



Appendix I

CHARGES & ADMINISTRATION FOR VISITS & TRIPS

After careful consideration, we have decided we will need to change how we administer visits and trips that are additional to the statutory curriculum.

The reasons for the changes:

- Budget reductions mean we have had to cut office hours
- Clerical assistant spends over 80% of her time chasing parents for permissions and payments
- A small number of families routinely give permission but don't make payments for trips

A reduced budget means we have less cash-flow and therefore do not have reserves to cover the cost of services such as trips, which must now be paid in advance. Schools are not allowed to make a profit on trips (i.e. we cannot 'round' costs up) but nor is it fair that we pay for trips for some families and not others (except in hardship cases where we are very happy to work with a family to find the best solution). When planning a trip, the overall cost of travel and entry will be shared equally amongst all the children who have permission to go on the trip. If a parent doesn't pay currently this means the school has to cover that cost. Sadly, increasingly we are finding that more parents are choosing not to pay or are paying late which means many hours chasing payments. We cannot continue to allow this to happen.

The changes we are making:

- In line with our charging and remission policy, whilst all trips enhance and enrich learning they are not 'an activity required specifically by the syllabus for a public examination, or to fulfil a statutory duty relating to the National Curriculum'
- As trips and visits are **additional** to the curriculum, payment is not voluntary
- Signing a permission slip will also mean you have signed to say you agree to pay the cost in full **before** the trip
- There may be a slight increase to the original cost if numbers going reduce due to non-payers or permission being received too late
- There will only be **one reminder** sent to chase permissions / payments
- A clear deadline will be set for permission and payment (usually 10 days before). If this deadline is missed your child(ren) will not be able to go on the trip

These changes have been made after very careful thought as we really don't want any children to miss out. However, the current situation cannot continue. To illustrate our point: on the day before a recent trip, we only had permission for 15 out of 28 children (payment for 13). The office had to spend most of the day tracking down parents to get their permission. Some parents didn't want their child to go but hadn't let school know. Consequently school has had to pick up the additional costs (approx. £50).



Appendix II

PARENTS TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

To help reduce costs for parents (e.g. cost of coach to Comberton Village College = £220 minimum), we have been successfully using parent volunteers to transport children to local events for a number of years. However, after concerns were raised by some parents, we have recently had to review this practice and have sought advice from our Educational Visits Director, the Local Authority Health & Safety department and the Outdoor Educational Advisory Panel.

I am pleased to let you know that the advice from all parties is that we can continue to use parent volunteers but need to have more stringent checks in place.

We have drawn up a Parent Volunteer Driver Agreement in which parents will sign to confirm:

- They hold a valid, current driver's licence
- They have not been banned from driving for any period in the past 10 years
- The vehicle they use is roadworthy and has a current MOT certificate (if needed)
- They hold a valid, current insurance policy
- They will abide by all aspects of the Highway Code and laws governing driving and road use

Their signatures will also confirm they understand their duty of care including:

- Ensuring children wear seatbelts / use booster seats throughout journey
- Ensuring the adult is never alone with an individual child (other than their own child)
- Overseeing the safety of all children as they enter and exit the vehicle
- Following all instructions and safety advice given by the visit leader

We will have a checking system and each Volunteer Agreement form will need to be reviewed annually. We hope this will reassure everyone that we take this issue seriously and we will continue to do all we can to ensure your children are kept safe at all times. Using our parent volunteers helps extend the range of opportunities, particularly local, that we can offer to enrich the curriculum.