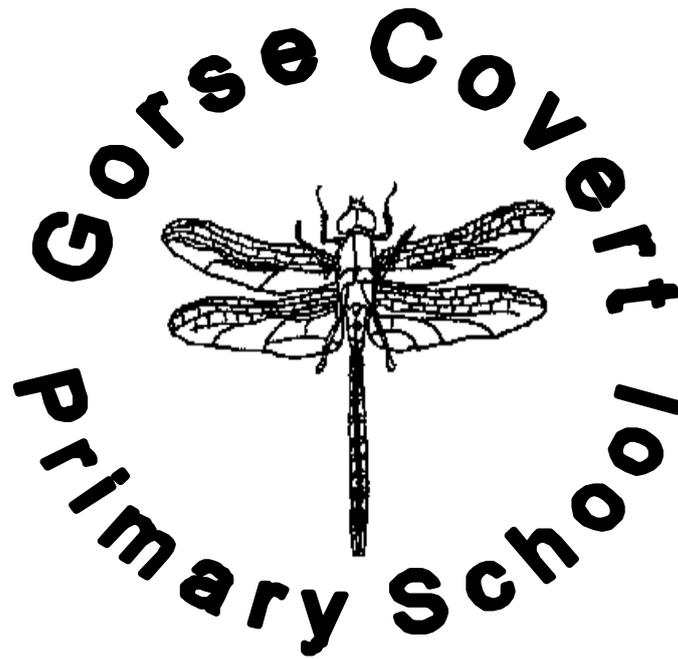


Policy on Charging



Written: Spring Term 2009

Reviewed: Nov 12-updated change of residential. No longer an agreement between Warrington and Cheshire for outdoor education centres

Reviewed: Nov 15-no changes

Reviewed: Nov 16-no changes

GORSE COVERT PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY ON CHARGING

This Charging Policy informs staff and parents about charging for school activities.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

At Gorse Covert Primary School we follow the basic principle that education should be free of charge if it takes place during school hours. No charge will be made for;

- admission to school,
- education
- resources required for national curriculum coverage
- public exams
- musical tuition which is part of the national curriculum requirement

A charge can be made for some costs which are considered to be 'optional extras':

- Resources which the child's parent wishes them to own
- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National curriculum.
- Transport (not required to take a pupil to where education has been provided for)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of 'optional extras' an amount may be included in relation to:

- Resources, books, materials, instruments in connection with the optional extras
- Non-teaching staff
- The cost or proportion of cost for teaching staff engaged specifically to provide the optional extras

Parent agreement is an essential pre-requisite for the provision of optional extras where charges are to be made.

No charge can be made which includes any element of subsidy for pupil whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Gorse Covert School will always try to cover the cost of 'in-school hours' activities which may include drama, theatre groups, live musical or dance performances or sports coaching.

Music instrumental teaching

As all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons which cover national curriculum are free of charge but charges will be made for teaching either individual or groups to play an instrument or sing where teaching is not a part of either National curriculum. Taking part in the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme is also free of charge as this is part funded by government grant and partly by school.

Gorse Covert hosts specialist music teachers who are able to provide extra music lessons to individuals or small groups. This is an independent agreement between parent and tutor. Parents will be expected to hire or buy their child's own instrument.

Residential Visits

Special rules apply for residential activities.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time*, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the cost of travel. Schools are permitted to charge for board and lodgings. At Gorse Covert, a charge will be made for board and lodgings and a request will be made for a donation to cover transport. **Where parents are in receipt of benefits, the school will support parents with payments.**

*If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening. Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.)

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours. (Our visit to Borrowdale would fall into this category - we can make a charge for board and lodging and ask for a donation to cover transport and activities paid for if no benefits are received by a family. For families in receipt of benefits, no charges can be made. We can ask for donations but must take child, if parent is unable or unwilling to pay, using school budget to cover costs.)

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Remissions

Any parent who is experiencing difficulty or who is unable to fund a child, is able to approach the Headteacher to explore if support can be given. The school will always do their best to support families to enable the child to attend.

Those parents in receipt of one or more of the credits below may be offered assistance in paying for the trip or a longer period of instalments will be made available to enable their child to access the activity.

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/09);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

Transport

We do not charge for transport which takes pupils to other premises where school or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.

We will ask for a donation from parents in connection with an educational visit to a place of interest.

Voluntary Contributions

We regularly do try to include curriculum enriching activities off site such as visits to museums, galleries, swimming baths, sports competitions and meetings, the high school and other places of interest, which support and enrich the learning, current to the schemes of work under study. Parents are asked to make a contribution to help make school funds go further. If a particular activity cannot take place without some monetary help from parents, this is explained to parents during the planning stage. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. Each child will be given an equal chance to go on a visit. However it will be clearly stated in the contribution request that if insufficient voluntary contributions are made, the visit will have to be cancelled.

Extra curricular clubs

A charge may be levied for participation in extra curricular activities 'outside of school hours', to meet the costs of materials and/or staffing as needed.

Letting of premises (See also the Lettings Policy)

We support community use of school's Community wing facilities. We offer minimum cost of facilities for non-profit making community activities.

We raise income for school from groups using the school hall and field.in the evening and at the weekend.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Finance Committee

- Will review and amend the Lettings policy on behalf of the governing body
- Will review the charges levied to groups for the community facilities.

Head Teacher

- Will be responsible for drafting proposals for charges
- Will provide reports for the finance committee

Teachers

- Will ensure all draft letters to parents are correctly worded.

Administrative Officer

- Will manage the letting of school premises
- Will provide effective financial administration enabling efficient budget management by the head teacher
- Will maintain efficient and effective information systems

Caretaker

- Will manage the school premises during lettings

Charges for services

Details of charges for photocopier facilities for community users are available from the school office.

03 March 2009