

Whaddon Church of England School



Charging and Remissions Policy for Educational Activities

2024-2025

“You are the light of world, let your light shine!” (Matthew 5:14-16)

Amended: September 2024

Review date September 2025

Vision:

Challenging each other to be our best, through actions, choices and words so we can all shine.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of enriching, additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and rich 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 Council Scheme for Financing Schools, Finance Section F7 Charges for Educational Activities.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked 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. When organising school visits that enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the visits where costs are incurred. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. Visits have to be self-financing and the school cannot add additional money to supplement the cost of the visit to cover lost revenue due to parents who choose not to send a voluntary contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it is likely to be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this 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. If a visit goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from others. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

The cost of any school visit is arrived at by calculating the cost of the coach and the entrance fee and any other additional costs incurred by the school associated with the trip and dividing it by the total number of children in the class to work out the cost per pupil. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs/charges to parents.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should 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 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).

Materials & Textbooks

Where a pupil takes home items produced as a result of an art or design and technology project, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials. In the case of Food Technology, pupils may be asked to provide their own ingredients, but where the school provides the ingredients, a charge will be levied via the parental voluntary contribution.

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.

Parents will arrange the lessons and payment directly with the peripatetic music teacher. Arrangements can be discussed for those pupils eligible for Pupil Premium grants.

Activities Outside School Hours: Clubs

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an “optional extra.” The school may offer a number of before and after school clubs. These are regarded as an “optional extra” and a charge will be made to cover the cost of the activity. The charge may include the cost of insurance, equipment, travel and staff costs. Sports4all and Green Planet Forest School club.

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 will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

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.

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 printed hard copy of document.

Freedom of Information Act

Where a request is made for information held by the school under the Freedom of Information Act, the school may charge an hourly rate that reflects the actual cost of compiling the information and photocopying costs. The school will inform the person requesting the information what the likely cost will be before preparing the information.

Remissions

The Governing Body may from time to time decide to remit all or part of the cost of activities involving particular pupils. This will be at the Governors' discretion. This will include those pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and those eligible for Free School Meals.

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>

In some circumstances, there may be cases of family hardship, which 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 to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher on behalf of the Governors. All parents, however, will have the right of appeal to the Governing Body, normally represented by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of Governors.

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

<http://oeapng.info/>

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

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Ratified by the Full Governing Body: September 2024

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