

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Name	Charges and Remission	Committee Responsible	Governors' Finance
Status	Mandatory	Committee Person i/c	JRB
Produced by	JRB First Agreed	First Agreed	March 2009
Date Produced	March 2009	Last Review Date	January 2025
References	1996 Education Act; Charging for school Activities - DfE advice - May 2018	Next Review Date	January 2026

CHARGES AND REMISSION POLICY

1. Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities. These apply to academies as well as maintained schools. This policy is based on the latest guidance (May 2018) available from the Department for Education. It applies to all pupils on roll.

DfE Framework:

2. The School **cannot** charge for:
- an admission application - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the School Admissions Code 2012 rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
 - 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
 - instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
 - entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

3. The school **can** charge for:
- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
 - optional extras
 - music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (*see section 9*)
 - community facilities
 - Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

4. Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. In 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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- 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 must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore 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. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

5. The school will exercise its right to charge in line with the above DfE framework.
6. The Reynolds Fund makes a contribution to the school to offset part of the additional staffing costs of educational activities.
7. **Examinations**
A charge will be levied in respect of:
 - examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination.
 - examination entries for pupils where the school has prepared the pupil for the examination but it considers that for educational reasons the pupil should not be entered and the pupil's parent/ carer 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.
 - exam fees for resits, unless the pupil is being prepared for the resit at the school.
 - exam fees 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.

The charges levied above will be the cost of the examination entry, plus any applicable centre fee.

An administration charge will be levied where a parent requests a review of a centre assessed mark, which will be refunded should the review result in an increase in marks.

8. **Voluntary Contributions**
Where the school cannot levy charges and it is not possible to provide these additional

activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip. Any request may not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of students willing to participate. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it will be cancelled **and this will be made clear to parents.**

Parents of pupils on roll at the school are invited to make a voluntary contribution to the Reynolds' Fund.

9. **Music Tuition**

The school levies charges for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, 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 who provide the tuition. Where students are eligible for Pupil Premium **they will be entitled to participate in one activity for a nominal fee. no charge is made**

10. **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, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

11. **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 by the Finance Committee. For users connected to the school, the charge may be based on the site staff overtime costs.

12. **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.

13. **Remissions Policy**

If the parent/guardian of a pupil is in receipt of the following benefits, charges in respect of board and lodging will be remitted in full:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

14. The Terms and Conditions for Trips, Visits and Activities can be found in Appendix A and form part of this policy.

Where flexibility is permitted, the school will apply these guideline at its discretion.

APPENDIX A

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR TRIPS, VISITS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Government legislation precludes the school from levying a compulsory charge for trips that take place in school time (at least 50% of curriculum time) or represent a compulsory element of an educational programme. (e.g. field trip), although for residential trips a charge may be levied for the accommodation element. If you are able to prove you are in receipt of the certain benefits (*listed at end of this document*) you will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. Where a charge cannot be made, parents/ carers will be asked to make a voluntary contribution; the trip can only proceed if sufficient contributions are received to cover the total cost of the trip/activity as the school is not in a position to provide a subsidy. The school appreciates the support received from parents and carers – trips rarely need to be cancelled due to insufficient voluntary contributions.
2. The school receives funding through the Pupil Premium which can sometimes be used to support payment for students on the Pupil Premium register. The school's leadership will determine each trip's eligibility for pupil premium subsidy, although this is normally only available for curriculum trips.
3. Where legislation permits charging, attendance will only be possible on payment of the required charge. In exceptional circumstances a subsidy may be available from the Reynolds Fund – please write in confidence to the Headteacher should you wish to apply for this.
4. The school budgets to break even on school trips. Should a small unexpected under-spend occur, and to avoid the administrative cost of refunding individual parents, the money will be treated as a donation to the Reynolds fund. This fund is used to enhance extra-curricular activities across the school.
5. Once a student is offered a place on a trip, any deposit paid is non-refundable.
6. Should a student withdraw or be excluded from a trip, it will not be possible to offer a refund unless another student takes up the place or the cost is covered by insurance. Any non-recoverable costs resulting from the withdrawal or exclusion will be deducted from any refund available.
7. If the school makes the decision to cancel a trip due to circumstances outside its control, the school will endeavour to secure repayments. However, where this is not possible the school will not be able to reimburse parents. Parents/ carers should be aware of this when committing to a trip.
8. In the event of a gross breach of the code of conduct, a pupil might be returned home /repatriated. All costs arising from this decision will be at the expense of the parent/carer.
9. Should a parent/ carer make the decision to withdraw a student during a trip, all costs arising from this decision will be at the expense of the parent/carer.
10. Payments must be made via Parentpay; the school no longer accepts payment by cash or cheque.
11. A copy of the insurance policy can be found on the school website. Please check the cover carefully to make sure it meets your needs. Please note that insurance for personal items should be arranged by parents, as the school's policy is not intended to cover these.
12. To ensure that the school's trip insurance policy remains effective, it is the parent/ carer's responsibility to ensure that the trip organiser is made aware of any pre-existing medical condition (who will then liaise with the insurance company as necessary). Any uninsured costs incurred due to undisclosed medical conditions must be met by parents/ carers – this particularly applies to trips abroad.

13. By signing up to a trip, you are agreeing to the terms outlined above.

Relevant benefits for assessing financial assistance

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)