



# Charges and Remissions Policy 2015

**Courtney Primary School**

Ratified by: Full Governing Body	Date: November 2015
Signed by: Janet Hinchliffe	Date: November 2015
Next Review Date	<b>October 2016</b>

# **COURTNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL CHARGES AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

## **1. Introduction**

Staff and Governors at Courtney Primary School are committed to providing an education that enables children to “grow academically and socially to meet life’s challenges”. To achieve this, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum where classroom activities are enriched by residential and day trips out of school, and visits to school by artists, speakers and theatrical groups. Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to help fund the cost of such activities, but we believe that such activities make a valuable contribution to a child’s development, and no child will be excluded from these activities because a parent is unwilling or unable to make a financial contribution. This policy explains how such contributions will be sought, the activities for which charges can be made, and the conditions under which such charges will be remitted.

## **2. Legislative Background**

The Education Act 1996 (Sections 449 and 462) establishes the principles for charging in schools. These principles were introduced in the Education Reform Act 1988 and explained in DfEE Circular 21/89. In any matter not covered in this policy, reference should be made to these Acts and any subsequent legislation. The key principle of this legislation is that no charge can be made for education that takes place during normal school hours. The legislation clearly explains how to calculate if an activity is considered to be taking place ‘during school hours’. Where parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution, no pupil can be excluded from an activity because no financial contribution has been made. Certain exclusions to these principles are permitted, and these are detailed below.

## **3. Policy**

### **3.1 Voluntary Contributions**

Activities such as visits by outside groups may be funded from the budget agreed for curriculum expenditure. If, however, the Headteacher agrees that a specific activity should be funded by a financial contribution from parents, the request for such contributions must make it clear that such contributions are voluntary, and no child will be excluded if parents do not make a contribution. For each activity, a level of contribution will be suggested, but parents will be able to contribute a greater or lesser amount if they wish. In requesting a contribution, it must be clear that the activity might not go ahead if a certain level of contribution is not received. In planning each activity, the Headteacher and appropriate member of staff must agree the maximum level of funding available from school funds.

In the event of an activity having to be cancelled, voluntary contributions will be refunded to parents. In the event of a child not being able to take part in an activity for which a voluntary contribution has already been made, no refund of that contribution will be made for any payment which cannot be recouped.

### **3.2 Optional Activities**

Charges can be made to cover the costs of activities taking place outside of school hours that are not part of the National Curriculum. Where such charges are made, they must not exceed the actual cost of the activity.

### **3.3 Activities Provided by Outside Organisations**

Where an outside organisation arranges an activity during school hours, parents wanting their child to take part can be charged. In such cases, parents must request (and the Headteacher must agree) to the child being absent from school for the activity. As with ‘Optional Activities’ such charges cannot exceed the actual cost of the activity, but this may include an allowance for any teachers who supervise the activity. Teachers asked to supervise such charged activities will be given a separate contract. This could just be a letter asking them to take part in the activity.

### 3.4 Residential Trips

Where the school arranges a residential trip that takes place during school hours, a clear distinction should be made between the cost of board and lodgings and the cost of other activities. Families in receipt of the following benefits are entitled to have the full cost of the board and lodgings met from school funds.

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to working tax credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's revenue and Customs, that does not exceed £16.190 for the year)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; and
- An income-related employment and support allowance (this benefit was introduced on 27 October 2008)

The Headteacher should advise all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving benefits. This must be made clear to parents when arranging such trips, but they can be invited to contribute a proportion of the board and lodging costs if they wish. Parents who are not in receipt of the benefits above, but who would still find it difficult to meet the cost of such a trip can request financial support from school funds. Such a request will be considered by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. For all parents, the contribution requested to cover the activities and transport element of the residential trip, must be regarded as a voluntary contribution subject to the same conditions as in 3.1.

### 3.5 Ownership

When an activity requires the use of materials and results in an article (e.g. cakes, pottery items etc.) that the child can take home, parents can be asked to accept ownership of the article in advance. In such cases, parents can be charged for the materials used or asked to contribute ingredients. For parents not accepting ownership in advance, the finished article will remain the property of the school.

### 3.6 Music Tuition

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 came into force in September 2007 to provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing.

### 3.7 Breakages

Where a child's behaviour leads to the damage of school property, the costs of such damage may be recovered from parents at the discretion of the Headteacher.

## 4. Evaluation and Monitoring

The monitoring of this policy will be the responsibility of the Resources Committee acting on information provided by the Headteacher. The Committee will consider the range of activities that have taken place and the extent to which these have been funded by voluntary contributions and by support from the school budget.