the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.”**

ii) Education – Outside School Hours

**“Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1998 described activities which can be charged for as ‘optional extras’. It is up to the LEA or the school’s Governing Body to decide whether or not to make a charge.”**

iii) Residential Activities

**“For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the costs of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving the following:**

- **Income Support**
- **Income based Job Seekers Allowance**
- **Support under section 6 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1996**
- **Working Tax Credit and an annual income not exceeding the published Inland Revenue threshold.**

**The Head should tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.”**

*All the relevant legislation is contained in the Educational Reform Act 1988; sections 106 – 111, 117 and 118. Guidance is contained in the DfES circular 2/89; Charges for School Activities.*

### **3. Remission Policy**

To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions, Little Sutton Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy.

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them, and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties, which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children. Birmingham City Council defines people in receipt

of Income Support and their dependants as living in poverty, and people in receipt of Housing Benefit and their dependants as living on the margins of poverty.

As a minimum, children at Little Sutton Primary School, who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding will receive –

- Three educational visits per year free of charge. Parents may, however, wish to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs.
- EITHER one free extra-curricular club per year OR free instrumental tuition for each year that they continue to qualify for Pupil Premium funding

Any requests for funding from parents of non Pupil Premium children will be considered on a case by case basis by the Head Teacher.

#### **4. Informing Parents**

Little Sutton Primary School will follow the DfES guidelines which state that; “ The LEA or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of General Policy on Charging....A Policy Statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explain when charges will be made.... Parents need to know how the charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs (or even get it free). A summary of ‘this information’ must be included in the prospectus published by the school.

“ If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual costs. If further funds need to be raised.... this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.”

#### **5. Implementation**

Planning, as part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy which recognises equality of access. We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school, taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), costs per head and a breakdown of transportation costs entry fees, teacher costs etc.

Such a process however should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities that arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way that is consistent with the school’s overall policy.

Reviewed by Finance Committee of the Governing Body 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Date of next review May 2016