



"Let your light shine"

Charging and Remissions Policy

Member of staff responsible: Headteacher

Governing body committee responsible: Finance

Reviewed: Annually

Headteacher's signature: Martin Gosling

Chair of Governor's signature: Jill Dean

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Charging and Remissions Policy for Educational Activities

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education and aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities for pupils. This policy complies with the relevant statutory provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Buckinghamshire CC Scheme for Financing Schools.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

Voluntary Contributions:

The school may ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset and will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled.

No child will ever be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will not be pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. We will not send colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school funds. Nor will we send direct debit or standing order mandates when requesting contributions.

Permitted Charges:

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge will be made in respect of education provided during school hours. No charge will be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, the National Curriculum or religious

education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit (subject to LA and school policy).

1. Materials & Textbooks

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. In the case of Food Technology, pupils usually provide their own ingredients, but if the pupil forgets, the school provides the ingredients and levies a charge. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

2. Music Tuition

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

3. Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours

If an activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

When is an activity held in school hours?

If the number of school sessions taken up by the 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). A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

5. 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 to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

6. 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 and approved by the Governing Body.

7. Other charges

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

Remissions Policy

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a pupil who is currently eligible for free school meals shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Under current regulations children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible for free school meals:

- Income support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Child Tax Credit except if the parent is entitled to working tax credit (regardless of income) or has an annual income in excess of £16,190 (2020 figure).
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax).

Policy reviewed annually. Last Reviewed: Oct 2023