



WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Policy on Charging and Remission of Charges for School Activities

1 Introduction

The governors fully support the principles of free education and equality of opportunity for all students. However, the governors recognise that most parents would want the school to enhance the education of its students by providing additional activities. Such activities rely on voluntary contributions from parents. The governors therefore wish to encourage all parents to support the school as far as they are able by contributing to particular activities from time to time, by donating to the School Fund and by supporting The Friends of William Farr.

2 Charges for public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations' list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school within that academic year.

There is a charge of the examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school (as this is considered to be an optional extra).

We may also charge an examination fee if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of a public examination where the Governing Body originally paid the entry fee.

3 Charges for activities and visits

3.1 Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include any breaks during the course of the school day)

There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music or vocal tuition where parents have requested the service.

There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

We may charge for:

- Books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge);
- Optional extras (see section 4);
- Music or vocal tuition (see section 5).

3.2 Activities that take place outside school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside school hours where they are:

- Part of the set curriculum;
 - a) Part of the syllabus for a public examination for which the pupil is being prepared by the school;

- Part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

The school will charge for activities that do not appear in the above criteria and are classed as optional extras (see Section 4).

3.3 Activities that take place partly during school hours either on or off site

Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 3.1.

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 3.2 and section 4.

3.4 Residential activities

We will not charge for:

- 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, 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;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit;
- Travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours;
- Residential activities that take place during school hours.

We will charge for:

- **Board and lodging**

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost (see section 11 for more guidance on remissions.)

- **Travel**

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

- **Activities**

The school may charge for residential activities that fall outside school hours as outlined in section 3b and section 4.

3.5 Trip Contingency Fund

The Trip Contingency Fund has been set up using funds from Trip accounts that have amounts left over that are not large enough to refund to students who have contributed to them (see section 3.6 below). Trips can borrow against this fund until payments come in, and it is used to support genuine overspends, despite careful budgeting by trip. It is available if there are unexpected costs for a variety of reasons. This fund can be used to support students with particular needs whose needs were not factored into the original trip budget. It will also be used to pay for extra members of staff to accompany a trip or take part in an event if it becomes clear some students may need extra monitoring due to e.g. Special Educational Needs or medical needs.

3.6 Refunds

Every effort will be made in the planning stages to run a visit or event that balances the funds

collected with the costs incurred. If a visit or event is more expensive than anticipated, the shortfall may be made up by the Trip/School Event Contingency Fund. Tracking of when this happens will allow adjustments to be made in future visits or events, with support and advice for Trip Leaders/Event Organisers. If a visit or event is less expensive than anticipated, the Trip Policy lays out advice that all students on the trip may receive e.g. an ice-cream. However, if this underspend is not realized until all expenses have been reconciled after the event, a refund will be arranged via the Finance Officer as long as the refund will be £10 or over per student who took part and paid. If it is under this amount then the balance shall be transferred to the Trips or School Contingency Fund.

4 Optional extras

We will charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) Part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil is being prepared at the school;
 - c) Part of Religious Education.
- b) Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or Governing Body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

The cost of optional extras

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, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- 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 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.

5 Musical tuition within school hours

We follow government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will 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).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to 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. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

Students on the free school meals register are to be entitled to remission of 75% of the tuition fee for a shared lesson and free instrument hire. There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for children in care. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

6 Voluntary contributions

The Education Act, 1996, confirms the right of schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

Parents may be asked to make voluntary contributions for any visit or journey by the school and approved by the governors. There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

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.

The matter of voluntary contribution will not be a factor in deciding whether a pupil is allowed to participate in an activity to be financed by voluntary contributions. The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

The school reserves the absolute right to determine whether the level of voluntary contributions is sufficient to enable the activity to take place. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The National Guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel states:

“The restrictions on charging do not prohibit the Local Authority or school from seeking voluntary contributions in support of an activity or visit. Such contributions must, however, be genuinely voluntary. Consequently, it must be made clear to parents that there is no obligation to contribute, and students must not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution.

It is important to provide written information to Parents. This should explain the nature of the proposed activity or visit, the likely value in educational terms and the financial contribution per student which would be required if the activity were to take place. The information should emphasise that there is no obligation to contribute and that no student will be excluded because parents are unwilling or unable to contribute. However, it must be made equally clear whether the activity or visit is likely to be cancelled if there are insufficient 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 students of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.”

7 Admissions

The school will not make a charge for the administration of admissions.

8 Charging in kind

Where parents indicate in advance that they wish to own the finished product of a practical activity they may be asked to provide or pay for any ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed. No child will be at a disadvantage because of a parent’s unwillingness or inability to contribute in this way.

9 Damage to property and breakages

The governors reserve the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of replacement of lost, broken or damaged books, equipment or other items, except where caused by normal fair wear and tear.

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by a student or parent 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.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and be dependent on the situation.

10 Community facilities

The school may charge outside users for the use of school facilities. The profits generated from these charges will be spent on school facilities.