CHARGES AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Queensway School believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

1. The policy identifies activities for which:

- **voluntary contributions may be requested**
- **charges will be made**
- **charges will not be made**
- **charges may be waived**

2. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents from the outset.

No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

If insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

3. No charges will be made for

- An admission application to any maintained school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;

- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

4. Charges may be made for

a) Activities outside school hours
Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed in Section 3 above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours). (See Section 9)

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. This should recognise that parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

b) Residential visits during school hours
Board, lodging and insurance costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time, however, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board, lodging and insurance.

c) Music tuition
Music tuition for individuals or appropriate sized groups of pupils to play a musical instrument or to sing and which is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum.

5. Optional Extras

Charges may be made for optional activities that are known as 'Optional Extras'.
Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision, i.e. no profit to the school.

6. Breakages and Damages to School Buildings/Property

Wilful damage to the school building or property by a pupil may be charged to the parents/carers of the child.

7. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which such charges will be waived, however the parent will be expected to contact the Headteacher to discuss their particular situation.

8. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

Individual consideration will be given to children who qualify for the Pupil Premium**
and/or other relevant benefits or circumstances.

**Children from Service families and Children we care for or those in receipt of Free School Meals (NB. This does not refer to children in receipt of Universal Infant Free School Meals).

9. Is a school visit in or out of school time?

When any visit is arranged, parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

If the number of school sessions on a school 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.

10. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- The total cost of the visits per child will not exceed £20 per year. This does not include residential visits.
- We will give parents as much notice as possible for forthcoming visits/trips. At the induction meeting for new parents, we will discuss how visits/trips are organised throughout the school.
- Where possible, the school shall publish on its website a list of visits (and their approximate cost) as soon as is practicably possible so that parents can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a ‘first pay, first served’ basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection. The exception to this is after school extra-curricular clubs which are operated on a first pay, first served basis although funding is available for those pupils eligible under Pupil Premium.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Resources Committee.

Chair of Resources: ……

Head Teacher: ……

Date ……