

Syresham St James CE Primary School

GOVERNORS' POLICY OF CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Syresham St James Primary School seeks to create an environment that reflects our Christian ethos, providing safe, happy and challenging working conditions for all members of the school. This environment is exemplified by our school values to promote respect, generosity, courage, love, fairness and forgiveness.

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 a decision will be made on whether or not the trip will take place. Parents eligible for benefits (see Point 7) are not expected to contribute, but may do so if they wish.

- b) **Residential visits taking place during school term time:**

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 are eligible for benefits (as listed in Point 7), travel and admission costs will be met from the school budget. Board and lodging charges do have to be charged for but 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 then be partially or fully met either from school funds, 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.

- 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.

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 an administration charge of 20% of the outstanding amount 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. The school's preferred payment method is by debit/credit card using the school's online payment system by School Money. If a cheque is produced for payment 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.

2. NON-RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE 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 term's notice if they wish to remove their child from instrumental lessons (6 weeks). A deposit will be charged, which will not be refunded if the required notice period is not given. 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 receive 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. Pupils with parents eligible for benefits may have some or all of the tuition fees funded by school.

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, it is the Governors' policy that parents should be asked to pay for the costs of repair or replacement.

5. BREAKFAST CLUB and AFTERSCHOOL CLUB

Breakfast club is open from 8:00am to 8:40am each week day during term time. The club is open to children attending the school and nursery only and parents should book in advance for either single days per week or multiple days per week. Places may be booked on a regular basis or occasional.

Afterschool club is available to children who attend the school or nursery and runs from 3:30pm. Children attending other clubs in school go to these first and then move to afterschool care at the end of that sessions. Parents may choose to collect at 5pm or 6pm, but the charging period starts at 3:30 in all cases. The club is open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during term time.

Costs for wrap around care: The charges are made per child per session (not per hour) and no reductions are made if children arrive late or are collected early. Charges are reviewed annually. Charges have 3 levels:

Charge for a 2 year old per session

Charge for a 3or4 year old per session

Charge for a school age child (a small discount is available for siblings for breakfast club only)

Invoicing

Sessions for both clubs are booked via Eduspot-School Money and charges are posted and emailed to parents each week. Parents may pay by debit/credit card either in advance, weekly or termly. It is expected that all charges will be met and cleared by parents by the end of each term. If there are any outstanding amounts at the end of each term, parents will be contacted and payment requested.

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. Pupils with parents eligible for benefits may have some or all of their breakfast club/after-school care fees funded by school.

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 the following benefits may also be entitled for support with these charges:

- 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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