



POLICY FOR CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

Document history

Date	Description [i.e. draft, consultation with staff, approval by Governors, review due]
Oct 2015	Draft Policy for governors approval (finance meeting Feb 2016)
Feb 2016	Approved by Finance Committee pending amendments
May 2016	Universal Credit added to list of qualifying benefits
May 2020	Reviewed by Governing Body
May 2020	Approved by full governing body



Charging and Remission Policy

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Aims

As a school we offer all pupils a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences and recognise the valuable contribution that these can make towards pupils' education. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

We believe that all of our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This 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.

As a school we recognise that it is not only those families who are in receipt of certain benefits that may face financial hardship and for this reason the governing body agree to the school heavily subsidising the vast majority of activities that we offer, including those which are regarded as optional.

No charges will be made for:

- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- 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 or part of the school's basic 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 (e.g. swimming).

Charges may be made for:

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed 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). These activities are not part of the National Curriculum.

b) Residential activities

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed above).

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

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or small groups of pupils, which is provided at the request of parents/carers and is not part of the National Curriculum. Charges cannot be made for such provision for pupils in the care of the local authority.

d) Breakfast Club and After School Care

e) Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee. Details are available in our separate lettings policy.

f) Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or a lower cost may be set at the decision of the Head teacher. A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or a lower cost may be set at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Charges may also be made for materials, books, instruments and equipment where a parent/carer wishes the pupil to own them. This includes school meals (unless a child is entitled to a free meal) and items of school uniform, book bags etc which the school may stock.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that the school will heavily subsidise the majority of activities and visits even where charges can legally be made. In some circumstances an activity or visit may 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 may be waived. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Parents/carers in receipt of

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Universal Credit
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Voluntary Contributions

For activities where the school cannot levy charges and it is not possible to cover the costs of these activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request that parents/carers make a contribution towards the cost of the trip or activity. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have made any contribution in response to the request. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it will not take place for any pupil.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Finance Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a yearly basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

This policy will be reviewed by the Finance Committee of the Governing Body at least every four years.