



## **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY FOR**

### **BEECHES INFANT SCHOOL**

#### **1. Introduction**

Beeches Infant School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. In practice, this means the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:-

- participate fully in school curriculum;
- contribute to all aspects of school life; and
- be a valued partner in the process of education.

These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parents/guardians who are on low income. We aim:-

- **To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income;**
- **To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;**
- **To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school; and**
- **To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.**

The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycle with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities. It includes a number of key factors:-

- the value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of pupils;
- the cost of activity set against their educational value;
- how the activity will be paid for;
- the appropriate process for raising funding;
- an assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way;
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved – for example, education visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- an assessment of local facilities.

## **2. Legislation – Education During School Hours**

The DFES 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 the LEA or the 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 in kind...the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.”**

## **3. Education Outside School Hours**

**“Parents can only be charged for 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”. It is up to the LEA or governing body providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge.”**

#### 4 Residential Activity

**“For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either for the education or the costs of the travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Head should tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.”**

All the relevant legislation is contained in the Education Reform Act 1988: Section 106 – 111,117, and 118. Guidance is contained in the DfES circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities.

#### 4. 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. Birmingham City Council defines people in receipt of Housing Benefit and their dependants as living on the margins of poverty.

As a minimum, children at Beeches Infant School from families in receipt of Income Support, Council Tax, Housing Benefits, or Family Credit will not be asked to provide a voluntary contribution to any educational activity or trip as the school will fund this. If the activity is related to the school curriculum or in the school day no child will be excluded from it.

Teachers will ensure that these children 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 and school funds via an appointed person, possibly the School Secretary, rather than in the classroom; rather than in the classroom; by annualised or term time single payments to the school at the start of each term and for example, by arranging for all children to receive a packed lunch from the school when on a visit.

- School Fund may be used to subsidise the cost of some visits.
- Parents will be informed at the outset that if sufficient voluntary contributions are not received it may not be possible for the trip to go ahead.

## 5 Residential Visits

School budget would be unable to sustain funding for residential visits for children who are unable to pay the full cost. Charities may be approached to help fund children whose families are on low income. Charges will be made for the total cost of residential visits plus transport and any additional insurance that may be taken out. Payments may be made in instalments. As it is unlikely that all children will want to, or be able to, go on a residential visit there will usually be several children in a year group remaining at school. A special topic will be planned for those staying at school.

### Informing Parents

Beeches Infant School will follow the DfES Guidelines which states that **“The LEA or governing body may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of General Policy on Charging ... A Policy Statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explain when charges will be made... Parents need to know how the charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs (or even get it free). A summary of “this information” must be included in the prospectus published by the school.”**

**“If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual costs. If further funds need to be raised ... this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.”**

### Beeches Kids Club

The school will agree an hourly rate for Beeches Kids Club to use their school premises outside core hours. The school will invoice the club in advance each half term of its use. The school to ensure the school charge enough to recoup the additional governing hours Birmingham City Council will charge.

### Parent Support Worker

The school Parent Support Worker will be allotted time to work with Beeches Junior School as agreed with our Governing Body. The school will invoice the juniors on a termly basis of any work carried out and time spent in researching matters. The school Head Teacher can use her discretion on payment charges taking into account work being carried out by the PSW and cost in time to our school.

## 5. Implementation

Planning, as a part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy at Beeches Infant School which recognises equality of access. We

will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school and taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), cost per head and a breakdown of transportation costs, entry fees, discounts, teacher costs etc.,

Such a process however, should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities which arise during the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way which is consistent with the school's overall policy.