



Parklands Community Primary School

Charging Policy

Date of Approval : 25th June 2024

Review Date : Summer 2026

Reviewed by : Finance and Staffing Committee

CHARGING POLICY

Status

Statutory

Purpose

To make appropriate charges which ensure that all children are provided with a curriculum consistent with that described in the Parklands Community Primary School vision, value and aims statement. i.e. one that is broad, balanced, relevant, that has a strong emphasis on personal and social development and one that is enriched by first hand experiences.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information about charging and voluntary contributions for Parklands Community Primary School activities.

Who / What was consulted

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors and parents. It is based upon guidance issued by West Sussex LA and the DCFS Governors Guide to the Law.

Relation to other policies

This policy has links with the policies for curriculum, teaching and learning, off site visits and inclusion.

Where it appears in the policy, the **school day** is defined as 9.00am to 3.15pm.

Roles and Responsibilities of Headteacher, Staff and Governors

The Headteacher will ensure that the following apply:

During the school:

Voluntary Contributions

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours. Parklands Community Primary School follows the West Sussex policy for charging for school activities that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education's advice document published in November 2013

<https://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00213976/school-charging>

No compulsory charge will be made for any activity which takes place during school hours. Any contribution is entirely voluntary, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute are not discriminated against. However, where

there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

Arrangements

All letters regarding contributions for school activities will make it clear that these are voluntary and that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated differently. If any parents have any financial difficulty (no child will be prevented from taking part) they will be invited to talk to the headteacher who will come to an agreed arrangement.

Optional activities outside of the school day

Charges will be made for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day to meet the costs of materials and staffing as necessary. (For example, materials for art club, staffing for sports club.)

Residential trips

Special rules apply for residential activities.

a) In School Hours

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time (50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs within schools hours), it meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges not exceeding the actual cost for the individual pupil will be made for board and lodging. Voluntary contributions (as above) will be requested.

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 these charges:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, (provided that the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit, and their annual Income, assessed by HMRC does not exceed £16,190)
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

b) Outside School Hours

An activity is deemed to take place out of school hours if 50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs out of school hours. In this case, and for a residential trip, this will be considered as an 'optional extra' and a charge will be levied which includes an appropriate element for travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and other equipment, non-teaching costs and teaching staff costs. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Parents in receipt of the allowances identified above have the same entitlements.

Music Tuition

There will be no charge for musical tuition if the teaching is an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. For other musical tuition, charges will be made for individuals or groups to play a musical instrument, and for the hire and repair of instruments which are used for instrumental tuition at school. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Governing Body will review this policy every 3 years, and as necessary due to any changes in legislation.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. (For example, a trip to a theatre during an evening). When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot.

Pupils who would qualify for support are those who are entitled to receive free school meals.

The principle of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charge to parents.

Payment difficulties

Where parents experience difficulties in payment and do not qualify for support, a payment plan will be set up allowing payments to be made over an agreed period of time.

Refunding of payments made

As specified in the section on calculating charges, charges made for activities will be calculated based on the total number of pupils participating. For this reason payments received will be non refundable unless the place for which the payment has been made is taken by another pupil. If an activity is cancelled by the School for whatever reason, all payments received will be refunded in full depending on the circumstances, see office for a refund.

The Headteacher and Staff will ensure that the following apply:

Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not parents have made any contribution in response to a request.

Parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity if a voluntary contribution or charge will be necessary for an activity to take place.

The Business Manager will ensure that the following apply:

Charges are levied fairly and are based on the actual costs incurred divided by the total number of pupils participating.

Parents requesting support provide documentary proof of their eligibility under the criteria listed elsewhere in this policy.

Records of contributions received for activities are maintained and receipts are provided if appropriate.

A termly report on all activities which involve contributions from parents is provided to the Finance and Staffing Committee for their consideration.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Finance and Staffing Committee will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a termly basis, a financial report on those activities that resulted in contributions being requested and any support awarded (without giving names).