Cornerstone Schools (Barton. East Cowton and Ravensworth CE Primary Schools)

Charging and remissions policy for school activities and lettings

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Policy Author	K. Petch, Headteacher	
Amendments to policy	**Date**	**By whom**
Method of communication	Email to staff & available on Teams	

Introduction

This policy takes guidance from the DFE Policy – 'Charging for School Activities' (updated May 2018) and Local Authority guidance on school lettings. Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Governing Body and will be adjusted in line with new Government or Local Authority recommendations. It sets out the school's position on charges, remissions and lettings.

Voluntary Contributions and Responsibilities of Staff

Nothing in legislation prevents a Governing Body or Academy Trust from asking for voluntary contributions that would benefit the School or any School activities and the School will invite parents and others from time to time to make voluntary contributions to enable the provision of activities and visits which may not otherwise be possible. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Headteacher will make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No student will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, it may not go ahead. Staff organising visits should make this clear to parents. Staff organising a trip will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on the visit will be.

Activities outside of normal lesson times and not within the National Curriculum are classed as 'optional extras'. Parents may be asked to meet the full cost of these activities. In the case of residential experiences, every effort will be made to offer value for money but the cost might be quite high. It is intended that School-based extra-curricular activities should be free or very low cost. The School will do its best to offer assistance or remission of charges in any case where there is hardship.

For activities during normal School hours and/or within the National Curriculum, parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the activity to enable it to go ahead. Each year, such visits are likely to include residential visits, swimming, and trips to places of interest which will support their learning.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to School funds, parents will not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is not compulsory. The School will ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting for contributions.

Charges and contributions should cover the anticipated costs. If contributions from an activity exceed the actual cost, the School will refund surpluses of £3 or more per student where the charge for the activity is under £100; and £5 or more per student where the charge for the activity is over £100 or more. Any surplus of less than £3 per student, where the charge for the activity is under £100 and less than £5 per student where the charge for the activity is £100 or more will be retained in the School for use with other activities. A charge may include an allowance for the cost of staff from the School who supervise optional extra activities if those staff have been specifically asked to cover the activity as an 'optional extra'.

Parents may be asked to meet the costs of private music tuition in full, where tuition is given either to an individual student or to students in small groups. General fundraising and sponsorship may be used to permit additional activities.

Charging Structure

For residential courses during the time of normal school hours, parents can be asked to meet the full cost of board and lodging, and to make a voluntary contribution towards any travel expenses. The School will meet the costs for students whose parents receive the income support benefits, where it is still possible for the visit to go ahead. The school will do its best to offer assistance and remissions in any case where there is hardship.

Parents may be charged for some or all of the cost of damage to School property where this has been intentional, and will be expected to meet some or all of the cost for replacing lost or damaged books or equipment.

Activities and Visits

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 normal school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the day, regulations require that a school day be divided into two sessions: a 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. Activities during normal school hours may only involve a request for a voluntary contribution; parents may be charged an amount to cover the costs incurred to the School for activities mainly taking place outside of school hours.

Parents should be informed of the decision to ask for contributions at the planning stage of activities. Planned activities may be cancelled if financial support is not forthcoming. Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards activities taking place during school time, or towards activities which are a necessary part of the National Curriculum, or towards activities that form part of the School's basic curriculum for Religious Education. Parents will be asked to meet the full cost of optional extra activities that occur outside of normal School hours, where these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum. Parents will be asked to meet the full cost of board and lodging, and to make a voluntary contribution towards travel expenses for residential visits which fall, in the main, during normal school sessions. Students whose parents are receiving the following benefits should not be prevented from taking part in any school activity or trip that is open to other students:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It will not include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during School hours, the charge will include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from School accompanying students on a residential visit. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

When the School informs parents about a forthcoming visit, the member of staff leading the trip should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of income support benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. However, where voluntary contributions would not cover the cost of a visit, it would be likely that the visit would be cancelled where the trip was not an essential element of the curriculum.

