

Birchfield Nursery School

Policy on Charges and Remissions for School Activities

Rationale

1. The Education Reform Act 1988 clarified and amended existing law which prohibits most charges for activities which take place in school time. This has been re-stated in the 1996 Education Act and applies to all maintained schools.
2. The Act requires LAs and Governing Bodies to determine and keep under review their policy on charging and remissions within the framework of the legislation. Schools must maintain a written statement of their policy and make it available to parents on request.
3. Neither an LA or a school can make charges for school activities unless a policy is in existence.

Purposes

- To maintain the right to free school education.
- To establish that all activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- To emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education related activity, but schools are given the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly OUT of school hours.
- To confirm the right of schools to invite **voluntary** contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school whether during or outside school hours.
- Halton Education Committee will continue to empower Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to seek voluntary contributions in order to fund activities taking place wholly or mainly during school hours for which the costs cannot be met from the school's budget, providing that it is made clear to parents in writing that any contribution is voluntary and failure to contribute will not involve the relevant parent's child being treated differently from any other child in the school.

It is permissible to warn parents in advance that where an activity cannot take place without some support from parents, and there are insufficient voluntary contributions, the activity may be cancelled.

Remissions

Although it is not envisaged that residential trips will be organised, the governing body will be empowered to remit charges for other activities where costs can be reasonably and appropriately from the school budget if the parents are in receipt of the following state benefits.

- The guarantee element of State Pension Credits
- Income support; (15)
- Income – based Jobseeker’s Allowance; (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Higher rate Child Tax Credit (where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit).

Schools will continue to be responsible for meeting the cost of any remission of charges arising from this policy.

Guidelines

- a. As a nursery school it is not envisaged that the children will be involved in residential visits, instrumental tuition or entry to public examinations.
- b. The range of activities where voluntary contributions **may** be sought would be:
 - (i) Visits from nursery to theatres or places of educational interest.
 - (ii) Paid visitors coming to school i.e. musicians, artists, theatre groups, wildlife exhibitors, entertainers, or hire of large play equipment.
 - (iii) Contributions to major fund-raising events.

(NB in categories (i) and (ii) costs will be met wherever possible from children's daily voluntary contributions to school funds).