

Thriplow Church of England (Aided) Primary School Charging and Remissions Policy

We know that by law the school may not charge for any activity unless we have drawn up a statement of general policy on charging. This is such a document.

Voluntary Contributions

Thriplow Primary School's governing body believe that when education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours it **should** be free. We accept this as a principle but in pragmatic terms we know that many activities currently provided in our school would not take place unless there were extra monies available for these events. The school budget and curriculum has to be managed imaginatively to provide for as many opportunities for learning as possible, in line with our school's aims. Therefore in accordance with the DFES guidance we accept that it is not possible to levy a **compulsory** charge for transport or admission costs for visits to museums etc. during school hours. These charges must be in the form of **voluntary contributions**.

As Governing Body of Thriplow Primary School we ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of some activities which take place during school hours. The contributions are genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unwilling or unable to contribute are not discriminated against. Where there are insufficient contributions to make an activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall the visit is cancelled.

Residential Visits

The school is able to charge parents for board and lodging costs for residential visits. Under certain circumstances, and at the discretion of the Governing Body, parents may be exempt from these costs if they can prove they receive the following benefits:

- Income support(IS)
- Income-based job-seeker's allowance(IBJSA)
- Child tax credit provided that working Tax credit is not also received and the families income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £15,575 (Financial year 2008-2009)
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit and
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27th October 2008

These parents must have board and lodging costs remitted to them if the visit takes place mainly during school hours. Fees for residential visits (rather than the cost of board and lodging) are not charged to such parents if the visit is outside school hours and forms part of the national curriculum programmes of study.

Instrumental Music Lessons

The law states that all education provided during school time must be free, an exception to this law is music lessons

At Thriplow School Instrument lessons are arranged and charged privately between parents and music tutors but can take place within school time.

Materials

The school may charge for materials or require them to be provided for cooking, design technology etc. if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

Swimming

Thriplow Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution of a wide range of different activities to suit various learning styles. We believe that every child in our school should have the opportunity to learn how to swim and encourage parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of transport to ensure that children can take advantage of the teaching of swimming at Melbourn Village College McSplash Pool. Where possible the cost of pool hire and teaching will be met from the school budget. *We ask for contributions towards the cost of transport.* There is provision made for this in the annual allocation of monies to Primary Schools. Nevertheless the Governors have the discretion to cancel the swimming sessions for some year groups if it is apparent that this activity is becoming an inordinate drain on the school budget in comparison with expenditure in other curriculum areas.

Remissions

If there are cases of short-term family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities the Governing body invite parents to apply in confidence to the headteacher for remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the headteacher.

Debt Management

- 1 Payment should be obtained as and when goods and services are provided wherever possible; in particular where the value of the goods and services is relatively small, i.e. less than £100.
- 2 Where payment is not received at the time when the goods or services are delivered an invoice must be raised as soon as possible but normally within 10 days after the debt becomes due.
- 3 Invoices should require payment within 30 days from the date of issue.
- 4 Final reminders should be issued if no payment is received within 35 days. The final reminder should make it clear that legal action will be taken if payment is not received within a further 14 days.
- 5 At each Finance Personnel and Premises Committee meeting, the Head Teacher will inform the governors of any debt which is still outstanding after the 14 day period following the final reminder, together with any proposed action.
- 6 Outstanding debt of up to £50 may be written-off by the Head Teacher provided that the appropriate follow-up action outlined above has been taken and the details of the debtor, amount of write-off and reason for no further action being taken is reported to the FPP Committee for information.
- 7 Write-off outstanding debt in excess of £50 must be approved by the FPP Committee following submission of details of the debt by the Head Teacher together with reasons for no further action being taken.

Revised January 2010

To be reviewed January 2012