



Gastrells Community Primary School

CHARGING POLICY



Approved by: Resources Committee

Last reviewed on: January 2025

Next Review Due: January 2027

CHARGING POLICY

1. Guiding Principles

1.1 Gastrells Community Primary School is a Local Authority (State) maintained educational establishment. As such, we do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum (apart from swimming (see Section 6 below). All education during normal school hours is provided at no charge to pupils, or to their parents/carers.

1.2 At Gastrells we also believe that enrichment and extra-curricular activities are of immense value as they allow all pupils to discover and stretch their physical and mental abilities, offer experiences that develop their interest in the World around them and promote inclusion. Wherever possible, these activities are provided free-of-charge but where there is a cost to the school (for instance for transport or entry fees), we have no option but to ask parents/carers to contribute towards these costs in accordance with this Policy. However, we are also very clear that no child should be disadvantaged because their parents/carers are genuinely unable to make a financial contribution (Section 4 below applies).

2. School Undertaking

2.1 The school undertakes to inform all parents/carers of the projected class and club trips planned at the start of each term (and for Residential trips (Year 4 and Year 6, at the start of the academic year), together with an estimate of the costs involved.

2.2 Wherever possible, the school will offer flexibility in payments, thus enabling parents/carers to pay on an instalment basis. This is on the requirement that all contributions are received prior to the commencement of the activity.

3. Voluntary Contributions

3.1 When organising school trips, visits and other enrichment activities, the school is required to invite parents/carers to contribute to the cost. Whilst payment cannot be enforced, if insufficient “voluntary” contributions are received then the trip as whole is likely to need to be cancelled for all pupils.

3.2 Below is an indicative list of enrichment activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents/carers if they are to proceed. These are known as “optional extras” and comprise activities such as:

- Visits to places of educational interest (e.g., museums)
- Professional sporting events
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to, or by, a theatre company
- Musical events (such as Young Voices)
- World Awareness Week activities
- National Representative Competitions (e.g., Great Big Dance Off)

4. Financial Hardship

4.1 The school is clear that no child will be prevented from taking part in an organised whole school, class or club activity, or a residential (Section 5) simply because their parent/carer is genuinely not able to pay the full contribution. In such cases, the parent/carer is asked to speak to the Headteacher, in confidence, in the first instance.

4.2. Every effort will be made to find an equitable solution which may involve an agreed reduced contribution, the use of pupil premium or a subsidy from another area of the school budget. Whilst any request will normally be handled on a trust basis, the school reserves the right to ask to see documentary evidence, for instance receipt of universal credit or other state benefit.

4.3. All children going on a trip will be treated with dignity and respect; we will not treat children whose costs have not been met by the parent/carer any differently from any other child.

5. Residential visits during School Time

5.1 Residential trips away from the school, of between 2 and 4 nights, are normally organised for children in years 4 and 6. These residentials are seen as important in honing our children’s self-sufficiency skills and independence.

5.2 These residential trips are invariably expensive as they involve not only transport (coach hire) but also board and lodging on an all-inclusive basis. We will provide parents/carers with an estimated cost of a residential trip as early in the academic year as possible, together with a facility to pay via instalments. The principles outlined in Section 4 above will apply in instances of financial hardship.

6. Swimming

6.1 As Gastrells does not have a swimming pool, the school organises swimming lessons for all children in Years 1 and 2 and Rookie Lifeguarding for children in Year 5. Swimming takes place in school time and is not an optional activity as it forms part of the National Curriculum.

6.2 As costs are incurred in the provision of transport and entry fees, a voluntary contribution is sought from parents. Parents/carers will be informed when these lessons are to take place and will be required to give written permission for their child to take part.

7. Extra-Curricular Clubs and Activities

7.1 At Gastrells we aim to provide a variety of clubs and extra-curricular activities, both at lunchtimes and after school. We ask for a small charge for most of these activities to cover the costs of administration and running costs.

7.2 We can also offer some specialist activities for our children which are provided by independent and external agencies or tutors (e.g., judo, music tuition and sewing). These need to be funded entirely by parents/carers.

8. Pre-School and After-School Clubs

8.1 We provide wrap around care. This is in the form of breakfast and after school club. These costs are reviewed on a yearly (academic year) basis.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

9.2 If any parent/carer feels it appropriate to raise any issue related to the implementation of this policy with the Governing Body, then they are asked to contact the Clerk by e-mail: clerk@gastrells.gloucs.sch.uk.