



# *Berkswell C of E School* *Charging Policy*

## **Introduction**

This policy covers charges made by the school to parents for pupils' school activities in accordance with the 1996 Education Act. There is a separate Lettings Policy to cover the charges made by the school to hirers for letting the school premises.

All education during school hours is free, with the exception of individual or group music tuition. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. The school requires a voluntary contribution for school visits and visitors to the school who work with classes (such as theatre groups).

The school may request a voluntary contribution for activities to enhance / enrich the National Curriculum.

## **Voluntary contributions**

When organising school trips or visits that enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the activity. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel an activity. If the activity goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we still allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays the additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded and the school will provide this information on request. This information will not make reference to specific individuals.

The following is a list of some of the additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- Visits to educational sites beyond the school boundary, including residential trips.
- Visitors to the school related to educational activities
- Sporting activities outside the school day which require transport expenses
- Musical activities

If parents are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) they will not be asked for a voluntary contribution towards educational activities, with the exception of music tuition, detailed below.

Parents in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the costs of any board and lodging for residential trips:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit

- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

### **Music tuition**

All children study music in class, as part of the normal curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There is a charge for individual and group instrumental tuition, as this is not part of the National Curriculum. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019, Solihull Music Service invoice parents directly for this music tuition.

We give parents information about the arrangements for additional music tuition when their children start to learn to play an instrument for the first time. This may be at different ages and stages depending on the appropriate starting point for learning an instrument.

Where parents are unable to fund music tuition due to financial hardship, the school may be able to subsidise the charge by up to 50%. Each request for funding support will be assessed individually by the Headteacher and will be reviewed regularly.

The school's policy is not to make a profit from these parental contributions.

### **Residential visits**

When the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, we ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the full costs for board and lodging. When a residential visit is organised mainly outside of school time parents are asked to pay the full costs for board and lodging. The School always gives details of a payment plan, which gives parents the option to make stage payments, with the final balance due before the trip takes place.

These payments will include the costs of the activities involved and travelling expenses.

If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, and the costs cannot be met from the school budget, we may cancel the visit.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure that no pupil is prevented from attending a residential visit for financial reasons.

The School does not make a profit from any school trip, and we always issue refunds to the parents once all the expenses have been paid, if their contributions exceed the full cost of the trip.

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