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# CHARGING, REFUNDS AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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## **School Policy/Procedure No: 58**

The Policy was formally adopted by the Governing Body on:	Date: November 2024
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*Last Reviewed: November 2024*

*Last Amended: November 2024*

*Next Review: November 2025*

The Governing Body has resolved to make charges as allowed by sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996

## **CHARGING POLICY**

The school aims to have a clear, robust process in place for charging, refunds and remissions; this policy clearly sets out the activities that are chargeable, when charges will and will not be made, the management of refunds and the process for claiming remission

### **Definitions**

**Charge:** the fee payable for a specifically defined activity

**Refund:** the return of monies previously paid for a specifically defined activity

**Remission:** the cancellation of / exemption from a charge that would normally be payable

### **School Meals**

All meals taken by students who are not eligible for free school meals will be chargeable

The charge for the food provide by the canteen is set by the external caterers

There is no charge for students who are entitled to free school meals

### **Educational visits:**

The school:

- will seek voluntary contributions from parents/carers where applicable
- will not exclude a child from participating in an activity during the school day on financial grounds

Where parents/carers decline to make the requested voluntary contribution, their identity will remain confidential

If a sufficient level of contributions is not achieved, the activity will be cancelled and any monies already collected will be refunded to the relevant parents/carers

### **Residential Educational activities:**

The costs of residential activities can be high and such activities may only continue to be available if sufficient costs are recovered

Charges that apply:

- travel costs – transport to and from the residential activity
- board and lodging
  - full cost of board and lodging on residential trips whether or not it takes place during school hours
  - parents / carers will be informed of the cost before the activity takes place
- costs of supply staff engaged to cover the staff accompanying students on a residential trip where the trip takes place during term time
- full cost recovery for residential activities that take place outside of school hours

The school will subsidise the cost of board and lodging on residential visits for children of families claiming free school meals

No charge applies:

- where parents / carers in receipt of certain benefits may claim exemption in accordance with the remissions guidance below
- for education costs incurred on any visit during school hours

- for education costs incurred on any visit outside school hours if it is part of the school's curriculum

### **Music Tuition**

Instrumental tuition or singing lessons do not form part of the curriculum but are an additional activity arranged by the school and delivered by specialist tutors either on an individual basis or as part of a group, following parental request. The cost of such lessons is dependent on the charges applied by the tutors, the size of the group, the duration and frequency of each lesson

The school operates on full cost recovery basis. However, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all students, charges for music tuition within school hours for students eligible for free school meals or children in care will be considered for remission in accordance with this policy (see remissions section)

There will be no charge applied if the music tuition forms part of a public examination syllabus being followed by a student of the school

### **Examination fees**

No charge when:

- an exam is part of the curriculum
- an exam is on the school's set examinations list
- the student has been prepared for that exam by the school
- the exam is not on the set list, but has been arranged by the school

Charges do apply when:

- the student has not been prepared for the exam by the school
- the student wishes to re-sit an exam
- the student fails to reach the required standard without good reason (the school may ask the parents/carers to pay the original exam fee)
- a student wishes to sit a BMAT exam

### **Extra-curricular activities:**

#### **Curriculum related clubs**

Where these activities run outside of normal school hours, (ie. sports clubs, homework club, art club) a charge may be made to cover costs of equipment, materials, teaching or non-teaching staff, specialist staff /coaches and the cost of buildings and accommodation. The total charge will not exceed the actual costs incurred in the provision of the activity

Parents/carers will be advised of any such costs before their child is allowed to undertake any such activity and participation will be on the basis of the parent's/carer's willingness to pay the charges

Parents/carers are able to claim remission from such charges in accordance with the guidance below

## **Other areas:**

### **Charges apply:**

- for books and materials belonging to the school that a student has lost
- for books and materials that a parent/carer wishes a student to keep after having been advised of the cost
- for activities taking place outside school hours that are not
  - part of the school's curriculum
  - part of a syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school
  - part of the school's basic religious education
- for property damage – each individual case to be decided upon by the Headteacher
  - full repair costs incurred as a result of wilful or reckless damage to school property by a student or parent/carer
  - full recovery of costs incurred by the school as a result of damage caused by a student to third party property
- if a student wishes to hire a locker for each academic year
- for unpaid cheque charges

### **No charge applies:**

- for activities taking place during school hours except any of those listed above
- for transport during school hours for school-organised activities except for educational visits as detailed above
- for activities outside school hours that are part of the
  - set curriculum including sports matches against other schools/academies
  - syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school
  - school's basic religious education syllabus
- for admissions

## **Voluntary contributions**

The school may, from time to time, ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions to the school's general funds in order to assist with the provision of resources to enhance their children's education. There will be no pressure exerted and any contribution will be gratefully received.

Where the voluntary contribution applies to an educational visit or extra-curricular activity, there is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution and no child will be excluded from an activity if the parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if the sufficient level of contributions is not achieved, that activity will be cancelled and any monies already collected will be refunded to the relevant parents/carers.

## **DBS checks**

The school will cover the cost of DBS checks for all employed staff  
The school may cover the cost of DBS checks for volunteers

## **REFUNDS POLICY**

### **Educational visits**

When a student is absent due to illness and does not attend an educational visit, the transport/entrance cost will not be refunded, where already committed. However, where possible, the school will endeavour to recover costs related to that activity and, if successful, will then refund the parent/carer.

If a trip has to be cancelled by the school, parental contributions will be refunded, less any initial deposits withheld by the venue.

Where contributions for an activity exceed the final total cost by more than £5 per student, a refund will be given. Excess income less than £5 per student will be retained in school funds. Excess expenditure will be paid from school funds.

### **Residential activities**

If a student does not attend a residential activity due to illness, the school will endeavour to recover costs, through the trip insurance and, if successful, will then pass this refund onto the parent/carer; please note that initial deposits may be retained by the travel company.

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the travel company, the school will endeavour to recover full refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto parents/carers

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the school, parental contributions already received will be refunded, less any initial deposits withheld by the venue.

### **Music tuition**

Where Instrumental or singing lessons are cancelled by the tutor or the school, and payment has already been received, the school will transfer the funds to cover future lessons taken by the relevant student. If lessons are not being continued in the following term, the parent/carer may request a refund

Where a student fails to attend a pre-booked lesson, refunds do not apply

### **Extra-curricular activities**

If a student does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where curriculum related clubs are cancelled by the school, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where students are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.

### **Outside of school hours activities which are not part of the curriculum, public examination syllabus or part of the school's basic religious education**

If a student does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies

Where the activity is cancelled by the school, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where students are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund

Where the activity is arranged by the school but has been cancelled by external organisers/tutors/sports coaches, the school will endeavour to obtain refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto the parents/carers

Where an activity arranged by external organisers directly with parents/carers is cancelled, the parents/carers must contact the organisers to obtain a refund in accordance with the separate booking agreement

## **REMISSIONS POLICY**

A member of the Senior Leadership team will authorise the remission of charges in all cases.

The school will consider the remission of charges to parents/ carers who receive the relevant support payments (in accordance with the current DfE listing) which make their child/children eligible for free school meals and for children in care

All claims for remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially

The school may decide to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and students; each event or case will be considered individually by a member of the Senior Leadership team

**Note:** All data on Charging and Remissions stored in school is only shared in accordance with the school's Privacy Notice (e.g. other educational establishments, Local Authority, DfE)