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Charging and Remissions Policy

Approval Date: October 2021

Review Date: October 2022

Dovecotes Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The Governing Body of Dovecotes 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.

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. However, for certain activities we may charge or ask for voluntary contributions. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity.

In accord with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, the Governors have drawn up the following charging and remissions policy. This was approved by the Finance Committee of Dovecotes Primary School and will be reviewed annually.

This policy shall be made available to parents or carers on request.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask parents or carers for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or towards activities, for example, contributions towards fund raising, sporting activities which require travel expenses, outdoor adventure activities, musical activities and costs associated with school trips and visits.

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution. A child will not be excluded from an activity due to his or her parents/guardians/carer being unable to pay.

School Trips and Visits

When organising school visits, which enrich the curriculum and improve the educational experience of children, the school invites parents, and carers, to contribute towards the cost. All contributions are voluntary. No pupil will be left out because a voluntary contribution has not been received. However, if there are insufficient voluntary contributions, the school may be left with no choice but to cancel the visit / enrichment activity. It will be explained to parents or carers at the planning stage if this is likely to be the case. Parents or carers who have contributed would then receive a refund.

If a parent/carer has reserved a place on a school trip and is unable to take part in the visit the school will attempt to fill the child's place, however, it is at the schools discretion as whether a part or full refund can be given.

Governors have agreed to subsidise some trips at their discretion. Parents and carers have a right to know how each activity is funded, and the school will provide this information on request.

Residential Visits and Overnight stays

Where a school activity involves pupils staying nights away from home, there will be a charge for board and lodging.

Parents or carers who are in receipt of the following support payments are entitled to claim remission from the payment of the board and lodging charge: -

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

All other costs involved in residential visits are asked for as voluntary contributions. If we cannot raise sufficient funding through these voluntary contributions, the visit may have to be cancelled, and that aspect of the curriculum would have to be covered in other ways.

Optional Extras

Out of hours activities and clubs are classed as Optional Extras.

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

Activities Outside of School Hours

The full cost to each pupil of all approved activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours.

Breakfast Club

The school operates a Breakfast Club, which is administered by the Local Authority Catering Department. Charges are determined centrally and are displayed in the school hall.

The Governors have agreed to subsidise the Breakfast Club costs for those children who use the Walking Bus (whenever this is in operation).

See Breakfast Club Policy for further details.

Instrumental Music Lessons

All children study music as part of the normal School Curriculum and class tuition from specialist music teachers from Wolverhampton Music School. We do not charge for these.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Y5 and Y6. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and we ask parents or carers for written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

Charging for School Equipment

No charge will be made for materials, books or equipment needed for lessons. The only exception to this is where wilful damage to the equipment by the child has taken place. A contribution towards the cost of replacement shall be requested.

School Meals

Under the Education Act 2011 schools are permitted to charge up to the maximum cost of a school meal. The Governing body have agreed to continue to pass on only part of the cost of a school meal onto parents/carers. The Governors have agreed to charge parents/carers £2.50 per junior paid meal, £2.00 per discounted/flexible meal and £3.50 for staff meals.

To be eligible for a discounted/flexible charge meal, parents/carers must meet a certain criteria of being a low-income family in receipt of working tax credit as permitted under the flexible charging framework (Education Act 2011).

Children in Early Years Education are eligible to receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal Scheme currently in place. We do ask that families who are eligible for free school meals still apply for them as the premium attached to this benefit comes in to school and helps provide children with additional benefits such as free milk, extra help in lessons, reduced costs for some school trips, sports coaching and pastoral/welfare support etc.

To be eligible for a free school meal where no charge is made for the provision of a school meal (separate to the UIFSM) parents/carers need to be in receipt of support payments (as listed previously).

Uniform

It is our school policy that all children wear uniform when attending school and when participating in a school-organised event either inside, or outside, of normal school hours. The school hold a stock of uniform items, which can be purchased from the school office. A price list is available from the school office. No profit is generated from the sale of uniform items.

Paying for Information

Where parents or members of the public request copies of information under either the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act, the Governors can make a charge for providing copies of information. Details of charges are provided in the school's Data Protection policy and FOI Publication Scheme.

Lettings

All persons or groups wishing to hire school premises should complete a letting application form and read the terms and conditions of hire. Charges for lettings are set by the Governing Body, however the Local Authority do suggest minimum amounts. At present there are no lettings to note.

Receipts

All income is recorded; receipts are available on request.

Monitoring & Review

The procedures in this policy will be monitored in the light of any new information and guidance which becomes available.

This policy will be reviewed annually, the next review being September 2022.