

PARSONS DOWN PARTNERSHIP of SCHOOLS
SCHOOL CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY
2021- 2022

Purpose and background

The Partnership wishes to make a broad programme of activities accessible to as many pupils as possible. This policy is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of the school budget. It also defines other circumstances when the school may wish to ask for voluntary contributions. The policy is written to comply with the relevant terms of the Education Act 1996: Section 457 and the Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999. It also states the school's policy for charging for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

In accordance with the Educational Reform Act, the Governors of Parsons Down Partnership of Schools have agreed that the Schools will apply any charges levied by the LA for services, which it provides, and also remission arrangements, which the Authority considers appropriate.

The school reserves the right to levy a charge in any circumstances permissible under the Education Act.

Policy objectives

Charging No pupil should have their access to the curriculum limited by charges. However, the school reserves the right to levy a charge in any circumstances permissible under statute as detailed below. When charges are to be made the school reserves the absolute right to determine whether the activity has to be cancelled if an insufficient number of families are prepared to pay for the activity to take place.

Voluntary Contributions Where a charge cannot be made (as is the often the case for activities which are an essential part of the curriculum, or religious education) parents may nevertheless be asked to make a voluntary contribution. The matter of a voluntary contribution will not be a factor in deciding whether a pupil is allowed to participate in an activity to be financed by voluntary contributions.

Remissions The school will apply the statutory minimum remissions to any charges that they make. This applies currently to pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit (please refer to www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals for current annual income threshold). Any further remission of charges will be at the absolute discretion of the Governing Board.

No pupil shall be placed at an educational disadvantage because of a parent's unwillingness or inability to contribute. Parents are offered the opportunity to pay the contributions for day trips in instalments.

In the case of particular need, remission outside these parameters will be at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher.

Information Documents are available under the Freedom of Information Act and charges may be made. For more details please refer to the Parsons Down Partnership of Schools Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

Liability for personal property The school does not accept liability for any items of personal property lost or damaged in school, although in exceptional circumstances a contribution to the replacement of a lost or damaged item may be made at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher

School Fund

No contributions are requested for the School Fund. Money is raised by such from the sale of school photographs, sponsored events and donations.

Management of policy

Staff: This policy is implemented and managed by the Headteacher

Governing Board: The Governors' Finance Committee reviews this policy annually and recommends amendments to the Governing Board for final decision.

Associated policies

School Fund Policy

Parsons Down Partnership of Schools Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Practice and procedures

Organisers of activities should be clear as to whether an activity falls within the parameters for charging or voluntary contributions:

Charging

Activities

It is not *normally* possible to charge for activities that are an essential part of the national curriculum or religious education.

Where a charge is allowed (see below), it may not exceed the cost that can be apportioned to the pupil's participation. If the cost of the chargeable element of an activity is expected to exceed the sum of the charges received then the organiser should ensure funds to balance are available by reference to the Headteacher. The school will normally make a charge where the law permits it:

- 1 activities provided by a private company.
- 2 the services of a non-school organisation employed during school hours. This includes swimming trips at KS2.
- 3 any charges levied by the LA for services that it provides whilst applying the remission arrangements that are considered appropriate,
- 4 materials used in the production of an article where the pupil's parent has indicated in advance that they wish the article to be owned by the pupil, (NB where a parent declines to offer to pay for materials used in the production of an article where otherwise it would be expected that the pupil's parent would have indicated in advance that they wish the article

to be owned by the pupil then the pupil shall undertake the exercise but not be allowed possession of the article on completion),

Voluntary contributions

These may be asked for, but this must be done in line with the stated objectives of this policy. Organisers of activities will normally ask for voluntary contributions to cover the costs of:

- travel
- materials, books and equipment; including covering the cost of loss or damage to items
- associated administrative and support staff costs
- tickets and entrance fees.

The organiser will have constructed a balanced budget in advance. When arranging an activity the voluntary contribution requested will be set to cover the direct cost per pupil, fixed overhead costs and where appropriate, with an allowance for a contingency.

When writing to parents the benefit and educational aims of the activity must be described along with any risks associated. A request for voluntary contributions must make it clear that:

- there is no obligation to make a contribution,
- no pupil will be treated differently or not allowed to participate according to whether a contribution has been made,
- it may be necessary to cancel an activity if voluntary contributions received are insufficient to meet the costs of the activity.

A charge may be levied for activities available to our pupils that take place outside, or mainly outside, school hours that are not an essential part of the national curriculum or religious education in order to support the wide range of additional extra-curricular activities arranged by the school. The organisers of activities will normally determine a charge to cover the costs of:

- materials, books and equipment
- teaching costs including supply cover
- associated administrative and support staff costs.
- tickets and entrance fees.

For an extra-curricular activity the charge will be set to cover the direct cost per pupil, fixed overhead costs and where appropriate, an allowance for a contingency to cater for any reasonable unforeseen shortfall in income or increase in expenditure

When writing to parents the benefit and aims of the activity must be described along with any risks associated.

GDPR

Under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we, Parsons Down Partnership of Schools, are no longer able to charge for document requests relating to personal data held by the school but we are able to decline requests if they are deemed 'manifestly unfounded or excessive'

We will provide the first copy Free of Charge but a charge may be levied for additional copies if deemed excessive. If a charge is levied it will be a 'reasonable fee for administrative costs associated with the request'.

We have a period of one month to respond to your request. In certain circumstances we may need extra time to consider your request and can take up to an extra two months. If extra time is required we will let you know, within one month, and explain the reason(s) why.