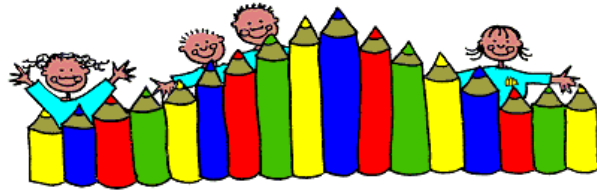


# Oldbrook First School

## Living and Learning Together



## Charging and Remissions Policy

### Aim

To provide clear guidance, and the reasons for this, in implementing the legislation. (Education Act 1996, Sections 449-462 and DfE Circular 2/94).

The governing body recognises the enhancement to all areas of school life that activities and visits provide.

At the same time, the governing body recognises that, regrettably, it is not possible to fund these additional activities from the General School Budget. However, funding will be provided to cover some events and activities from the School Fund. The level of funding spent for this purpose will be dependent on the existing resources available in the School Fund. Some activities will rely largely on voluntary contributions from parents.

### Implementing the Policy

At Oldbrook First School the charging policy will apply in the following areas:

- **Art/Craft and Cooking:** all children will be able to take home, free of charge, all activities involving art, craft and cooking. The governing body considers it very important that young children are able to share their achievements with their families. Therefore, parents are not asked to indicate if they are willing to pay for the materials in order for them to go home.
- **Breakages and Damage:** the governing body recognises that, as at home, accidents happen. The cost of breakages and damage resulting from accidents will be met from the General School Budget. However, at times, as at home, things are deliberately broken or damaged. When it is clear who is responsible the governing body reserves the right to ask the parents to meet the cost resulting from their child's misbehaviour. This action is reasonable as a learning experience for the child. At the same time, it ensures that unnecessary demands are not made on the General School Budget.
- **Books:** the governing body reserves the right to ask parents for the replacement costs

of library and reading books that are lost or damaged. Books must be valued by the children as an essential reading resource and, as such, need to be looked after. Therefore to request the replacement cost is reasonable as a learning experience for the child.

- **Examination Fees:** this does not apply at Oldbrook First School.
- **Music Tuition:** although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of pupils to play a musical instrument. Music tuition would be provided by the Milton Keynes Music Service and the amount charged passed on to parents would depend on the charges made by the Music Service at the time. An exception would be for recorder lessons which are run by a teacher as a lunchtime club. No charge is made for recorder lessons although parents will be asked to pay for a recorder for their child, which will be ordered through school.
- **Visits:** extensive use is made of the local environment. This is dependent on the good will of parents, acting as helpers in accordance with the Off-Site Visits and Outdoor Learning Policy but does not require financial support. It is for this reason, that staff regularly plan visits in the local community as well as accessing it as a rich learning environment.

At times, it is necessary to consider going further afield to extend and enrich the curriculum. Careful attention is given to the cost of such visits. Whilst there is no obligation for parents to contribute, Oldbrook parents are invited to make a voluntary contribution in order for the visit to go ahead. Significant advance warning is given in order for parents to plan ahead. Parents may pay in instalments. The school may only request the actual cost of the visit for each child. The school funds the cost of any preliminary visit that is made by a member of staff and materials purchased (booklets, postcards, etc). Adults who help (including the staff) are not required to pay. These costs may be included in the average total for each child. Parents may contribute more than the minimum contribution, if they wish. The school may be able to subsidise a small part of the cost. The vast majority of the funding relies on parental contributions. Therefore, if these are insufficient, the governing body will cancel the visit. It is unfortunate when this happens. The governing body regrets this action. When visits are able to go ahead they provide an extra dimension to the lives of the children. This is particularly true when families do not have cars or when the full cost (rather than party rates) has to be met, if the family goes alone. Many of these visits also include a talk or the use of resources and the provision of activities that are only available if booked through the school.

During the planning stage of a visit a cost pro forma will be completed and the cost per child is worked out. This will take into account any fundraising that can contribute to the cost of the visit. This cost analysis will be shared with governors and filed in the Visits and Journeys file. Whenever possible we will endeavour to keep the cost of trips to a minimum.

- **Visitors to school:** the school regularly invites a range of visitors with expertise into school. This normally involves the whole school, for example, authors during Book Week, or speakers at assembly. Although these visitors charge or request a contribution towards expenses, the school often funds them from the School Fund. However the school may request a voluntary contribution from parents to cover some of the cost.
- **Other events:** the school is committed to parental partnership. Events are held regularly to which parents are invited. These are wide ranging. They focus on events to support parents in finding out how we teach, e.g. curriculum meetings. Others are arranged so that parents can find out how their child is getting on, e.g. parental consultation evenings. Sometimes these are more informal, e.g. joining us in assembly. At many of these events, refreshments are provided free of charge. So, too, are refreshments provided free for our children at a number of the 'fun' events during the school day, which occur throughout the year, e.g. at the Christmas parties and at sports events. The governing body chooses to fund these activities as a gesture of good will in valuing all members of the school family and in order to promote the social skills of the children.
- **Events and Activities organised by a Third Party:** where educational activities are provided by a third party, its charges will be passed on to the parents of the participating children.

Kirk Hopkins  
May 2015