

THURLBY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is clarity over which items Thurlby Primary School will provide free of charge, and those items for which there may be a charge.

Objectives

The objectives of the charging provisions outlined in the Education Act 1996 are summarised as follows.

- to maintain the right to a free school education;
- to establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to meet the costs;
- to emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give the LA, and schools, the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours;
- to confirm the right of the LA, and schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

Schools can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parents wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below)
- music and vocal tuition where the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;

- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who meet the current requirements for Free School Meals will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

Charging at Thurlby Primary School

Day Visits/Trips and other Activities

All children are given opportunities during their time at this school to visit, during term time, places of interest, exhibitions, etc. in connection with projects or topics followed in the normal school work.

- Parents/Carers may be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of a visit, to cover admission charges and transport.
- Requests for voluntary contributions will make it clear that there is no obligation to contribute and that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have agreed to the request. This will be made clear in the correspondence to the parents/carers.
- If the visit or activity is mainly within school time (i.e. 50% or more) no child will be excluded because their parents/carers have not contributed.
- The charges made to parents/carers will not exceed the actual cost of the activity or visit.
- Parents wishing to make a voluntary contribution over and above the cost will be allowed to do so.
- Parents/Carers will be informed in the correspondence that if insufficient voluntary contributions are available then the visit/activity may not take place.

Residential Trips

The same criteria will apply to residential visits as applies to other visits, trips and activities. For residential trips mainly out of school time (50% or more) and not related to a statutory curriculum purpose, a charge will be made for the full amount of the trip as such a trip is

classed as an “optional extra”. Voluntary contributions will not be requested, and the criteria below relating to Free School meals or other such benefits does not apply.

For residential trips mainly during school time (i.e. more than 50% of their total duration) the cost of accommodation and meals can be charged. Where the pupil is entitled to Free School Meals, the school can only ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of accommodation and meals. All parents will be notified that if they are receiving such benefits they are entitled to claim remission.

For residential trips mainly in school time, voluntary contributions can be requested from all parents to help fund transport and other costs.

Charging parents who assist on school visits

Parents assisting on school visits and activities will not be charged.

Swimming

All children from year 3 to year 5 go swimming for ten sessions. The school has to pay for professional swimming coaches/life guards and for the transport to/from the pool as well as for additional staff to support the classroom staff. Parents are asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of travel.

Music Tuition

Parents, who wish their children to learn a specific musical instrument with ‘Music for Schools’ or other providers, will enter into a formal agreement with the organisation directly. The school does not benefit financially in any way from such arrangements and the payments are not processed by the school office.

School Meals

Our hot school meals are provided by The Farm Kitchen. Parents who wish to order a hot meal for their child are asked to order online, orders will close on the preceding Tuesday at 3pm. Payments are not processed by the school office.

Children qualifying for Pupil Premium and children in Key Stage 1 are entitled to a free school meal.

General

There are no centrally available funds to deal with “hardship cases”. The school will need to finance these from its own resources irrespective as to whether the trip is deemed to be in or out of school time. Requests for financial support should be made to the Headteacher.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and presented to the Full Governing Body for adoption.