



At Lobley Hill Primary School we aim to 'Be the Best We Can Be' through being curious, adventurous and respectful in order to achieve personal excellence.

Lobley Hill Primary School

Charges, Remissions and Lettings Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date October 2024
Last reviewed on:	October 2024	
Next review due by:	October 2025	

Introduction

The Headteacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend children's learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Headteacher and Governing Body aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities. However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents/carers are charged for the cost. This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities. The Governing Body should determine annually a scale of fees and charges for the supply of goods or services by the school, including fees for lettings. Fees must be set at a level to at least cover the cost of earning those fees.

Statement

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996.

Our aims are:-

- To make school activities accessible to all children regardless of family income
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To provide a process, which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, children and the school
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Legislation

Education during School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to school Governors states that “education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of “education” includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.” It goes on to advise that “although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they can still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)”. When additional costs are incurred by Lobley Hill Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the children, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no child will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Education outside School Hours

The DfE in its guidance to school Governors states that “Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Lobley Hill Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy.

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all children gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where parents demonstrate a level of hardship (pupil premium) the Governing Body will remit up to the full amount of the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the child if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for children to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full through completion of the Hardship Fund. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Data Protection of Children and Families

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum. If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity. If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Educational visits which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (i.e. residential)
- After school and pre-school clubs. Music tuition if it is not required for the national curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or for groups of pupils even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before the tuition is provided.
- Damage to school property - the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a child's behaviour
- Visits to school by professionals e.g. authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.
- Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc. needed for practical subjects such as Food Technology. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.
- Residential Activity. The DfE in its guidance to school Governors states that "For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel. However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for children who are receiving Universal Credit or free school meals. The Headteacher will tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits. Parents will be requested to complete a School Funding application form and provide evidence of income. A voluntary contribution or deposit will be requested by the school for such activities.

- Photocopying. Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', will be charged at 10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing.
- Any report or data that is requested on a child for the purpose of a third party private assessment requested by a parent (eg. Mid-year pupil progress report for solicitors, private psychologist reports or solicitor reports) will be charged at an agreed rate by the Headteacher in discussion with the Chair or Vice-Chair of Governors. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information (not less than £10 per hour) as well as photocopying charges (not less than 10p per sheet) and postage.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made. Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

Use of Premises – Lettings procedures and Charges:

School premises are sometimes used for an After School Club for children and during the evening for Governors meetings, discos, open evenings for parents and other occasional events. In addition, there are sometimes evening and week-end bookings. The charging policy adopted by the school Governing Body is designed to reflect the following costs:- caretaking, cleaning, heating, lighting, wear & tear and a small amount of profit (when used for other than school-related functions). Any profit made from lettings is used to enhance and extend activities for children at the school, and particularly to enhance extended services activities e.g. After School Clubs, which helps to reduce costs to parents. The fixing of annual Letting Charges is reviewed and agreed annually by the income from lettings.

The responsibilities for agreeing the terms and conditions of lettings and charges due are clearly defined by the Governing Body. Any income coming into school from lettings is held in a separate cost centre and is used to offset against: caretaking, cleaning, heating, lighting, wear & tear and After School Clubs costs.

An application form is completed for each letting and authorised by the School Business Manager and kept in the lettings file. The School Governing Body issues these 'Local Hiring Conditions' in line with directions and advice given by the Local Authority and the Health and Safety Executive. The school premises will only be made available for hire by members of the community when they are not required for school use.

If lettings fees are not received in advance, they should be promptly billed to the organisation. This policy will be reviewed and updated annually as part of the School Self Evaluation and Review Schedule on an annual cycle.

Equipment and Materials

Any equipment or materials needed by the hirer must be detailed specifically. Hirers may not use any school equipment that has not been included on the booking form.

Nature of activity

The hirer is asked to state the specific nature of the activity to be undertaken in order that the school can be sure the premises are suitable for the purpose. If the nature of the activity is in any way hazardous (e.g. sporting activities), the hirer will be asked to produce evidence of up to date qualifications pertinent to the proposed activity.

