



Gilbert Colvin Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Gilbert Colvin Primary School-Our Vision

At Gilbert Colvin Primary School, we believe that all our pupils have the potential to be changemakers. We believe that confidence, self-esteem and strong moral values are the keys to successful futures.

We empower every member of the school community to embrace challenge, have a passion for learning, take risks, collaborate, and aspire to achieve their best.

Our pupils thrive in a caring, inclusive environment which provides excellent educational opportunities and memorable experiences to prepare our pupils for a positive future.



As A Rights Respecting school this Policy supports the following articles:

26. You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

28: You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

School Policy Review

Date of Review: May 2022

Date of next Review: May 2023

Ratified by FGB September 2022



Introduction

The Headteacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Headteacher and Governing Body aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Purpose and Aims

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

Where 'parent' is referred to, this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim to:

- Make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income
- Encourage and promote external activities to take place at a minimum cost to the curriculum
- Provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- Respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget

Legislation – Education During School Hours

The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that "Education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity". It goes on to advise that "Although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or kind)".

When additional costs are incurred by Gilbert Colvin Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils; parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. In the event that insufficient voluntary donations are received by the school for a planned event, it may be decided that the event is financially unviable and cancelled. In such circumstances, full refunds would be made for payments already made.

Education Outside School Hours

The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that “Parents can only be charged for the activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intention, Gilbert Colvin Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply, in confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full by contacting the Headteacher. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. The Headteacher or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

If the parent of a pupil is in receipt of income support, family credit, income based jobseekers’ allowance or disability working allowance, charges for materials and charges for activities outside school hours may be reduced. The school will use the Pupil Premium register as the first indicator for which families are eligible for such reductions.

Data Protection of Pupils and Families

Following the updated GDPR regulations, parents will be aware via the Privacy Notice on the school website how the data we collect is used in the school. Teachers will ensure that those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits and where charges are therefore reduced are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

Contributions

Voluntary contributions will be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity, it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled and the range of activities may be curtailed.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (i.e. weekend/ overnight residential)
- After-school, lunchtime and pre-school clubs
- Music tuition if it is not required for the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or groups of pupils
- Damage to school property – the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's actions
- Visit to school by professionals, e.g. authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists, etc.

Music Tuition

At present, the school employs the services of Redbridge Music Service to provide expert music tuition to support the National Curriculum. No charge is made for this provision.

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects

Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc, needed for practical subjects, such as Design Technology. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.

Lost School Books

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school books.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture and Property

Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's actions.

Field Courses/Residential Visits: The school will charge for board and lodging for those pupils involved in field trips (which are not compulsory, though children are encouraged to attend as part of the inclusion policy of the school). In addition, voluntary contributions may be requested to cover the cost of travel. The school will consider any requests for financial support where this may prohibit a child attending these experiences and the family is known to be in receipt of additional financial benefits.

Penalty for Late Collection

If a child is collected after 3:35p.m. on more than one occasion within a half-term; then the school will apply a child care fee of £15 per quarter of an hour (or part thereof). The Headteacher will have the discretion to waive or reduce this in the case of genuine emergencies, e.g. hospitalisation of a parent or sibling. Where a child is attending an after-school club, this care fee will apply if he/she is collected later than 10 minutes after the close of the club.

Photocopying

Requests for photocopies of children's records can be made but will not incur any charge.

Private Fees

The school recognises that there are times parents request additional information about their child and these can be outside of the school main duties. In certain circumstances, the Governing Body will make a charge for these.

Reference requests to support applications to enter the independent educational sector: £25 per child per report. These references are passed directly to the school and are confidential.

Passport applications: £25 per application

Letters of attendance to support visa applications, nationalisation etc: no charge.

Conclusion

The Governing Body may amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.