

Charging and Remissions Policy 2013

Rationale

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs, live theatre performances and residential experiences, (curricular and extra curricular), can make towards pupils' education independent of their parents/carers' financial means.

Purpose

This charging and remissions policy describes how we do our best to ensure a good range of additional activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils being able to take full advantage of the opportunities available.

Guidelines

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:

- charges will not be made
- charges will be made
- charges may be waived

2. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, there are occasions when we ask for voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to the pupils and in accordance with the law:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions parents/carers will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents/carers are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

3. No charges will be made for

- 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 or part of the curriculum for Religious Education;
- 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
 - a. if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
 - b. part of the curriculum for Religious Education;
- 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 trip.

4. Activities for which charges may be made – outside school hours

Charges may be made for optional extra approved activities (other than those listed above) which take place outside of 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).

- **Residential activities**

Board and lodging costs for residential trips deemed to take place during school time. Pupils whose parents/carers' are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs in those circumstances.

For residential trips deemed to take place outside school time charges may be made (other than for those activities listed above).

When any trip is arranged parents/carers will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

- **Music Tuition**

Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 4 pupils.

Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip 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.

It is the policy of this school that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as 'optional extras'. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Activity or visit which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help may be available
The cost of materials, books, instruments, ingredients and equipment, where a parents/carer wishes their child to own them.	E.g. A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay. Cooking	Discuss with Head teacher
Music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils	Discuss with Head teacher
Board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Discuss with Head teacher
Entrance fees for school trip activity	The charge will not exceed the actual cost.	Discuss with Head teacher
Approved activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside of school hours	The charge will not exceed the actual cost.	Discuss with Head teacher

5. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged 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/carers in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

6. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the above table. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Parents will be advised to write in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part to the Head Teacher who will consult with the Chair of Governors for authorisation.

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance.
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit.
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

9. 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:

- Where possible, we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost), at the beginning of the school year so that parents/carers can plan ahead.
- Letters to parents/carers' requesting a voluntary contribution towards activities and/or trips will identify how the total cost per child has been calculated. Nothing additional can be added on in case any parent/carer decides not to make a voluntary contribution.
- We have established a system for parents/carers to pay in a lump sum or by instalments provided the final payment is made before the event.
- 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.
- Children whose parents/carers' have made a voluntary contribution will be sent a refund if their child is absent on the day of the activity and/or trip.

Reviewed by the Resource Committee on 26th November 2013

Ratified at FGB

To be reviewed