



*Rooted in the community – growing for the future*

## **Charging Policy**

Written February 2012 (reviewed in 2014, 2017, 2020 & 2023)

Re-adopted at Resources Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023, as recorded in minutes and signed by the Chair of Governors, Antonia Nicholls:

.....*A.Nicholls*.....

This policy is due for review by Spring 2026

All our policies should be read in conjunction with our Shire Oak Values and the principles and practices detailed in our Equalities Policy.

The Governing Body of Shire Oak CE Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs, visitors and residential experiences can make towards children's education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. It is the intention of the Governing Body that cost should never be a barrier to participation.

### 1 School lessons

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. We do not charge for, or expect, any special equipment for lessons other than suitable clothing for PE.

### 2 Educational visits and visitors

When planning for curriculum units, teachers and other staff may identify visits, trips or experiences which would enhance the learning that is done in school. In order to make these economically viable, voluntary contributions are sometimes sought from parents and carers towards the cost of the trip or experience. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. 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 always allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity.

The school allocates money for supporting educational visits and monitors the amounts that are spent and requested in each year group. Often it is the transport costs that are the most expensive when pricing a trip. Recognising this (as well as our contribution to sustainability and to developing children's independence) we try to walk or use public transport wherever possible. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded so the school will provide this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which may require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- historical enactment visitors or drama groups;
- visits to the theatre;
- musical events;

### 3. Residential Trips

If the school organises a residential trip in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we make a charge only to

cover the costs incurred to the school and would never seek to make a profit on these. Frequently our PTA, FOSOPS, subsidises the cost of transport for school residential. We appreciate that it can be a lot of money to find, however much we try to keep the costs down, so we encourage parents to spread the cost over a number of weeks or months and give as much notice as possible that a residential is being planned. If parents are experiencing financial difficulties they are invited to speak or write in confidence to the Headteacher as (also please see the section on Remissions Policy)

#### 4 Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. Children in Y4 receive djembe drumming lessons which are paid for by school through the Wider Opportunities scheme. Peripatetic lessons on a range of instruments are also offered in conjunction with school-contracted tutors. These are charged for termly and as they are small, group lessons in school time they represent a cost effective way for children to be introduced to instrument tuition. The school recognises that children with talent in this area may have parents who cannot or will not pay for lessons and will therefore make use of Artforms bursaries and our own Opportunities Fund to support children who would benefit most from these lessons.

#### 5 Swimming

The school currently organises swimming lessons for all children in Years 2 and 3 (and for children in Year 4 & 5 who have not yet reached a good level of swimming confidence.) These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. No charge is made for the swimming lessons or the cost of the transport to the swimming pool. A charge is made by the instructors at the pool for badges, although school will subsidise this through the Opportunities Fund for those children whose parents do not or cannot pay for the badges.

#### 6 Activities Outside School Hours

In order to offer as wide a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities as possible we use a number of volunteers, staff and outside organisations. As far as possible we do not charge for these activities, but for some after school clubs there is a charge for materials, tutors or coaches. School does not charge in excess of the cost levied to us. Children who would benefit from attending these activities or show a particular aptitude for the skill being developed may access the Opportunities Fund if parents/ carers are unable to pay the standard charge.

#### 7 Damage/Loss to property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide it right to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

#### 8 Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities, unless the activity fulfils specified school aims. The scale of charges is determined by the Resources Committee and forms part of our separate Lettings policy.

## 9 Other charges

The Headteacher, Resources sub-committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. photocopying.

## 10 Remissions Policy

If the parent/carer of a pupil is in receipt of Income Support, Income Based job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit, the guaranteed element of state pension credit, support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit) the cost of Residential will automatically be halved upon request. Where there are siblings in the same year group or both due to attend residential in the same year and these criteria are met, then parents will only be asked to pay for one child. If a parent/ carer is experiencing financial hardship but is not eligible for the benefits detailed above, then this will be taken into consideration and a similar position adopted for these families.

## 11 Opportunities Fund

The Governing Body have established a fund that is to be used to support children whose parents cannot or will not pay for the sorts of activities for which a charge may be levied. The intention is that it will support children with developing study skills, pursuing a talent, gift or passion or removing barriers to progress. Each application is assessed on its merits and the decision recorded. (See appendix)



