Whitehall School

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Contents

1. Aims 3
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Definitions 3
4. Roles and responsibilities 3
5. Where charges cannot be made 4
6. Where charges can be made 5
7. Voluntary contributions 6
8. Activities we charge for 6
9. Remissions 6
10. Monitoring arrangements 7

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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

3. Definitions

- **Charge**: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission**: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headteacher.

The Governing Board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions Policy has been delegated to the Resources' Committee.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Resources' Committee/ Headteacher.

4.2 Headteachers

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Charging and Remissions Policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- 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
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
- The national curriculum
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school

- Religious education
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- 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 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 will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, 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 giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

6.5 School Lunch Monies

For pupils in primary schools within the London Boroughs, payment for school lunches is currently met by the London Mayor. Meals must still be ordered by parents in advance.

Where there is a change of circumstances, and pupils become entitled to free school meals, it is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school as soon as possible. In cases where payment has already been received, and a new claim for free school meals is backdated, school will only reimburse one week's worth of payments.

When a pupil is taken off roll and there is a credit balance of £5 or less on their dinner money account, due to the administrative costs involved in processing refunds this money will be donated to the school fund to be used for the benefit of the children in school. If a parent does not wish to make a donation, they can request a refund.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

e.g. school trips, sports activities, enhancement activities

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities where applicable:

Breakfast, after-school and sports clubs and activities, unless these are provided by an external provider (who would collect charges directly). Charges will not exceed the actual cost of (per pupil) of provision.

For each activity the charges could include transport, entrance fee, building or insurance costs, staffing, administration and any other reasonable costs incurred for the activity.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be reviewed annually and parents will be notified of any changes.

It will be made clear to parents whether all or part payments can be refunded in the event of a cancellation. The school will always aim to refund any monies that can be recovered from the provider.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Governing Board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)

Any request for reduction in charges should be made to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity following notification of the trip.

9.2 Redeeming costs for damage

The school reserves the right to charge parents and carers for:

- Wilful damage to the property belonging to the school, teachers or other pupils or the misuse or loss of books and equipment;
- Costs arising from financial processes resulting from returned parental cheques.

Remission

The school will comply with legal requirements for remissions. It is the policy of the Governing Board to delegate to the Chair and the Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of this policy.

9.3 Additional considerations

The Governing Board recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end, the school will aim to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible, the school will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents and carers can plan ahead;
- The school will establish a system for parents and carers to pay in installments;

- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, the school will arrange to allow payment by installments beyond the date of the trip;
- The school acknowledges that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis may discriminate against students from families on lower incomes and will avoid this method of selection whenever possible.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Resources' Committee annually.