



POLICY DOCUMENT

For use by all member schools

Charging & Remissions

| | Name | Date |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Written By | Mr N Vitarana Head of School | June 2012 |
| Approved FGB / Sub-Committee | Mr N Holland FARCO | 19 June 2012 |
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Policy to be reviewed every three years

Charging & Remissions Policy

Introduction

The Spring Partnership Trust's policy is that education should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly within school hours. However, in certain circumstances as laid out in this document, charges for activities may be incurred.

Where the schools are providing such activities a charge may be levied (unless remitted in accordance with the Trust's Remissions Policy below).

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended) and sets out the circumstances in which the Local Committee members or Directors propose to meet any charge payable either:

- (a) for an optional extra; or
- (b) board and lodging

provided for a registered pupil at any school.

Prohibited Charges

The Spring Partnership Trust does not charge for the following:

- **Admission to school**
- **Access to the National Curriculum**
- **SATs testing**
- **Religious education**
- **Equipment**
The provision of books, equipment, materials or transport in relation to any activity that cannot itself be charged for, subject to the provisions under permissible charges (see below).
- **Non-residential school trips**
For non-residential school trips and visits that take place within school hours, the schools may request a voluntary contribution towards the costs, but it will be made clear to parents/carers that they are under no obligation to contribute. The amount of the voluntary contribution will be calculated based on the cost of the activity, the number of pupils taking part and any administration costs incurred.

No pupil will be excluded from such a trip because his or her parents/carers have not contributed.

The schools will inform parents/carers that if a particular trip is dependent on voluntary funding and if sufficient funds are not raised, the trip may have to be cancelled.

Permissible Charges

The Spring Partnership Trust may charge for the following:

- **Individual music tuition within school hours**
The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows the schools to make a charge for teaching either an individual pupil or group of any appropriate size except where it is provided to fulfil the requirements for a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the requirements of the

National Curriculum. The charge will include the cost of the teacher providing the tuition, the cost of sheet music and, if applicable, the hire and insurance of a musical instrument. When charges are to be levied, parents/carers will be asked to indicate their written agreement in advance of the provision of the tuition.

In addition, the schools may provide facilities for the tuition by peripatetic music teachers in the playing of any musical instrument. In these circumstances payment for the tuition should be made by the parents/carers directly to the teacher providing the tuition.

- **Board and lodging**

Where a school activity involves pupils in nights away from home, the schools may make a charge for board and lodging in all cases, whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours, subject to the Trust's remissions policy.

Where a trip is deemed to take place outside school hours' charges may also be levied for transport.

- **Transport**

In general, the cost of any transport provided by schools in school hours for activities not deemed as essential parts of the National Curriculum will have to be met from voluntary contributions. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the activity may not go ahead.

However, where a pupil makes use of transport not provided by the school to travel directly from home to an activity sanctioned (though not provided by the school) parents/carers will be expected to meet the costs of such travel. An example of this is travel direct from home to a sporting event organised by a member school.

- **Charging for "finished products"**

Where parents/carers indicate in advance a desire to own the finished product of work prepared by pupils, a charge may be levied to cover the costs of ingredients or materials. This will apply in subjects including, though not limited to, Art and Design & Technology.

- **Breakfast & Afterschool Clubs**

The schools may from time to time facilitate a number and variety of clubs which run outside normal school hours to the benefit of pupils and parents/carers. These clubs may be run by external service providers. Where the club is run by an external organiser, for example a sporting activity, the club organiser will charge parents/carers direct for the activity.

If the club is for care provision before the start of a school day or at the end of the school day parents/carers will be advised of the charges before they apply for a place at the club.

- **Optional extras**

An optional extra, as defined in Section 455 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended), is an activity which takes place outside school hours. Participation in such activities is dependent on parental/carer choice. A charge, including board and lodging where relevant, may be made, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost or provision and cannot include an element of subsidy for other pupils wishing to participate, but whose parents/carers are unwilling, or unable, to make a contribution.

Prior written agreement will be obtained from the parents/carers of pupils involved in an optional extra for which a charge is to be made.

There is a wide range of activities which schools may wish to arrange as optional extras. The majority of these extras are activities which will have to be self-supporting.

Items which can be included in the charge to be made to parents/carers include, but are not limited to:

- (a) a pupil's travel costs;
- (b) a pupil's board and lodging costs;
- (c) materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- (d) non-teaching staff costs;
- (e) entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc;
- (f) insurance costs.

The cost of engaging a teacher on a contract for services, as distinct from a contract of employment, in order to provide the chargeable activity may also be included.

- **Clothing**

Although no charge will be made for equipment for use in connection with education provided during school hours as set out in Section A(5) above, the Education Act 1996 (as amended) specifically excludes clothing from this definition.

Parents/carers may be asked, therefore, to provide their children with appropriate items, such as school choir 'T' shirts although these items are voluntary and those in hardship may be given a waiver on this deposit.

- **Breakages and fines**

If a pupil is responsible for damage to property or equipment, or for the defacement or loss of a book, the parent/carer may be asked to pay the full cost of any repairs or replacement. To facilitate the recovery of such monies after a pupil has left the school, a deposit may be requested which, if all textbooks and library books which have been lent out have been returned, will be refunded in full. Those in hardship may be given a waiver on this deposit.

General

In accordance with Section 460 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended), nothing in:

- (a) the Education Act 1996 (as amended); or
- (b) this Policy Document; or
- (c) any Bromley Local Education Authority Guidelines

shall prevent the schools from inviting parents to make voluntary contributions towards the costs of providing activities both within and outside school hours, provided that such contributions are genuinely voluntary, and that any request for contributions makes it explicitly clear that:

- (i) there is no obligation to contribute; and
- (ii) that under no circumstances will pupils be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make such contribution.

Remissions

Requests for financial assistance and or consideration of remission of charges for Looked after /Previously Looked after Children or parents/carers in receipt of certain benefits (listed below) will be given for those activities outlined below:

- (a) income support,
- (b) working families tax credit,
- (c) an income-based jobseeker's allowance, or
- (d) disability working allowance
- (e) disability living allowance

Other requests will be considered from parents/carers based on their merits with regard to individual circumstances at the time of the request.

Examples of Remissions may include:

- The full cost of board and lodging on residential visits in school time.
- The full cost of board and lodging on residential visits outside school time, where the education provided on such a residential visit is:
 - (a) in pursuance of a duty imposed by Section 357(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to implement the National Curriculum; or
 - (b) in pursuance of a duty imposed by Section 69 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to secure the due provision of religious education.
- The costs associated with individual tuition of the playing of a musical instrument, when this is provided by the school.