

Stanford in the Vale CE Primary School

Policy on Charging

1 Introduction

Stanford In The Vale CE School believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. We will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered, at the same time, we will try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking advantage of the opportunities.

All the education we provide during normal school hours is at no charge to pupils. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which must be reviewed regularly. The review date is recorded at the end of this document.

2 Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits/visitors to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may have to cancel a trip.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit or requests from the school are made to FOSS (Friends of Stanford School). Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded, and the school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- musical events;
- residential visits.

3 Residential visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we calculate a charge to cover all costs associated with the trip. If we cannot raise sufficient funding through these voluntary contributions, the visit may have to be cancelled, and that aspect of the curriculum would have to be covered in other ways. School funds or FOSS have been very helpful in the past in contributing funds so that no child misses this opportunity by virtue of their financial circumstances.

4 Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. The Music Service make a charge for these lessons, but parents in receipt of state benefits are exempt from payment. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

5 Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all children, with the exception of Foundation. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We do ask for a small voluntary contribution from parents to cover the cost of transport. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we seek the parents' written permission for their children to take part.

6 Gym

The school offers additional coaching after school in a range of sports. Where this is run by a qualified coach, who is not a member of the school staff, they make a small charge for these sessions.

7 Additional considerations

We recognise our responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Topic plans include costs for trips/visitors planned for that topic. These are sent home at the end of the previous term, to aid financial planning.
- Where possible we give the parents at least three weeks notice of a planned trip and its cost.
- 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.
- FOSS send home regular letters, explaining forthcoming events/projects and associated costs.

8 Confidentiality

In all events we will try our utmost to assist families experiencing difficulty in meeting the contributions requested for these trips/events. Requests for help with payments should be addressed to the Headteacher and will be handled in a confidential manner. Requests made to FOSS for financial support are made without disclosure of who the money is for.

9 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed every year, or earlier if necessary.

Signed: Amanda Willis

Reviewed: November 2016

Next Review: November 2017