



Charging, Remissions and Lettings Policy

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This policy sets out the circumstances in which the school may charge for activities, request voluntary contributions, or offer remissions, in line with the Education Act 1996 and Hertfordshire County Council guidance.

Principles

“The Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging in all schools maintained by local education authorities:

- To maintain the right to free school education
- To establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of parents’/carers’ willingness or ability to meet the cost
- To give local education authorities and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours, while emphasising that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity
- To confirm the right of local education authorities and 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.”

CSF and National Guidance

Financial Handbook for Schools Part iv: Guidance – Section 11

The policy of the Governing Body on charging is in compliance with the law and is guided by the Charging Policy of Hertfordshire County Council, Financial Handbook for Schools, Part iv: Guidance Section 11.

Our policy is to charge for the following areas of activity as permitted under the Education Act 1996:

- Board and lodging on residential visits
- The cost associated with tuition in playing a musical instrument, other than for children in care
- Optional extra activities which take place outside school hours, excluding additional education if it part of the National Curriculum such as booster classes
- The cost of any scrutiny of exam results if requested by parents/carers
- The cost in cash or in kind of ingredients and materials needed for practical subjects such as design technology, if parents/carers have indicated in advance the wish to own the finished product

Charging

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. While the school may recover the full costs of the following activities, charges will not exceed actual costs. Where the final cost of a trip is less than the calculated cost, the minimum refund given per pupil will be £5. Refunds under £5 will not be issued as the administrative cost of processing them would exceed the value of the refund. Any refund may be subject to an administration fee to cover costs on all refunds.

School Journeys in School Hours

The board and lodgings element of future residential activities deemed to take place within school hours.

Theatre trips, Outings, Visits to the School, Weekly Swimming

Where the trips take place in school hours, the Governors propose that parents/carers will be asked for voluntary contributions to cover the cost of these activities. The Governors understand that such contributions will be genuinely voluntary, and that no pupil will be omitted because his/her parent/carer has not contributed. However, if insufficient contributions have been received by the school, the parents/carers may be informed that the activity will not take place.

Activities outside School hours

The full cost to each pupil of future activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours, or activities, which take place outside of school hours to which this policy does not apply.

Individual Instrumental Tuition

The cost to the pupil for providing individual instrumental tuition (e.g. violin).

Remissions

Children, Schools and Families operates a remissions policy in relation to tuition in playing a musical instrument. The school is concerned that pupils are not excluded from such activities on the grounds of cost and make this known to parents/carers as appropriate.

Where the parents/carers of a pupil are in receipt of income support, universal credit or other equivalent means tested support, the Governing Body will consider remission in part or full of the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that it organises for the pupil, if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours. The Governing Body may wish to remit in full or in part the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents/carers. For example, there may be cases of family hardship that make it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Governing Body will invite parents/carers to apply in confidence for the remissions of charges in part or in full. The Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will make authorisation of remission.

Voluntary Contributions

The Governing Body asks parents/carers for voluntary contributions towards the costs of:

- Some activities which take place in school during school hours, e.g. arts workshops
- School equipment
- Off-site visits

Where there are not enough contributions to make an activity possible, the activity may be cancelled. However, no child will be excluded if the parent/carer is unwilling or unable to make a contribution.

The school also asks for voluntary contributions towards the cost of swimming lessons. However, this activity will always go ahead regardless of the shortfall, and no child is excluded on the grounds of cost.

Damage to Property

The school may seek to recover costs for:

- Willful damage to school property.
- Loss or damage to school books or equipment
- Damage to property belonging to a third party were the school has been charged.

Charges will reflect the actual cost of repair or replacement.

Lettings

We adopt the principles that:

- We actively encourage the letting of the school buildings and grounds, in the interests of community development, the extended school's agenda and maximising revenue for the school.
- We promote such lettings through a number of means, including local advertising.
- We operate a lettings policy that enables us to be flexible in our approach to making best use of the school buildings and grounds.
- All lettings are subject to safeguarding, health and safety, and site security requirements, and must not conflict with the operational needs of the school.