Music Tuition

The law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, but music lessons are an exception to this rule. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide students with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s).

Extended Schools

After school club charges are as follows:

School	Breakfast Club Timings	Breakfast Club Charges	Afterschool Club Timings	Afterschool Club Charges
Barton	8am to 8:50am	£3	3.30pm-5.30pm Contact school for detail	£5 per hour £2.50 per half hour Prices vary for external providers
East Cowton	Breakfast Club is available on site through Sharon Crisp, childminder	N/A	3.30pm to 4.30pm Contact school for detail	£5 per hour £2.50 per half hour Prices vary for external providers
Ravensworth	8am to 8.20am	£2.00 (£1 for children arriving after 8.10am but before 8.20am)	3.30pm - 5pm Monday and Friday 3.30pm - 5.30pm Tues - Thurs Contact school for details	P £5 per hour £2.50 per half hour Prices vary for external providers

Late Collection Policy – After School Club

Late collection from After School Club can affect staffing arrangements and impact staff members' personal commitments. To support the smooth running of the club and also ensure fairness for staff time, a late collection fee will be applied once the club has officially closed. A charge of **£2.50 for every additional 5 minutes** will be incurred for any child/ren remaining in our care beyond the scheduled end time.

Early Years

Nursery charges for additional sessions over the funded 15, or if entitled 30, hours

All 3 and 4 year old children have an entitlement to 15, or 30, hours funded entitlement and this entitlement must always be completely free at the point of delivery. A parental agreement will be required in relation to the funded 15 or 30 hours provision.

Additional sessions over the 15 hours per week entitlement may be available but this is dependent upon the number of children who are attending for funded sessions and to whom priority will be given. The parental agreement should include details of the additional chargeable sessions which will only be guaranteed for the duration of 1 term with the agreement being put into place each term to define requirements, again dependent upon availability.

Sessions will consist of:

School	**Nursery Charges – additional hours**
Barton	£4 per additional hr - Full day £24, half hour £2
East Cowton	NA
Ravensworth	NA

Invoicing and Payment Procedures

An invoice for the additional sessions will be sent to parents weekly via MCAS. Where immediate payment of the invoice may cause hardship, parents are advised to contact the Headteacher in writing upon receipt of invoice. The School will do its best to assist with payment arrangements basing individual requests on their own merit. Note: late payment may incur additional charges (see Important Note and Late Payment Charges below) and non-payment will result in the termination of the contract with immediate effect unless an individual agreement has been arranged.

Non Attendance or Cancellation

There will be no refunds (full or part) for non-attendance of chargeable sessions.
Fees for additional sessions are chargeable for a full term and cancellation of the agreement will result in a cancellation charge for the remainder of fees due up to the end of the term. The cancellation charge may be waived or reduced at the discretion of the Headteacher basing individual requests on their own merit. All requests for waiving/reduction of cancellation fee must be put in writing to the Headteacher. Note: late payment may incur additional charges (see Important Note and Late Payment Charges below)

Lunchtime Sessions

The school can charge parents a fee to cover for additional supervisory staffing provision for nursery children attending the lunchtime session.

An optional charge* will be charged to cover school dinner where required (packed lunches may be provided by parents if preferred).

School	**Nursery Charges – Lunchtime Sessions**
Barton	£3 cost of school meal
East Cowton	Nursery not presently available
Ravensworth	Nursery not presently available

Free School Meals

For information on free school meals where applicable please see the School Administrator. Where there is entitlement to a Free School Meal the lunchtime supervision charge will be waived for the sessions that the Free School meal applies.

Important Note:

Any sums payable by parents for optional extras such as unpaid nursery fees, extended school provision etc. to which they have agreed in writing, or for board and lodging shall be recoverable as a civil debt and may also be subject to late payment charges.

Late Payment Charges:

Charges will be levied at the higher of **£5.00 or 5% of** the outstanding debt, to cover associated administration costs.