



# **Blackheath Primary School**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

**Date of issue:**

**February 2016**

**Review date:**

**February 2019**

# Charging and Remissions Policy

## 1 Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities, in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This legislation is further explained in Chapter 16 of the DfES document 'A Guide to the Law for School Governors'.

These two documents provide the framework that underpins this policy. Where an issue arises that is not specifically dealt with within this policy, decisions will be made which are in line with the spirit of the policy and of the two documents detailed above.

All education during school hours at Blackheath Primary School is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

The Governing Body of Blackheath Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

## 2 Voluntary contributions

2.1 The 1988 Education Act draws a distinction between the term 'charges' which are considered to be an obligatory cost and 'voluntary contributions' which are self-explanatory.

2.2 When organising school trips, visits or activities to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, we will invite 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 paid some or no contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

2.3 Subsidies from various sources e.g. School Fund, Blackheath Primary Schools PTA, voluntary organisations, may be considered to cover deficits. Surplus finance will be allocated to school fund which is for the benefit of the children.

2.4 Whenever possible we will give sufficient notice to allow parent/carers to pay by installments.

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

activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit or activity. Parents have a right to know how each trip or activity is funded. The school provides this information on request however the school reserves the right to conceal if insufficient contributions are made.

2.6 The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is by no means exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- school trips;
- musical events;
- transport;
- residential visits

### **3 Music tuition**

3.1 All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

3.2 In Key Stage 2 children are able to take part in small-group music tuition, this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic Music Teachers from Sandwell Youth Music. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We give parents information about additional music tuition throughout the year via letter or our monthly Newsletter.

### **4 Swimming**

4.1 The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Year 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part.

### **5 Breakfast / After School Clubs**

5.1 We offer a range of additional activities before and after school for all Key Stages. We reserve the right to make a small charge for these sessions to cover the cost of food, activities, resources and staff time.

## **6 Cost of Damages**

Subject to the school recognising that accidental damage can sometimes occur, the school will seek to recover the costs incurred as a result of any item of school property, or personal property (staff, visitors, children) being damaged, broken or lost as a result of mis-behaviour, thoughtless behaviour or carelessness. These include any damages to the fabric of the school premises (such as a broken window) and the defacing, loss or breakage of books or classroom equipment. In such cases, especially where the damage is due to unacceptable behaviour on the part of the child, parents will be asked to pay the cost of repair or replacement. Such charges may be reduced or waived on an individual basis if this is deemed to be appropriate. This will be considered on a case by case basis, for example, in certain circumstances where a student has owned up to a mis-demeanour.

## **7 Remissions**

7.1 In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances.

7.2 The governing body and the school recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall give parents advance warning of visits so that parents have enough notice to plan for payment.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in installments especially for residential trips

## **8 Conclusion**

The Governors and the School wish to continue to offer children as wide a range of opportunities as possible and hope that parents will, where possible, look sympathetically on requests for voluntary contributions.

*Agreed by Governors on .....*

*To be reviewed November 2018*

*Signed (Chair of Governors).....Date.....*