



## Charging & Remissions Policy

*Reviewed: February 2024*

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## **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:**

For clarity, the definition of the words 'charge' and 'remission' used throughout this policy can be found below:

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

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

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Governing Board of Wharnccliffe Side Primary recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including day visits, clubs and residential experiences, can make towards a pupil's education.
- 1.2 The Governing Board aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. Therefore the school intends to ask parents to make 'voluntary contributions' towards activities which take part wholly or partly within school hours.

### **2. Charges and Voluntary Contributions**

- 2.1 Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities. This policy has been written using guidance from 'Charging for School Activities (DfE, May 2018).
- 2.2 Schools can ask parents for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. Clearly, it is important that voluntary contributions are sought at the earliest possible date to allow for the planning of school activities as far ahead as possible and to avoid unforeseen disruption or cancellations for different groups of pupils.
- 2.3 The costs and means of funding an activity will be explained to parents and carers when asked to contribute. Letters will be worded as such: "Parents / carers are asked to make a contribution of £xx. Should you need to discuss support in making this contribution for your child, please contact (name)."
- 2.4 No child can be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable to pay. However, where an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be clearly explained to parents at the outset.

- 2.5 The size of any voluntary contribution will be commensurate to the activity or event and the use and size of the contribution will be fully explained (including the educational / social / cultural benefit). School is committed to obtaining good value and will always seek to get the best possible prices for any such activity / event.
- 2.6 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.

### 3. **Education During School Hours**

Activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost. Thus, the education provided by a school for its registered pupils will be free of charge if it is provided wholly or mainly during school hours or where the provision is made:

- (ii) to comply with the requirements of the national curriculum;
- (iii) to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education.

If the number of places available for a particular activity is limited, the school must decide which pupils should be given the opportunity to participate without regard to parents' willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost. Voluntary contributions may be used to meet the costs of activities during school hours.

#### 3.1 **Materials and Equipment Costs**

- (i) Governors do not have discretion to levy charges for the use of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, including essential protective clothing during school hours. But parental voluntary contributions may be used in order to release resources from the school budget for other purposes: again no student should suffer any disadvantage because of a parent or carer's inability to contribute voluntarily.

NB: "equipment" in this context excludes clothing e.g. football boots.

## **(ii) Charging in Kind**

As part of the curriculum, we sometimes ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of materials, ingredients and equipment if the parents / carers have indicated they wish to own the finished product.

### **3.2 Educational Visits**

We often arrange for visits for the children in connection with the theme they are studying. Some of these visits are local and cost nothing or very little, whilst others are further afield. Whenever we organise such a visit we request that parents / carers make a voluntary contribution towards the cost. If insufficient contributions were received then the visit would be cancelled. Families who do not meet the remission criteria (section 4.3) but are experiencing financial difficulty are encouraged to speak to the Head Teacher to discuss contributing in instalments.

### **3.3 Residential Visits**

In line with Local Authority policy, the school will make charges for board and lodging (subject to the remissions policy applying), for any residential activity and may request voluntary contributions towards the cost of transport. For residential visits, all parents will be given the option to pay in instalments.

### **3.4 Special Events in School**

Each year we enrich the school curriculum with special events such as in-school theatre performances and visiting poets, authors and artists. We usually ask for a voluntary parental contribution towards the cost of such events.

### **3.5 Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument**

As part of our music curriculum, we provide opportunities for all children to play instruments free-of-charge. However, charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of up to four to play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus followed by the pupil (i.e. it is an optional extra over and above our universal offer). In some cases, bursaries are available to support families on low incomes. The school will support parents / carers in applying for these if required.

### **3.6 Private music tuition – instrument provision**

Parents enter into agreements with private tutors. Should an instrument be required for this, parents would arrange the hire / rental of an instrument from the tutor or agree to provide an instrument themselves.

### 3.7 **Lost Items, Damage**

Parents / carers are expected to replace or pay for lost items of school equipment or books. Parents / carers will be charged for wilful damage carried out by their child to the school building, furniture or other property.

### 3.8 **Optional Extras**

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

### 3.9 **Clubs**

Schools can charge for extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs and supervised homework sessions). All prices are made clear to parents at the time of booking and may be subsidised as set out in section 4 below.

## 4. **REMISSION**

4.1 In order to keep voluntary contributions to an affordable amount, the school may decide to subsidise the total cost before asking for contributions from parents / carers. This will be made clear on any letters asking for contributions.

4.2 For sporting events and activities, school will often subsidise the total cost of the event / transport (as defined in our Sports Premium policy). This ensures fair access for all and increases participation amongst selected groups of pupils. Where only a small number of places are available (e.g. a football team), the selection criteria will be made clear to pupils and parents.

4.3 The Governing Board may wish to remit in full or in part, the cost of activities for particular parents / carers. For example, in the case of family hardship, e.g. families in receipt of Universal Credit, Pupil Premium or Income Support.

More detail about the current benefits a family may be eligible for can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>

4.4 When arranging a chargeable activity, parents / carers are invited to talk to the Head Teacher in confidence to discuss the remission of charges in full or in part. The Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation for any such remission.