



Denmead Infant School

"Where the Joy of Learning Begins"

CHARGING POLICY

The governing body recognises the valuable contributions that the wide range of additional activities such as school visits, clubs and residential experiences can make towards the children's personal and social education. The governing body intends to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of the school and as additional optional extras.

The governing body understands that the school is not allowed to charge for activities that form part of the curriculum of the school, but can charge for extra-curricular activities.

The governing body aims to:

- maintain the right to free school education
- enable all children to take full advantage of the activities provided by the school
- ensure that activities offered in school time are available to all children regardless of their parents/carers' ability or willingness to help meet the costs associated with those activities

Voluntary contributions

The restrictions on charging for school activities do not in any way prohibit or restrict a Local Authority school from seeking voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential. Such contributions must make it clear that:

- there is no obligation to contribute
- children registered at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have made any contribution in response to the request

The charges for individual children must not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, which includes the cost of extra staff required to ensure the adult/pupil ratio is met (excluding staff for special needs), divided by the number of pupils willing to participate, rounded up to the nearest 10p.
- include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parents wish them to participate but are unwilling or unable to meet the cost
- include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate, where a small part of the activity takes place in school hours

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contribution, the school will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. The initial letter will explain the nature of the proposed activity and its likely value in educational terms. It will then indicate the contribution per child which will be required if the activity is to take place. It will be emphasised that there is no obligation to contribute and that no child will be omitted from the activity because his/her parents/carers are unable to contribute, but it will be made equally clear that the activity may not take place if insufficient parents are willing to support it financially.

Where the school requests voluntary contributions from parents/carers for school activities in or out of school time and the number of places available for a particular activity is limited, the school will decide which children should be given the opportunity to participate, without reference to parents/carers' willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

Neither a child or his/her parents will be required to pay for, or to supply, any materials, books or other equipment for use in connection with National Curriculum Education provided during school hours. Parents and carers may, however, be invited to provide their children voluntarily with particular items, in order to release resources for the school budget for other purposes, but no child shall be at a disadvantage because of a parent/carer's unwillingness or inability to contribute in this way.

Educational visits

Competitive prices are obtained for travel (usually coach) and party rates for admission to places of interest that allow considerable reductions. Parents/carers are notified of the cost of the trip, if the trip is to be a viable one, and they are invited to make a voluntary contribution equal to this amount. If the response is such that a shortfall is likely, the parents/carers will be informed that the visit will be cancelled.

The value of educational experience is carefully weighed before trips are planned, and it is our view that children gain a great deal from first hand learning of this nature.

Visits by theatre groups, story tellers etc

Visits by theatre groups etc are costed according to the charge of the group visiting and are always kept to a bare minimum. Sometimes these activities will be funded by the PTA and at other times the school may ask for voluntary contributions to help cover the cost. All children benefit from these presentations regardless of contribution made or lack of it.

Breakages and Damage

The school will ask parents/carers to pay for the cost of replacing items lost, damaged or destroyed as a result of wilful or neglectful behaviour. This might, for example, cover the cost of replacing a broken window or a defaced, damaged or lost book

Responsibilities

Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans at the draft stage should be submitted to the Head teacher for consideration and approval before any booking or request for voluntary contributions from parents/carers is made. .