Charging and Remissions Policy

Version	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	10/2022	
2	09/2024	
3	09/2026	

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Reviewed	30/09/2026
Responsibility	School Business Manager
Committee	Education
Review Date	September 2028
Signed	

1. Introduction

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is monitored by the Education Committee and will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.

This policy has regard to the Education Act 1996 and relevant regulations and Department for Education guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996, particularly the provisions relating to charging for school activities
- Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Department for Education, *Charging for school activities*
- any other relevant legislation or statutory guidance in force from time to time.

3. Definitions

- **Charge**: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission**: the cancellation or reduction of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Education Committee

The Education Committee has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy and monitoring its implementation.

4.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with this policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 School Business Manager

The School Business Manager is responsible for monitoring charging and remission arrangements in practice, ensuring charges comply with this policy, and recommending amendments where required.

4.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Principal of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns or queries about charges, voluntary contributions or remissions.

5. Where charges cannot be made

The Education Committee recognises that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Religious education
    - Instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning individually or in groups, except where charging is permitted by legislation.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

The school will not charge for materials, books, instruments or equipment required for education provided during school hours. However, a charge may be made for materials or ingredients where a parent has indicated in advance that they wish their child to own the finished product.

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the School or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit where charging is prohibited.

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
    - The National Curriculum
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We can charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
    - The National Curriculum
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit

- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents and carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

The school will not charge for education provided on a residential visit where charging is prohibited by law.

A charge may, however, be made for the pupil's board and lodging. Any charge for board and lodging will not exceed the actual cost incurred.

Where the statutory remission criteria apply, the cost of board and lodging will be remitted in accordance with section 9 of this policy.

7. Voluntary contributions

The school may ask parents and carers for voluntary contributions towards activities that could not otherwise be provided. Requests may include:

- Educational visits and trips, including elements of residential trips for which the school cannot levy a charge.
- Activity Clubs
- Activity Week

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents and carers are unwilling or unable to pay. Parents will be clearly informed that any request is voluntary. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

Where insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the school may need to cancel the activity if it cannot be funded from another source.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast and After School Club – Resources, Staffing
- Optional swimming lessons or swimming clubs provided outside the normal school day, where participation is voluntary and the activity does not form part of the National Curriculum, a pupil's EHCP provision or any statutory educational entitlement. Charges will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents and carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

The school will apply the statutory eligibility criteria in force at the time the remission is being considered. Where these criteria change, the current statutory requirements will take precedence over the wording of this policy.

9.2 Discretionary remission and financial hardship

The school recognises that families may experience financial hardship even where they do not meet the statutory criteria for remission. Parents and carers who may have difficulty meeting a charge or making a voluntary contribution are encouraged to contact the School Business Manager in confidence.

The school may, where appropriate and subject to available resources, waive or reduce a charge or identify alternative financial support. Requests will be considered sensitively and confidentially on a case-by-case basis.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager will monitor charges and remissions and ensure that arrangements comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Business Manager, or earlier where there is a relevant change in legislation, guidance or school practice.

At every review, the policy will be submitted to the Education Committee for approval.