

2) Charging and Remissions

1. Status

This section of the policy is a statutory requirement.

2. Purpose

The governing body believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits, both curricular and extra-curricular, regardless of the financial means of their parents or carers. The purpose of this policy is to set out the ways in which the governing body will try to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered, and try to minimise the financial barriers which might prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered.

3. Relationship to other sections of this financial policy and to other school policies

This is referenced to the school's agreed Financial Procedures, including the Schedule of Financial Delegation, to the Equal Opportunities Policy, curriculum and teaching and learning policies, and off-site visits and learning outside the classroom policy.

4. Delegation of Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities for the implementation of this policy are delineated in the school's Schedule of Financial Delegation. The governing body, Headteacher, and school staff will otherwise jointly ensure that the policy is implemented.

5. Activities for which no charge will be made

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, part of the school's curriculum for religious education, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which a pupil is being prepared at the school

- Tuition for pupils learning to play a musical instrument or to sing, if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum
- Education provided on any trip taking place within school hours
- Education provided on any trip outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, part of the school's curriculum for religious education, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which a pupil is being prepared at the school
- Supply teachers to cover for any teachers absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- Transport provided in connection with a residential trip

6. Voluntary contributions

The Headteacher or governing body *may* ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours
- school equipment
- school funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and pupils whose parents are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make an activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the school reserves the right to cancel the activity.

In particular, the school will invite a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of swimming pool rental, tuition, and transport for swimming lessons which take place in school time and are provided under the National Curriculum.

7. Residential activities

The school may make a charge to cover board and lodging costs of residential activities deemed to take place during school time (if the number of school sessions on a residential visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip, it is deemed to take place during school hours). The charge will be remitted in the case of pupils whose parents qualify under the terms of the provision for remissions set out below.

8. Extended school activities

The school *may* make a charge to cover the incurred costs of providing a range of extended school activities, including:

- Music tuition: instrumental or singing tuition for individuals or groups of up to four pupils where this is additional to provision made under the National Curriculum
- Sports coaching

The governing body may use the school's delegated budgets to subsidise an individual pupil's access to chargeable extended activities, where they consider that the activities are provided for the purposes of the school, because they are of educational benefit to the child.

9. School meals and milk

Charges for school meals and milk will comply with County stipulations. Adults will pay for their meals at the County price when not supervising pupils. Under the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme children aged 4 to 6 are entitled to receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day.

10. Guidelines to promote equality of access

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on parents or carers. In addition to provision for remission of charges, the following guidelines should be followed by staff planning activities for which a voluntary contribution or charge may be requested:

- Information about planned or forthcoming activities must be published as far ahead as possible so that parents and carers can plan
- Parents and carers must be allowed to pay by instalments in advance or in arrears
- In order to avoid discriminating against low income households the school will not allocate places for any activity on the basis of 'first pay, first served' or similar

11. Qualification for remission of charges or assistance with payment

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body have agreed that some activities and visits for which a charge is legally requested will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents or carers in receipt of:

- Universal Credit (in circumstances prescribed by the DfE);
- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseekers 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the current maximum set by HMRC;
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;

The governing body additionally delegates to the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, the right to waive, remit or reduce the charge in other cases of known financial hardship.

12. Refunds

Where an activity makes a surplus, parents will be offered a refund. Parents will be requested to claim or collect a refund from the school office.

If a parent chooses not to claim a refund, the sum will be transferred to school funds.

13. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Resources Committee will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving biennially a financial report on those activities for which a charge is levied or voluntary contributions sought, including anonymous data on any subsidies awarded and charges waived. The Resources Committee will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support. The conclusions of both processes will be reported to the full governing body.