

## Charging and Remissions Policy

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### PURPOSE

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional 'optional extras'. This policy covers circumstances in which a charge or remission may be made and also notes general principles with regard to voluntary contributions.

### LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The law requires that education during normal school hours and the examination of students in accordance with the National Curriculum is provided free of charge. The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wider range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' education and reserves the right to charge parents in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996.

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 and complies with the school's Funding Agreement.

### DEFINITIONS

**Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities

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

### CHARGING

The school may charge for the following areas of activity.

#### 1. Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Music and vocal tuition requested by the parent whether in or out of school hours (excluding Looked After Children)
- Where a parent asks for a prescribed public examination result to be scrutinised or re-marked, any charge made by the examining board for this service will be passed to parents.
- Pupils purchasing school meals, who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged an amount decided by the school's appointed caterers.
- Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement. Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

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### **2. 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/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)

### **The cost of Optional Extras**

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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

- any materials, entrance fees, travel costs, insurance costs, administration costs, pupils' board & lodging costs, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- non-teaching staff
- teaching staff engaged to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

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### REFUNDS

The school aims to run cost-neutral journeys and visits. The school does not calculate prices per pupil with the intention of creating a profit or incurring a deficit. At the end of each journey or visit, the surplus or deficit will be calculated.

If the journey or visit makes a surplus, where the sums involved per pupil exceeds £10 or more of the contribution per head (or proportionate amount where full per head costs are not paid), parents/carers will be offered a refund.

The school may ask for parental permission in advance of each school visit or journey to treat any surplus as a contribution to the school fund where this would exceed £10.

Any refunds will be made as soon as possible after the visit, either to pupils or parents by cheque or cash against signed receipts; alternatively if payment was made online an online refund will be given.

### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents/carers in respect of school activities that enrich the pupils education which would not otherwise be possible, such as educational visits, field trips and materials. In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

If a parent is unable or unwilling to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the activity, then it will be cancelled.

### REMISSIONS

The Headteacher will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents/carers who receive the following support payments:

Universal Credit\* (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

Income Support,

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;

Support under part VI of the Immigrations and Asylum Act 1999;

Child Tax Credit (where the person is not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190);

The guaranteed Element of Pension Credit;

Income related Employment/Support allowance;

Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

*\*The school uses the Local Authorities Eligibility Checking system which has been updated to reflect the changes and the transitional protection arrangements during the rollout of the Universal Credit system.*

Children of families who receive these payments are also eligible to apply for free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

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In cases of family hardship, parents may apply, in confidence, to the Head teacher for financial support and/or remission. The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the Headteacher.

### **MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Headteacher and the Chief Financial Officer monitor charges and remissions and ensure these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed by the Finance and Audit Committee biennially. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Body.

<b>Approved by:</b>	Full Governing Body	May 2018
<b>Last reviewed by:</b>	Finance & Audit Committee	Mar 2018
<b>Next review due by:</b>	Finance & Audit Committee	Mar 2020

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### **Appendix - GUIDELINES FOR CHARGING FOR SCHOOL VISITS**

#### **Day visits in school hours**

Parents must be informed that they cannot be required to pay for a school visit

Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions to meet costs

A pupil whose parents do not pay must be treated in exactly the same way as other pupils included in the group

#### **Day visits outside school hours**

Charges can be made, provided they do not exceed the actual costs incurred by the school and the visit does not form part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus of a public examination

#### **Visits in school hours involving an overnight stay**

Board and lodging costs only can be charged

The school must pay for the board and lodging costs of pupils whose parents are on income support, family credit or job-seeker's allowance

The party leader is responsible for informing any parent receiving income support/family credit/job-seeker's allowance that they do not have to pay for board and lodging

#### **Visits outside school hours involving an overnight stay**

Charges can be made unless the visit forms part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus of a public examination, in which case only board and lodging charges can be made. The remission of board and lodging charges for pupils whose parents receive income support, family credit or job-seeker's allowance (JSA) is discretionary

The charges made must not exceed the costs incurred

#### **Day visits – the calculation of “in/out of school hours”**

In schools other than independent schools the education provided wholly or mainly during school hours is free at the point of delivery. This means that the Headteacher may not impose a charge on parents for any visit that occurs during school hours. The Headteacher may, however, ask for a voluntary contribution. (A visit is deemed to be “in school hours” if 50% or more of the duration of the visit falls within the hours of the normal school day.)

#### **Voluntary contributions**

Some of the restrictions outlined above can be overcome by asking for voluntary contributions. However, the regulations stress that contributions must be “genuinely voluntary” and that parents must be informed that they are under no obligation to pay. They may be told that under-funded visits will be cancelled.