Charging and Remissions Policy for Educational Activities

A wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make a valuable contribution towards a child's education. Cheddington School aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

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

- Ø Voluntary contributions
- Ø Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below**.**

Voluntary Contributions:

Voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities may be requested. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, and as such would have to be cancelled if insufficient funds are received, this should be made clear to parents at the outset. The Head Teacher must ensure it is made clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child would be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

Permitted Charges:

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit.

1. Materials & Textbooks

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. In the case of Food Technology, pupils usually provide their own ingredients, but if the pupil forgets, the school provides the ingredients and levies a charge. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

2. Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. A charges may be made for teaching a musical instrument, either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles).

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for

music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

3. Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

(If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.
Example 1: Visit during school hours
Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.
Example 2: Visit outside school hours
Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.)

4. Damage/Loss to Property:

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head Teacher may decide.

5. Lettings:

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee and approved by the Governing Body.

6. Other charges:

The Head Teacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

Remissions Policy:

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a pupil who receives the Pupil Premium shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Under current regulations children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible for free school meals:

- Income support

- Income based job seekers allowance
- Child Tax Credit except if the parent meets ANY of the following criteria -
  i) entitled to working tax credit (regardless of income)
  ii) have an annual income in excess of £16,190 (Please note that this figure is for April 2011 and that it changes in April each year).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Where charges are to be made by the governing body for optional extras, parents may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge as set out in the school's remissions policy.

Based on the County Model Policy of September 2011