SPELLBROOK CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL (vc)

Flourishing in Love and Learning

In everything - in every circumstance - do to others as you would have them do to you." Matthew 7:12

School Activities Charging, Remissions & Reimbursements Policy

Document Information			
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Review Cycle:	Biennial	**Ratified by FGB:**	9/7/25

The following amendments have been made to this policy since the 'ratified by' date.

Date	Page number	Section	Details of change

These changes / recommendations will be reviewed / ratified by Full Governing Body for the 'review cycle' as quoted above.

School Activities Charging, Remissions and Reimbursements Policy

Purpose

The Local Authority or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging. The Governing Body's policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

What was consulted?

Based on the guidance in the 'Governors' Guide to the Law' and the DFE guidance 'Charging for School Activities' November 2013.

Types of Charges

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Permitted charges
- Voluntary contributions

Permitted Charges

1. Music tuition

A charge is permitted for instrumental music tuition undertaken in school hours for up to and including four pupils, unless the tuition forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination (e.g. GCSE).

We charge the full rate as determined by Hertfordshire Music Service or if music provision is provided by an out sourced provider that provider will invoice parents directly.

2. Residential Activities

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances*
- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income *(as assessed by the Inland Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190)*
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

*The government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal Credit is fully rolled out.

(For clarity, it is only those currently claiming free school meals and not those on Ever 6, who are entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging. Therefore not all on Pupil Premium are entitled).

3. Activities outside school hours
Charges will be made for non-residential activities, which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on the activity takes place outside school hours. (Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel occurs during school hours).

4. Lost and destroyed school property
In addition to the above, charges can be applied for the costs of lost and destroyed school property and breakages.

5. School meals
Payment for a school meal provided by Herts Catering Limited (HCL) is to be made in advance of a child receiving the meal, unless the parent has registered their entitlement to claim one or more of the following benefits and the school is in receipt of knowledge of the entitlement from HCC;

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances*
- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (*as assessed by the Inland Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190*
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

6. Breakfast Club
Entitlement to state benefits does not entitle a child to a free breakfast at our school breakfast club. Bookings and payments should be in advance using the schools online booking and payment system.

Parents wishing to pay for Breakfast Club using Childcare Vouchers may be able to do so by arrangement with their employer. The school will need to be aware of the scheme and register with the provider.

Voluntary Contributions

The Head Teacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

• Any activity which takes place during school hours
• School equipment
• School funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

Reimbursements

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. In accordance with the guidance set out within the HCC Financial Handbook for Schools, Spellbrook Primary School will make a refund where the surplus is either:

• 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
• £5 or more per person
Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, e.g. £3 not £3.29.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that 'a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent / guardian would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by a date 'x' weeks in advance. If the school is not contacted by that date it will assume that the refund has been donated to school funds.' All refunds will be made in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail.

Refunds donated to the school will be transferred to an appropriate budget heading, following approval from the Headteacher.

Additional Considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we will give at least two weeks' notice of any trip / visit.
- For residential trips we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis may discriminate against some pupils and we will avoid that method of selection.
- Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school will provide this information on request.

Reference should also be made to: MAN-B-044-v1 Pupil Premium Policy.

Arrangement for Monitoring & Evaluation

The Resources Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on an annual basis (or by exception if requested) a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.