Green Shoots Partnership

Respect Reflection Responsibility Resilience

Charging and Remission Policy

Our Vision

Green Shoots Partnership is a nurturing community primary school with a strong sense of pride and belonging, with the belief that all have the potential to thrive.

Our Purpose

We exist to cultivate a love of learning by broadening horizons and opening minds to new possibilities. Through our School Values, we grow confident individuals who aspire to shape the future.

Meadowside Primary School

Last Updated: January 2024

Declaration

Green Shoots Partnership agree to the adoption of the above Policy Document from review date above.

Members of the Governing Body will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; they will do all they can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; they will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the governing body, the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or staff.

POLICY STATEMENT ON CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

1. It is a requirement that the Governing Body of a school has in place a charging policy. This may be more or less generous than the LEA policy but must meet the requirements of the law. This policy has been compiled in line with the Department for Education requirements and in accordance with s449-462 of the Education Act 1996 and guidance issued by the DfE dated November 2013.

2. The purpose of the policy for Green Shoots Partnership is to make clear under what circumstances a charge will be made to parents. Unfortunately, the law on this matter is complex and the rules about when a charge can be made are far from simple. In addition, it is very important that the policy does not create a situation where fewer activities take place.

3. The Governors have therefore tried to balance the need for a policy to be clear and accessible but also workable in the wide variety of circumstances that are met in school.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governors.

General Principle:

4. In general, no charge will be made for any aspect of education, including books, materials and equipment, provided wholly or mainly during school hours. However, a charge may be made for activities fitting the exceptions listed below.

Buttercup Nursery:

5. Charges for Nursery provision will be applied above the 15 hour and 30 hour entitlement. See Nursery registration form, Nursery terms and condition and Appendix A for further details. Charges will be reviewed annually.

MASC Wraparound Care/Holiday Club

6. See MASC terms and conditions and Appendix B for further details. Charges will be reviewed annually.

Voluntary Contributions:

7. Where the school cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of an activity. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it may be cancelled.

Equipment, Materials, Clothing:

8. Equipment excludes clothing, including PE kit which must be provided by parents, with the exception of essential protective clothing/equipment such as safety goggles.

9. A fee can be charged for (or parents required to supply) ingredients and materials in areas such as technology that are to be used by a pupil to create his or her own article in a practical lesson. Any subject area can charge for materials, or require the materials to be provided as long as:
    i. The item is to belong to the pupil
    ii. It can be taken away by him or her, and
    iii. The parents have indicated in advance a wish for their child to own the product

Instrumental and Vocal Tuition:

10. A charge may be made for instrumental tuition taking place either during or out of school hours provided it is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision. A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition unless the tuition is part of the requirements of the national curriculum or the syllabus of a prescribed public examination, or is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme in which case it must be provided free of charge. Music tuition charges are made direct from NMPAT (Northants Music Services) to parents.

11. No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22 (I) of the Children Act 189). In this instance NMPAT will invoice the school for the cost of the tuition. Parents in receipt of pupil premium bursary may choose to use it to pay towards music tuition and if agreed by the school, they will be reimbursed or NMPAT paid directly.

Damage/Loss to Property:

12. 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 Executive Headteacher may decide.

13. A Charge will be made in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair or such lower cost as the Executive Headteacher may decide.

Optional extras (including school visits):

14. Voluntary contribution may be requested for an activity that takes place wholly in school time eg. trips or visiting speakers. Because the activity is optional, parents have a right to choose whether their children should participate or not. Parents cannot be required to do so, nor be required to pay the charges. However, the activity may not go ahead without voluntary contributions.

15. Care needs to be taken when assessing the cost of the activity/visit as some would be unsustainable as they have low basic cost but potentially very high supply cost. Supply costs must be included in the budget for the trip only if there will be a need for the school to have supply cover. In all cases a statement of activity costs must be drawn up and submitted to finance staff at the organisational stage of the trip (as per instructions on running school trips).

16. The charge levied by the school cannot exceed the actual cost of the trip. Any surplus left over £5 per student will be refunded. Surpluses under £5 per student will be transferred to a "Student Welfare" account which will be used to support students in financial difficulties.

17. Educational activities that take place wholly or mainly outside of school hours will be considered optional extras and as such may be charged.

    The cost of optional extras can include an appropriate element for:
    - Travel
    - Board and lodging
    - Materials, books, instruments, and other equipment
    - Support staff costs
    - Entrance fees
    - Insurance
    - Supply costs

18. The costs cannot include the cost of accompanying teaching staff, or teachers who have been involved in the organisation of the activity, unless engaged specifically to provide the activity (e.g. tennis coach)

Residential Visits:

19. A charge can be made for the board and lodging costs of residential visits. The charge must not exceed the actual cost of providing board and lodging for that particular pupil. For example, if different nightly rates are applied by a hotel or hostel to pupils of different ages, the total charge for the party should not be averaged out. Those for whom the charge is greater should pay the larger (correct) amount for them.

20. When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:
    - Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
    - Income Support (IS)
    - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
    - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
    - Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190
    - The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
    - Income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27.10.2008

Activities Partly during School Hours:

21. Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of the syllabus for a prescribed public exam that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of the religious education.

22. Many school activities take place neither wholly inside, nor wholly outside school hours, but partly in both. In order to determine the classification, the 50% rule is applied:

    - ***Non-Residential Activities:*** If 50% or more is spent on an activity in school time (Includes travelling time, excludes mid-day breaks)
      The whole activity is deemed to be inside school time

    - ***Residential Activities:*** The number of half-days are counted.
      A half-day is any 12-hour period ending noon or midnight.

If the number of days and half-days spent on the activity (including travelling time) is greater than the number of school sessions (am and pm sessions) that a pupil would spend on a normal school day, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours and vice-versa.

Transport:

23. Parents may be required to meet the cost of transport from/to home to/from an activity sanctioned but not provided by the school.

Activities arranged by Third Parties in school hours

24. A 'Third Party' is somebody other than the school. A Third Party who arranges an activity during school hours may make a charge for their services to the parents of the students who are released to participate.

Recharges of Energy use:

25. Each contract with external Third Parties to be reviewed on own merits whenever they come up for renegotiation as per contract terms.

Hire of School Facilities (lettings):

26. The school may charge for lettings use of the school to outside agencies at the market rate to include locking up / opening up / based on market rates for time required.

References for other Schools:

27. When parents apply to other schools, without moving home, a charge of £20 is made at the school's discretion to cover the admin costs of assembling, assessment and pastoral information. The payment of this sum also ensures that parents grant us permission under data protection to divulge student data to another school.

Lost Library Books:

28. A charge of £4 will be made to the student at the school's discretion to cover costs to replace.

Subject Access Requests(SAR)

27. Under the General Data protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) as set out in the Data Protection Bill we cannot charge for providing the first copy of information requested under a SAR however can charge for subsequent copies.

Other charges

28. The Executive Headteacher or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services at the school's discretion.

Support with Charges

29. Pupil Premium Bursary may assist families of pupil premium children for costs related to narrowing the attainment gap.
    a. Application processes and forms are available from the School Office.