**Charging Policy**

**2024**

*Initiated by:* *SLT*

*Approved by:* *Governors/SMT*

*Date Approved: 04/11/24*

*Operational Date: Nov 24*

*Date of Review:* *Nov 26*

*Distribution:* *SLT/TLR’s/All relevant staff*

*Signed: R.Jenkins Chair of Governors*

*Signed: S.Type Head teacher*

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, The Governing Body of Park Lane must have a policy on charging students to participate in school activities. By law, students may not be charged for taking part in activities that take place during the school day. Current legislation requires that education provided during normal school hours is free of any compulsory charge.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most complete statement of children’s rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history. This policy relates to Articles 28, 29 and 31 of the UNCRC.

Article 28: Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children’s human dignity. Primary education should be free.

Article 29: Education should develop each child’s personality and talents to the full.

Article 31: Children and young people have the right to have fun in the way they want to, whether by playing sports, watching films, or doing something else entirely. They have the right to rest too.

**Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure clarity around activities which are free and those which may be contributed towards or where a charge is deemed necessary.

All education during school hours is free.

We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

**Voluntary Contributions**

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, the trip may be cancelled. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution.

As part of our commitment to ensuring equality, all pupils are given the same opportunities to participate in all activities.

The school aims to keep the cost of these activities as low as possible. The school will give sufficient notice of such activities to allow parent/carers to pay by instalments.

The 1988 Education Act draws a distinction between the term `charges`, which are considered to be an obligatory cost and voluntary contributions` which are self-explanatory.

Any deficit in the contributions received to fund such activities may be met from a variety of sources such as sponsorships, grants, donations from voluntary organisations or a charity fund. Should there be any surplus this sum will be deposited in the school fund for the benefit of future activities.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to take part in an Educational Visit or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the activity, this will not prohibit the child from participating. The school will fund the cost as described above in order to ensure the child is afforded equality of opportunity.

Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

**Out of School Activities**

An out of school activity is defined as an activity undertaken outside the normal hours of the defined school day.

The following is a list of Out of School Activities, organised by the school, which may require voluntary contributions. These activities are known as ‘optional extras’. This list is not exhaustive and may include such things as:

* visits to museums
* sporting activities
* outdoor adventure activities
* visits to or by a theatre company
* leisure trips
* musical events
* the cost of transporting pupils

**Residential visits**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, no charges are made for the education or travel expenses.

If it is not possible for the cost of board and lodging to be met by the school or via one of the funding methods mentioned above a charge will need to be made to cover these costs.

**Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for all children, at various times throughout the year. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

**Damage/Loss to property**

In cases of wilful damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the Head teacher, in consultation with the Chairperson of the school’s Governing Body, will decide whether a charge will be made to cover the cost of repair/replacement of the damaged/broken item.

Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis and at the discretion of the Headteacher and the Chairperson of the school’s Governing Body.

**Lettings**

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges is determined by the Finance Committee of the school’s Governing Body and forms part of the school’s Lettings policy.

**Implementation of the policy**

The school will manage implementation of this policy with the support and guidance of the Local Authority.

**General**

This policy and its intentions will always reflect the present and future needs of all stakeholders and to support this we are always open to suggestions for changes and alterations of and to any specific individual provision / requirement to ensure full access to all.

**Health and Safety**

The school follows the recommendations of the Local Authority’s (LA) and the governing body’s Health and Safety Policies.

Staff accept the responsibility to plan safe experiences / activities in relation to school visits/activities off-site and to match the level of adult supervision and support to the degree of risk. Any specific issues relating to Health and Safety that requires immediate action must be brought to the attention of the Head teacher, Educational Visits Coordinator and Health and Safety Officer.

**Role of the Head teacher**

* To keep abreast of any changes to the legislation and ensure that all relevant school policies are updated accordingly.
* To ensure that staff are made aware of and comply with any updates to the policies.
* To plan appropriate INSET for staff, as necessary, to meet the revised requirements.

**Links to Other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

* Teaching and Learning Policy
* Equality and Anti – Discrimination Policy
* Curriculum Policy
* Equal Opportunities and Strategic Plan
* Differentiation and Equal Opportunities Policy