**CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this policy is to outline the procedures for charges made by the school to pupils for supplies or services. It also outlines eligibility for remission of charges.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport, admission costs for swimming lessons or visits to museums, etc. during school hours.

The LA or governing body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement of general policy on charging. The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

**Voluntary contributions**

Headteachers or Governing Bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

* any activity that takes place during school hours
* school equipment
* school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

**School Meals**

The school has appointed a contract caterer to provide school meals. Prices are set by the contract caterer and they bank and account for all the income.

Pupils can apply for free school meals if their parent is receiving Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance or Child Tax Credit (as long as they are not receiving Working Tax Credit and their annual income is below the threshold). Forms are available from the School Secretary.

**School Visits**

Pupils will be asked to pay a voluntary contribution toward the cost (including VAT) of any curriculum related visit. The contribution requested will be restricted to the cost of transport, accommodation, insurance, contingencies and incidental expenses, equipment, fees and staffing costs.

The cost of visits is met by school funds when pupils are selected to represent the school in sports or other activities.

Where the trip takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school-lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

* Income Support (IS)
* Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance   (IBJSA)
* support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* Child Tax Credit, provided the Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family’s income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/2009)
* The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
* An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27th October 2008

**Instrumental Tuition Fees**

Peripatetic music teachers either employed by The County Music Service or privately, provide instrumental tuition. Fees are invoiced and collected by the Music Service or the music teacher.

Pupils who are entitled to free school meals are entitled to remission of music fees.

Children who are Looked After (LAC) and are funded by Bedfordshire will be provided with free music lessons of their choice.

**Food Technology, Design Technology and Art Contributions**

Pupils are asked to pay an annual voluntary contribution towards the cost of consumables used in producing the work they take home.

**Photocopying**

Any personal photocopying done by staff or pupils will be charged at cost.

**Lost or Damaged Property**

Pupils are expected to pay for the replacement of any books (i.e. library books, homework diaries) they lose or damage.

If a pupil has caused physical damage to the school (i.e. broken window) as a result of misbehaviour the Head teacher has the discretion to ask the pupil’s parents for a contribution toward the cost of repairing the damage.

Signed by Head Teacher ……………………………………………………………………………..

Signed by Chair of Governors ……………………………………………………………………….