User Number Limits

It is important that the hirer states the number of participants for the activity. Depending on the activity and the age of participants, it may be necessary to limit the numbers taking part.

Public Liability Insurance

Other services or activities which are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate Public Liability Insurance.

Health and Safety Requirements (Appendix 2)

- Hirers must strictly adhere to the SMOKE FREE POLICY which applies to the entire school premises (both internal and external) and includes vaping.
- Safeguarding. Other services or activities which are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to Safeguarding children and child protection.
- Access to the telephone. The hirer of the premises has access to the telephone situated in the office. This telephone can be used for emergency calls only. The school's telephone number is: (0191) 4334080.
- The school must be provided with a telephone number and address where the hirer can be contacted in case there is a breakdown in the telephone system, so that if it is necessary the letting of the premises can be cancelled.
- First Aid Boxes are available for use if necessary, and can be located throughout the school building
- The SBM will give the hirer a tour of school prior to the first letting to ensure they are aware of the school layout including escape routes.
- Access to Fire Fighting Equipment. Fire warning: Continuous sounding bell.

Fire alarm activators: Red box with glass insert (wall mounted).

Fire equipment: Fire extinguishers & fire blankets.

The position of the fire fighting equipment and fire alarms are marked on the plans.

Most rooms have emergency fire doors.

It is vital that the hirer checks out the positions of all fire exits for him/herself, so that in the case of an emergency a route of escape from the building has already been considered.

- Fire Procedure: A copy of the school Fire Procedures is provided to the hirer, and further copies are located throughout the school building. The hirer should undertake a fire risk assessment prior to using the premises (the school's fire risk assessment will be made available to the hirer, upon request). On discovery of fire:-

PUSH/BREAK GLASS IN NEAREST FIRE ALARM ACTIVATOR

PRIORITY IS TO CLEAR BUILDING NOT TO FIGHT THE FIRE

LEAVE BY NEAREST FIRE EXIT

GO TO ASSEMBLY POINT IN MAIN YARDS

Letting Charges from 1/09/2024

Main Hall (Including toilets in the foyer)

Weekday:

Minimum hire period is for 2 hours @ £24.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

Weekend:

Minimum hire period is for 2 hours @ £24.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

Training Room (Including toilets in the foyer)

Weekday:

Minimum hire period is 2 hours @ £24.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

Weekend:

Minimum hire period is 2 hours @ £28.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

Use of school field (Including toilets and changing rooms)

Weekday:

Minimum hire period is 2 hours @ £24.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

Weekend:

Minimum hire period is 2 hours @ £28.00 per hour rounded up to the nearest hour

1. *The Governing Body has approved the Headteacher to exercise discretion regarding the use of the premises by local community groups.*

Appendix 1

Lettings. Method of Calculation

The lettings payments paid to caretakers are calculated based on a number of different variables. The main being how many rooms were used as part of the letting, and how big the rooms are. The Site Manager is not paid based on the number of hours worked, but on the number of hours deemed necessary to open and close the number of rooms used (or equivalent number of rooms).

Health and Safety Advice from Gateshead Council

Hiring of Premises

Head Teachers and Governing Bodies are required to follow the guidance notes carefully as they are designed to safeguard the position of LEA staff and governors in the event of accidents or incidents which might arise during the use of school premises by outside users.

It is felt that the guidance notes represent the minimum requirement that schools should follow to meet their responsibilities.

Further advice and guidance on the hiring of premises can be obtained by contacting the Establishment Services Section, Planning and Resources, Learning and Culture.

1. Basic Health and Safety Requirements

The statutory requirement to offer users of school premises the same facility for health and safety as the LEA's own employees means that the following requirements should be met before the premises are hired out:

a. Access to a telephone

Access to a telephone is vital and school Governing Bodies will need to consider how this can be provided and how groups, perhaps scattered around a number of buildings, can be made aware of its location.

