



Shirley Warren Primary and Nursery School Governors' Charging, Remissions and Allowances Policy

Shirley Warren Primary and Nursery School endorses the principles of the 1988 Education Act in maintaining the right to free education for all children. The act allows us to request voluntary contributions to broaden children's educational experience.

Trips, Visits and Activities

The school reserves the right to ask parents for voluntary contributions for any activity organised by the school which takes place wholly or mainly (50% or more) during normal teaching time. Non-contribution would not prejudice a pupil's place, however, unless most parents were prepared to make a contribution, the school may have to cancel the activity. Such enriching activities are an important aspect in supporting the curriculum.

Where an activity is residential, the consequent cost of residency will be charged to the parents or legal guardian. Any parents or legal guardians who are experiencing financial difficulty will be encouraged to approach the school where we will seek to find assistance with the charges. We are often able to do this via local trust funds and bursaries. The Governing Body will determine the special circumstances as appropriate, however, in all cases parents will be expected to make a nominal contribution.

Voluntary contributions will, in all circumstances, be invited through individual letters to parents. Any school organised activity which takes place mainly (more than 50%) outside of school time will be charged for in such a way as to meet the entire costs of the activity.

Damage to School Property

The school will cover accidental breakages of school property. Deliberate or wilful acts which result in breakage or damage to school property will be charged for at a rate appropriate to replacement costs.

Music

The school provides tuition from peripatetic staff and our own music teachers in addition to the national curriculum and this is currently not charged for.

Instrumental lessons within different year groups are currently funded by the school in addition to the national curriculum expectations. The school currently covers the cost of insurance for the instruments used.

Swimming

Swimming lessons for Year 2 and 4 are currently funded by the school from its delegated budget. This means the school subsidises the cost of swimming equally for all pupils, such that no charge is passed on to parents.

Dinner Money

Dinners are charged for at the rate set by Southampton City Council and the full cost passed on to parents. For children eligible for Free School Meals, no charge is made. From September 2014, we will provide a free school meal for all children in Years R, 1 and 2.

Other Charges to Parents

The Headteacher, Resources Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report. The school charging policy will be subject to change if there are new Local Authority or Department for Education policy changes, or changes in the law.

Governor Allowances

The Education (Governors' Allowances) Regulations 2003 provide the legal framework for governing bodies to pay 'out of pocket' expenses to their governors. The Department for Education guidance which accompanied those regulations states: "It is good practice to pay such allowances as governors should not be out of pocket for the valuable work they do".

The payment of allowances is not a reward; it is recognition that being a governor is not a cost-free exercise. Some governors may be able to afford the out of pocket expenses their role entails, but this is not true of all potential governors and restricting the right to claim may prevent someone from becoming a governor or force them to resign their position. A governing body with a policy of paying allowances claims will be going some way to meeting their duty to promote community cohesion by encouraging participation by all members of the community.

If governors are continually expected to meet the costs of fulfilling an essential role out of their own pocket then there is a real danger that a culture of doing the bare minimum will ensue; meaning governors will not undertake training and will be poorly informed.

Travel expenses must be paid at a rate not exceeding the authorised mileage rate provided on HMRC website for private use of cars.

(http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/cars/advisory_fuel_current.htm)

Shirley Warren Primary and Nursery School Governing Body believes that paying governors' allowances, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as governors for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of school funds.

The specific items allowable reflect this objective. However, governors will not be paid to attend meetings nor will they be reimbursed for loss of earnings. All governors of Shirley Warren Primary and Nursery School will be entitled to claim the actual costs, which they incur as follows:

1. Governors and Associate Governors will be able to claim allowances providing the allowances are incurred in carrying out their duties, as a Governor or representative of Shirley Warren Primary and Nursery School, and are agreed by the Resources Committee that they are justified before any reimbursable costs are incurred.

2. Governors and Associate Governors will be able to claim for the following, on a case-by-case basis and with the prior approval of the Governing Body:

- childcare or baby sitting allowances (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner)
- cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner)
- extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language
- cost of travel relating only to travel to meetings/training courses at the rate specified by HMRC
- travel and subsistence costs, payable at the current rates specified by the Secretary of State for Transport associated with attending national meetings or training events, unless these costs can be claimed from the LA or any other source
- telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage

Any other justifiable allowances Governors wishing to make claims under these arrangements, once prior approval has been sought, should complete a claims form (obtainable from the School Office), attaching receipts where possible. Claims forms will be submitted for final approval one week prior to the meeting of the Resources Committee in the second half of each term.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the Chair of Governors (or Chair of Resources in respect of the Chair of Governors) if they appear excessive or inconsistent.

Ratified May 2016

Review by May 2018