

MILTON CE SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

The Law

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials and equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. "School hours" are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day.

Policy Aim

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the school complies with the law and that during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

At Milton the school day is defined as 8.55 – 3.20pm.

Education during the School Day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced an exception to this rule allowing schools to charge for the musical tuition of individual or groups. Milton currently has an agreement with Cambridgeshire Music who provide tuition and directly invoice parents for their services.

Education partly during the School Day

Sometimes an activity may happen partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made.

Voluntary Contributions

The staff and governors recognise the importance of activities, that while not an essential part of the curriculum, add value and enjoyment to the experiences of the children. From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as History Off the Page to arrange an enrichment activity during the school day. To cover the costs school will invite voluntary contributions from parents / carers to make funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that contributions are voluntary. Children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this will be explained to them at the planning stage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is not way to make up the shortfall, the activity may be cancelled.

Residential Trips

Staff and Governors recognise the value of residential experiences. Charges will be made for board and lodging except for those parents who are in receipt of-

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, that does not exceed £15,575 for the year 2008–09);
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

The head teacher will advise all parents of their right to claim this exemption.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. Parents may be charged for transport but are not charged for the costs incurred by supervising adults. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and targeted school finances identified during the budget building process.

School also sometimes makes use of other organisations who are willing to support specific families on residential visits. The MSA also regularly provide financial support for coaches and enrichment activities such as visiting theatre groups.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The finance committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on an annual basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in voluntary contributions, sought charges, the subsidies awarded and the source of those subsidies.

This policy has been informed by A Guide to the Law for School Governors September 2008.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Date ratified by the Finance and Premises Committee: 14th November 2008

Date for review: November 2009