An "emergency calls only" extension would be adequate or consideration could be given to a pay phone facility on site. The cost of a telephone line could be recouped in the longer term by schools through the lettings fees. Schools also need to develop a procedure for alerting users to any breakdown in the telephone system so that if necessary the letting of the premises can be cancelled.

b. Access to First Aid Equipment

School Governing Bodies will need to ensure access to first aid equipment and consider how groups can be notified of its location. Only the normal first aid equipment prescribed for schools needs to be made available.

In addition to the provision of access to the equipment, school Governing Bodies will need to ensure that the first aid boxes are regularly checked and replenished. Any increased costs incurred should be recovered through the letting fees.

c. Access to fire-fighting equipment

It is important that users of school premises should be given proper access to fire-fighting equipment. Any concerns about access to school fire-fighting equipment by users of school premises should be discussed with the Council's Safety Adviser.

d. Safe access/egress within the premises

Attention needs to be given to ensuring that safe access and egress is available to users of the premises. For example, fire exits should not be locked and steel window shutters should not be secured.

e. Any equipment or materials to be included in the hiring should be safe for use by the hirer

It is clearly important that any equipment or materials to be included in the hiring should be safe for the hirer's use. In addition, any potentially unsafe equipment or materials should be kept locked away and unavailable. (See also 3 below).

f. Nature of activity for which the premises are being hired

The premises should be suitable for the purposes for which they are hired, e.g. school halls and gymnasias are not suitable for team games such as football or five-a-side. If in doubt, the Safety Adviser's advice should be sought.

g. Clear definition of emergency procedures

All emergency procedures (including fire precautions and evacuation routes) should be clearly defined and displayed. A copy should be given to the hirer.

h. User number limits

Consideration needs to be given to the maximum number of personnel allowed for certain activities to avoid contravening fire regulations or safety procedures. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the Council's Safety Adviser.

i. Local Information

Any local information relevant to the hirer (e.g. location of fire appliances, location of telephones, first aid equipment, fire exits) should be conveyed to him/her, preferably in writing in advance of a booking being confirmed.

2. Checks on the Users

If a Governing Body permits the hiring of the premises for hazardous purposes to someone not qualified for the purpose of the hire, they could face legal action if an accident arose. Prior to the approval of the letting, the hirer should be asked to produce relevant certification. A list of the most frequent requirements is given in the Procedure Notes. Further information can be obtained from the Physical Education Adviser.

This requirement applies not only to sports (particularly martial arts, gymnastics and trampolining), but also to hazardous activities such as the use of laboratories or workshop tools.

3. Swimming Pool Hire

The hire of swimming pools to outside users presents particular hazards and, therefore, a corresponding high regard for client safety. All of the requirements in Sections i and ii above apply and in particular, attention needs to be given to the following points:

a. Qualified life saver

A qualified lifesaver needs to be in attendance and on the poolside, not in the water, throughout the letting. The qualification of the named lifesaver(s) need to be checked and an agreement reached that at least one lifesaver will be in attendance throughout the period of the letting. (Minimum requirement - current Royal Life Saving Certificate Bronze Medallion Award but preferably the Pool Lifeguard Award).

b. Emergency Procedures

A copy of any emergency procedures should be sent to the hirer.

c. Pool User Limit

Groups need to be made aware of the pool user limits, as follows:

Name	Pool	Pool Building
Gibside School (hydrotherapy)	6	-
Dryden School (hydrotherapy)		-
St Edmund Campion School	74	118
The Cedars (Hydrotherapy)	7	12
Dukeshouse Wood	54	-

d. Display of Emergency Signs

All relevant emergency signs should be displayed. The Authority's Safety Adviser will be able to advise schools on which would be preferable in particular locations e.g. No diving, No running.

e. CCTV – Data Protection Act

If CCTV is in use, there should be signs displayed notifying the users.