





## Charging and Remissions Policy

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**Abstract:** This policy sets out the scope for and activities that fall under permitted charges and voluntary contributions requested of the parent body.

Approved by:	Mrs M Young Chair of Governors	
Approved by:	Mrs J Watson Headteacher	
Last reviewed on:	20/07/2023	
Next review due by:	19/07/2024	
Policy number:	LR5004	

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupils education. The Governing Body aims 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.

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996. This requires the Governing Body to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included in the school prospectus. The school must also comply with the Buckinghamshire County Council Scheme for Financing Schools, Finance Section F7 Charges for Educational Activities.

There are two types of financial contributions we can ask parents for in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

#### **Voluntary Contributions:**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or Headteacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it is likely to be cancelled. The school will make sure this is made clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The School will 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 must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. The school will not send colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds. We will also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting for contributions.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used. Thus voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise pupils of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.

#### **Permitted Charges:**

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit.

### **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 may levy a charge. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

### **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

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.

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. Guidance about these changes to the charging regulations can be viewed [here](#). 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).

### **Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours**

If the 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). Whatever the starting and finishing

times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. 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.

### **Examination Entries**

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where

- the school has prepared the pupil for the examination and
- it considers that for educational reasons the pupil should not be entered and
- the pupil’s parent/guardian wishes the pupil to be entered (or pupil him/herself when over 18 years old).
- In these circumstances, if the pupil subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost.

A charge may be levied for pupils re-sitting an examination.

A charge will be levied where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

### **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.

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage of property belonging to students or staff where this property could reasonably be expected to be in school - for example if a student wilfully damages another students glasses a charge would be levied however this would not be applicable on items that should not be in school including but not limited to student mobile phones, music players or smart watches.

### **Lost library books**

A charges of £5 for any lost or damaged books will be made and go towards replacing the book. This charge is non-refundable if the book is found at a later date, however the charge will only be made if a book remains lost at the end of the school year.

## **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.

## **Breakfast and Afterschool Club**

Breakfast club is operated by the school. The club should aim to cover all direct cost including staff time, provision of food and equipment and also indirect costs of administration, finance and teacher's time, share of utilities, etc. A notional rent can also be allocated based on market rates.

The charge should cover the costs above but also the Headteacher has the right to allocate free places to pupils who may benefit from the use of the clubs but have not the funds available to pay themselves. Pupil premium funds can be used to pay for these pupils if they qualify for same.

The governing body currently issues the contract to run afterschool club to an external provider if required. The school can charge the provider a letting fee in these cases.

## **Nursery Lunch and Additional Sessions**

If it is deemed that there is a demand for nursery lunchtime care or additional sessions above the government funded sessions to be operated by the school and the school has the facilities and staffing to offer same then the governing body can approve the operating of the sessions. The charge should cover the costs above but also the Headteacher has the right to allocate free places to pupils who may benefit from the use of the lunch and sessions but have not the funds available to pay themselves. Pupil premium funds can be used to pay for these pupils if they qualify for same.

## **Late collection charges**

Under Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and relevant Regulations, the school governing body has the power to impose a charge on parents or carers who fail to collect their child from school within a reasonable time after the close of the school day or after a school activity.

The governing body has decided that, except in emergency situations (be advised that traffic does not count as an emergency situation), where children are not collected from the school within fifteen minutes after the school day or after school activity ending, then a charge may be made to the child's parent or carer. The school accepts that a variety of emergencies can arise due to unforeseen circumstances and will ensure that the charge is not imposed on the parent where there is a genuine unforeseen emergency.

Notification must be given to the school as soon as the situation arises or when collecting the child. The Charging Arrangements In cases where a child is not collected within fifteen

minutes of the end of the day or after school activity a charge of £5.00 will be made to the parent / carer for up to 30 minutes of non-collection and then £5.00 thereafter for each 15-minute period that the child is not collected.

The parent will be issued with an invoice and expected to pay within the date set on the invoice. Failure to pay will lead to further action being taken.

This charge should not be seen as unbooked childcare and where children are repeatedly uncollected without good reason this will be considered a safeguarding matter.

### **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, parents in receipt of certain benefits (broadly equivalent to those which qualify pupils for Free School Meals) shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Government guidance providing details of the benefits which exempt parents from being charged can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

Where charges are to be made by the governing body for optional extras, parents may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge as set out in the school's remissions policy.

Additional information about charging for school activities (document 3.2c) can be found at:

<http://oeapng.info/>