

# Syresham St James CE Primary School

## GOVERNORS' POLICY OF CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In response to the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988 and DFE circular 2/89, the Governors of Syresham C.E. Primary School have agreed the following policy on charges for school activities:

### 1. VISITS

- a) **Non-residential visits made during school time**, such as outings to museums, theatres, and other places of interest:

No mandatory charge may be made for these visits. On each occasion parents will be given information about the proposed visit and asked for a voluntary contribution towards the costs of, for instance, travel and entrance fees. If not enough voluntary contributions are received then it a decision will be made on whether or not the trip will take place. Parents on Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance etc. are not expected to contribute, but may do so if they wish.

- b) **Residential visits taking place during school term time**, such as those arranged in recent years to Frontier Centre and through PGL, etc.:

These visits are considered as taking place during school time and no mandatory charges can be made for travel and admission costs. However, the cost of board and lodging can and will be charged for. Parents will be asked to pay for board and lodging and to make a voluntary contribution to other costs.

Parents will receive information about proposed visits well in advance by letter and, where appropriate, at a meeting. They will be given details of the cost of board and lodging and of other costs to be met if the visit is to take place. It will be made clear on each occasion that unless sufficient funds are provided from voluntary contributions, the visit will not take place. No child will be treated differently because of parental response to the request. All parents are given the option to make payments in instalments.

For pupils whose parents receive Income Support, etc., travel and admission costs will be met from the school budget. The board and lodging charge is voluntary, but parents are asked to pay this charge. Any parents who have difficulty in meeting this charge are invited to discuss the matter with the Headteacher. The cost of board and lodging for such pupils can be met either from school funds, or by the Friends of the School or other charitable funds, in response to a request by the Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body. Priority in these cases is given to children who have not taken part in a residential trip before. In all cases a 'payment plan' will be agreed with the Headteacher and parent and put in writing.

### Payment Terms

1. Once the consent document (payment plan letter) has been signed then there is a legal obligation to pay the amounts stated.
2. If payment is not received within the agreed times, then the school will send a reminder.
3. A second reminder and invitation to discuss any problems with which the school might help will follow this.
4. Following this a £5 administration charge may be added to the final cost.
5. In the event of continued non-payment, the school reserves the right to forward the matter to the Local Education Authorities' legal department for investigation.
6. The school will only be able to release goods or allow children to attend a trip if payment has been received, or an arrangement has been made with the Headteacher. Cash or cheques are accepted with a supporting cheque guarantee card number. If a cheque is produced for payment without a card number, then the school will be obliged to wait for the cheque to "clear" before goods are supplied.
7. It is stressed that the school will make every effort to support a family's request for help before any formalities are reached.

c) **Residential visits outside school hours** are not currently offered by the school. If such visits were proposed, the Governors would decide on a policy for charges and inform parents in advance of the details of that policy.

## **2. NON-RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES OUT SIDE SCHOOL HOURS.**

This refers to clubs run in school by an outside provider either during the lunch hour or after school. In these cases parents will be expected to pay the full cost levied by the provider.

## **3. TUITION IN THE PLAYING OF A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**

Group Tuition - Before a child receives tuition, parents will be informed by letter of the cost of lessons per term. Invoices will be sent termly and tuition fees should be paid in advance of lessons. The cost of music lessons will be the responsibility of the parents, if music is required for a school concert, i.e Nativity, then the school will fund this. The cost of entry for music examinations will be the responsibility of the parents, and no pupil will be entered for such an exam without the parents' written consent. Parents need to give one terms notice if they wish to remove their child from instrumental lessons. If payment is not received for a term's tuition by the required date a statement will be sent. If payment is still unforthcoming then the parent will be contacted by letter and advised that their child will no longer be able to received instrument tuition if the invoice remains unpaid. By the end of the term if payment has not been made, then the child will be withdrawn from lessons.

## **4. MATERIALS**

This refers to cooking ingredients, clay, etc.

It is the Governors' policy that the cost of such materials for activities that take place within school hours and which are considered to be part of the curriculum should be met either from the school's budget or from the school games fund, at the discretion of the Headteacher. Children will always be allowed to take home items they have cooked, whatever the source of funding. The school may on occasion keep particular pieces of clay work, embroidery etc., for display or other purposes.

While there is no reference to breakages in the Act's charging provisions, Governors wish to append the following paragraph to their policy statement: Breakages etc. Where fittings, windows, equipment or books have been damaged or defaced by careless or bad behaviour the Governors' policy is that parents should be asked to pay for the costs of repair or replacement.

## **5. BREAKFAST CLUB**

Breakfast club is open from 8:00am to 8:40am on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday each week during term time. The club is open to children attending the school only and parents should book in advance for either single days per week or multiple days per week. Places may booked on a regular basis or occasional. The maximum number for each session is 12.

**Cost** – for childcare and food per session the cost is £2.50 per child per session. Where 2 or more siblings attend on any one morning the cost per child is reduced to £2 per session.

**Invoicing** – unless payment is received on booking, invoices will be sent to parents at the end of each term short term and payment is expected in the first week of the next term. If payment is not received in this time the invoice will be followed up with a statement of account and letter requesting immediate payment. If an account remains unpaid after one term, the parents will be informed that a child cannot attend breakfast club until the unpaid account is cleared.

## **6. NURSERY**

Parents of Nursery age children are provided with documentation which includes a "Provider Contract" with a booking form giving clear advice about current fees.

On receipt of a signed contract and booking form the School will invoice parents termly for nursery fees.

The school will provide parents with forms and deadline dates for claiming the Free Government Nursery Vouchers and apply for these on behalf of parents. Should forms not be returned within the stated deadline dates, then parents will be liable to pay the fees for booked places.

Nursery lunches are not provided within the free place scheme and are charged for separately.

Invoices are issued once per term and payment is expected within one month. Parents may pay weekly, monthly or termly. If payment is not received for booked places, then that place will be withdrawn until the account is cleared.

## **7. ELIGIBLE BENEFITS**

Parents who are in receipt of free school meals (FSM) or qualify for pupil premium may be entitled to support for some of the charges for the costs detailed above. Families in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance – income related
- Pension Credit guaranteed
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual gross income (as assessed by HMRC does not exceed £16,190.

All discussions relating to individual family's financial circumstances will be confidential and discussed with the Headteacher only.

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