

## **POLICY STATEMENT FOR CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

### **Charges for School Activities**

In accordance with Sections 450-461 of the 1996 Education Act, the Academy Committee make no charge for education or educational activities provided during school hours as part of the published curriculum. However, the Academy Committee recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities can make towards the personal and social development of learners. The Academy Committee therefore reserves the right to levy charges for the following activities arranged by the school, which will not exceed the actual cost of the activity.

The Academy Committee recognises that learners who are in the care of the Local Authority are entitled to participate in all school arranged activities free of charge, as a budget allocation is made direct from the Government to cover this. Should the required amount be substantial, such as may be required for a residential visit, then the Local Authority holds monies to provide additional funds to the school to allow the learner to participate, although this may not cover the whole amount.

### **Optional extra activities outside school hours**

The full cost for activities such as specialist sporting instruction and residential visits, which take place out of school hours may be charged to parents provided that they are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum, an examination syllabus or Religious Education, where no charge will be made. In fixing the charge the school may take account of the costs for travel, lodging for supervisory and associated supply cover.

### **Residential visits partly or fully during school hours**

No charge will be made for such visits other than board and lodging charges. The Academy Committee recognise that they will provide full remission from the charge for board and lodging to learners whose families are in receipt of Income Support, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Guaranteed Element of State Pension, support under part vi of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit (providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income, as assessed by Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190), Pupil or Forces Premium Funding.

Where activities are organised and charged by a third-party e.g. independent tour operator the school may provide partial or full remission of charges.

### **Music**

If learners make use of an instrument provided by the school or the Local Authority, a charge may be made in respect of the maintenance of the instrument in accordance with the published scale of charges. A charge may also be made in respect of tuition even if such tuition takes place in school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before tuition takes place.

### **Materials for practical lessons**

Voluntary contributions or provision of goods in kind may be requested from parents for materials for practical lessons (Design Technology, Cookery or other subject areas as the Academy Committee may from time to time determine), if parents indicate in advance a wish to own the finished product.

### **Visits in support of the curriculum which are desirable but not essential**

The Academy Committee recognises that the school may wish to offer opportunities for learners to broaden the range of experiences in connection with certain curriculum areas during school hours. Such opportunities might comprise an educational visit to a historic site, work in an art gallery, or use of a swimming pool.

The Academy Committee's policy is to encourage the school to work jointly with parents in this respect, and invite voluntary contributions from parents either generally to school funds or specifically for certain activities, in accordance with section 460 of the 1996 Education Act.

In encouraging such co-operation, the Academy Committee is anxious to ensure that parents are made aware that such contributions are voluntary and learners will not be treated differently or discriminated against according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution. No learner would be prevented from attending such a visit if no contribution had been made.

### **If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.**

The Academy Committee recognises that the viability of visits in support of the curriculum which are desirable but not essential, depends upon the level of voluntary financial support received from parents and delegate to the Headteacher responsibility for decisions in relation to the viability of such visits.

The Academy Committee reserves the right to make a charge for visits to school by professionals such as authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.

### **Lost School Equipment, Books etc**

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school property.

### **Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture or Property**

Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a learner's behaviour.

### **Photocopying**

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act' (Publication Scheme) will be charged at 8p per sheet and 15p per sheet for any colour printing.

### **Private Fees**

Any report or data that is requested on a learner for the purpose of a third-party private assessment requested by a parent (for example: private psychological reports or solicitor reports) will be charged at an agreed rate by the Headteacher in discussion with the Chair of the Academy Committee. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information (not less than £10 per hour) as well as photocopying charges (not less than 8p per sheet) and postage.

### **Remissions**

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Ponteland Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all learners gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based upon an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy considers the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where families are in receipt of Income Support, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Guaranteed Element of State Pension, support under part vi of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit (providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income, as assessed by Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190), the Academy Committee will observe its statutory requirement to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organises for the learner if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for learners to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Academy Committee will invite parents to apply in confidence in writing for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Academy Committee.

It has been agreed that these learners in receipt of **Pupil Premium** (Looked After Children Premium or Armed Forces Premium) will have all costs for visits remitted through the use of their allocated monies.

### **Data Protection of Learners and Families**

Staff will ensure that these learners are not publically 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 or dinner money which do not identify learners who do not contribute.

The Academy Committee may, from time to time, review and amend the categories of activities for which charges can be made.