



## **Principles**

There are four principles underlying the provisions on charging:

- That education in schools should be free.
- That activities offered wholly or mainly during normal school teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- That there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education, but that CSA's (Children's Services Authority) and schools have the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
- That CSA's and schools have the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

The CSA is required to produce a policy on charging and governors of schools have also to state their policy, which may be more or less generous than the CSA policy providing they meet the requirements of the law.

## **St Erme with Trispen School Policy**

Governors recognise that there are a number of activities which will only take place if parental contributions are available but stress that no child should be excluded from any activity organised by the school because of the liability or unwillingness of their parents to pay such a contribution.

### **Optional visits wholly or mainly outside school hours**

It is the intention of the Governors to charge the full cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges, meals and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some pupils to go on the visit without payment, or to cover teachers' travel costs, where a separate contract is issued.

Visits outside school hours will only proceed if all those who wish to go pay the full costs charged. For those parents who wish their child to go on the visit but who are unable to pay the Headteacher will consider, on an individual basis, requests for financial support. If agreed, the subsidy for educational activities may come from the delegated school budget, including the pupil premium fund.

#### Visits wholly or mainly during school hours

It is the intention of Governors to invite voluntary contributions toward the cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly during school hours and which may, or may not, be provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and may, or may not, be required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some pupils to go on the visit without payment or to cover teachers' travel costs.

Visit will proceed only if all those who wish to go are willing to make a voluntary contribution. For those parents who wish their child to go on the visit but who are unable to pay the Headteacher will consider, on an individual basis, requests for financial support. If agreed, the subsidy for educational activities may come from the delegated school budget, including the pupil premium fund.

Children may not be prevented from going on a visit during school hours if the parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution and therefore if insufficient contributions are made this may lead to certain visits becoming unviable.

#### Board and lodging charges on residential visits

It is the intention of the school to charge the full cost of board and lodging on visits taking place wholly or mainly during school hours, or if out of school hours, provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education.

Where the parents are in receipt of income support, jobseeker's allowance (income based), child tax credit (but only when the recipient does not also receive working tax credit and has an annual income of less than £16,190 (April 2011 figure)), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance, the board and lodging charges must be remitted, and this cost will be met from within the school's funds i.e., for educational activities the subsidy may come from the delegated or Pupil Premium budget.

The costs of transport, insurance, admission charges, etc. incurred during residential trips may not, however, be charged, although voluntary contributions may, of course, be requested and could become a necessary prerequisite for the visit taking place.

#### Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument

It is not the intention of the school to charge for such tuition where it is provided by school employed schools' staff, whether in or out of school hours. However where tuition or ensemble activities are provided by external agencies and peripatetic teachers a charge may be made to pupils concerned.

Resits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school

It is the intention of the Governors to charge the full cost of the re-sit.

Entry to examinations which are not prescribed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State

It is the intention of the Governors to charge the full cost of the entry.

Charges for ingredients, materials and equipment

St Erme with Trispen School will provide any ingredients, materials, equipment needed for the delivery of the curriculum. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash, or in kind, can be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis. The school may charge for, or invite parents to supply, ingredients, materials and equipment if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Charges for breakages and fines

In certain circumstances St Erme with Trispen School may ask parents to pay for damage to equipment or property caused by their child. The Headteacher assess each case individually and contact parents if payment is required.

Recovery of unpaid charges

Sums payable by parents for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they had agreed, or for board and lodging, are recoverable as civil debts.

Governors have balanced the cost of recovering such charges in this way against the sums involved and have decided to request payment in advance of all voluntary contributions or permissible charges for board and lodging and trips undertaken outside school hours.

Definitions

The most important definition concerns whether an activity takes places within, or out of, school hours.

If the number of school sessions missed by the pupils is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours. If the number of school sessions is 50% or more of the number of half days, the activity is deemed to take place during school hours.

Numbers of half days, or of school sessions, are to be rounded up as follows:

Where 6 or more hours in a half day is spent on a residential visit the whole of that half day counts as having been spent on the visit; where half or more of a school session is devoted to a residential visit the entire session counts as having been spent on the visit.

