



CHARGING POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Head Teacher and Governing Body of Tow Law Millennium Primary School recognises the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development.

The Head Teacher and Governing Body aims 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.

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 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 still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind).”

When additional costs are incurred by Tow Law Millennium Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. If pupils are from low income families and in receipt of benefits they should contact the school who will make them aware of the support available to them.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. For more information visit https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

2. Voluntary Contributions

- 2.1 When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents havenot paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. We use Pupil Premium Funding, where appropriate, to ensure no pupil is disadvantaged. This funding is provided by the Government to raise the attainment of eligible pupils and narrow the attainment gap between eligible pupils and their peers.
- 2.2 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 and is **not** entitled to Pupil Premium, 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 through the School Fund.
- 2.3 Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded and information regarding costs is included in the trip letter alongside any subsidies or additional funding through grants etc. More detailed information is provided on request.

- 2.4** Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum or part of religious education
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodgings for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (breakfast club, after school clubs and supervised homework sessions)

Any charge made in respect of individuals pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating and will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

- 2.5** Although this is rarely the case, in some instances where we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may need to cancel a trip and organise another way to carry out the activity.

3. Residential Visits

- 3.1** When organising our biennial residential KS2 experience, we ask all parents to contribute a small deposit (historically £10) and the insurance (historically £5) and board and lodgings (not exceeding the actual cost). The school applies for external funding and uses pupil premium funding to reduce all costs. We are aware that, although not all our pupils are entitled to PP (52% eligible 2021), many of those not entitled come from low income families and we want every child to have this opportunity. If parents are unable to contribute their circumstances should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher. Parents in receipt of benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodgings.

4. Music Tuition

- 4.1** All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.
- 4.2** There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum and is provided at the request of a pupils parents. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons to KS2. The Music Service makes a charge for these lessons to the parents. Parents in receipt of specific benefits are exempt from payment. This is funded through Pupil Premium funding. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year and provide recommended music books to facilitate lessons at no cost.

5. Swimming

- 5.1** The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place and parents give permission for all organised activities during the school day in the child's EV4 form.

6 School Clubs

- 6.1 At times the school may offer additional coaching in, for example, football. This would be run by a qualified coach and charges would be dictated by the total cost to the school.

7. Management of the Private School Funds (PSFs)

- 7.1 *“Voluntary Funds often provide schools with a substantial additional source of income. Although such funds are not public money, the standards for the guardianship of these funds need to be as rigorous as those for the administration of the school’s delegated budget. Parents, pupils and other benefactors are entitled to receive the same standards of stewardship for the funds to which they have contributed.”* - (Keeping Your Balance, Audit Commission, October 2000).

Durham County Council Scheme for the Financing for Schools states, *“Any voluntary or private school funds held by schools, or trading organisations controlled by schools, must be subject to audit procedures and annual audit certification. Such audit certificates must be presented to governing bodies on an annual basis.”*

The DfE Schools Financial Value Standard requires *“Governing Bodies to confirm that they have adequate arrangements for the audit of voluntary funds.”*

Tow Law Millennium Primary School last met the standard for SFVS in March 2022.

7.2 Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The following guidelines provide a detailed analysis of the different roles and responsibilities of those involved in raising, managing, operating or being accountable for funds raised on behalf of our school:

- The Governing Body (who sets and monitors the policy and procedures for managing the School Fund);
- Lisa Jackson, Headteacher (the overall manager);
- Avril Wilkinson, Treasurer (the person who administers the fund on a day-to-day basis. Tow Law Millennium Primary School has only one general School Fund. The Treasurer has sufficient financial knowledge to be able to keep the financial records for the fund and sufficient time available to devote to the task;
- Tom Armstrong the Independent Auditor (who examines the accounts and records).

The Governing Body at Tow Law Millennium Primary School retains overall responsibility for the management of all funds within the school. To carry out these responsibilities effectively and to ensure that the school can satisfy financial administration requirements, the Governing Body ***is fully aware of all funds set up in the name of the school.***

7.3 The Governing Body receives the audited accounts annually in the Autumn term through its termly Governing Body meeting.

Signed:

Date: July 2022