

## Bushey Heath Primary

# Charging For School Activities

*(Based on the guidance provided in the 'Governors' Guide to the Law')*

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits independent of their parents' financial means. This charging policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The Local Authority or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging. The Governing Body's policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

### Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place during school hours.
- School equipment.
- School funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. **Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, or there is no way to make up any shortfall, then it will be cancelled.**

### Residential Trips

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed the sum given in Revenue and Customs Rules.
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

### Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge is permitted for instrumental music tuition undertaken in school hours.

### **Financial Assistance**

In cases of family hardship which makes it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made or voluntary contributions requested, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for assistance with charges in part or full. The Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will authorize the financial assistance.

On all documents requesting contributions for school trips, parents will be made aware that this assistance is available.

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

**Date: November 2013**