



Charging & Remissions Policy

1. Requirements

1.1 Change Record

Issue	Date	Author	Description
3.0	February 2017	H Mepham	Existing Charging & Remissions Policy
3.1	November 2017	P Atkin	Update to accommodate After-School Club
4.0	November 2017	P Atkin	Ratified by Finance and Premises Committee
4.1	November 2018	P Atkin	Draft for Approval
5.0	12 November 2018	P Atkin	Ratified by Finance and Premises Committee
5.1	June 2020	P Atkin	Draft for Approval
6.0	9 November 2020	P Atkin	Ratified by Finance and Premises Committee

Note: All issues except those of the form 'X.0' are draft.

1.2 Equality Statement

In developing and reviewing this policy we have carefully considered its impact on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

1.3 Approval and Review

This policy was approved by the Finance & Premises Committee on 9 November 2020. It is due for review in the Autumn Term 2021.

2. Rationale

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, and which is reviewed regularly.

The Governing Body recognises the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost. This policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

The Governing Body adheres to the guidance set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act:

- all children have the right to receive free school education;
- activities which are offered wholly or mainly during teaching time will be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' willingness or ability to meet the costs;
- the school will use its discretion in deciding whether to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours;

- the school may invite parents to make voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of an activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

The application of this policy may mean that where there are insufficient voluntary contributions to make an activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity is cancelled.

3. Chargeable and Non-Chargeable Activities

3.1 List of activities

Activity	Chargeable	Voluntary Contribution	Notes
Day, or part-day, trips and visits		✓	Visits which take place wholly or mainly within the school day are a part of the curriculum and as such are not chargeable. Visits which take place entirely outside the school day could be chargeable.
Visitors to school or activity days		✓	Visitors or activity days which take place wholly or mainly within the school day run by third-party providers are a part of the curriculum and as such are not chargeable.
Residential Visits	✓	✓	The cost of board and lodging for residential visits is chargeable. The cost of activities should be met through voluntary contribution as it forms part of the curriculum. The school should establish the respective balance of costs from the outset of any booking.
Instrumental Music Lessons	✓		These are provided currently by Cambridgeshire Music and therefore the Cambridgeshire Music Charging and Remissions Policy applies.
Materials for lesson activities, for example, cooking		✓	The school may ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of resources for the teaching of a specific project.
Curriculum swimming		✓	Swimming is a curriculum activity and is not chargeable. The school may ask for a voluntary contribution towards swimming costs, but currently does not do so.
Non-curriculum swimming	✓		The school charges parents to join the Swimming Club to use the pool after school, at weekends and in the holidays.

Activity	Chargeable	Voluntary Contribution	Notes
School Meals	✓		The school charges parents on behalf of a third party provider. The charging and remissions policy of that provider applies.
After-School Club	✓		The club runs outside of school hours and is therefore a chargeable activity. The club is run by a third-party provider who may have their own remissions policy.
After-School Activities	✓		After-school activities are outside the curriculum and third party providers may make a charge.
Wilful damage to school buildings or property by a pupil.	✓		The school reserves the right to charge for the reasonable repair or replacement of property deliberately damaged by a pupil.
Photocopying for the purposes of a FOI request.	✓		As per the relevant legislation, the school may make a reasonable charge for photocopying materials required to service a FOI request.

3.2 Calculating charges or rates of voluntary contribution

Where a charge is made it will not exceed the actual cost of the activity. Fees for Swimming Club will be set annually by the Finance and Premises Committee to reasonably cover the costs of providing this activity.

Where a voluntary contribution is requested, the rate set should be equal to that of the cost of the activity divided by the number of children taking part. There cannot be a levy on those who can afford to pay to support those who cannot.

4. Remissions

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low incomes have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

4.1 Criteria for Remission

Remission of charges for activities may be available if any of the following apply:

- the child involved in the activity is in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals
- the child involved in the activity is in receipt of Disadvantaged Premium or Forces Premium
- there is sudden, short-term family financial hardship, for example, the loss of employment of a parent or carer

Remission will apply to the following activities in priority order:

- The charges associated with a residential visit
- The charges for any requested musical instrument tuition for a single instrument
- The charges for any after-school activity
- Agreed sessions at After-School Club
- Family membership at Swimming Club

For remission to be available the school will need to demonstrate that funds are accessible, for example through Pupil Premium. Authorisation of remission will be made by the headteacher; other staff are not able to authorise remission and should refer the matter to the headteacher.

4.2 Sources of funding

The school may consider the following sources of funding to meet the charges for an activity:

- Pupil Premium Grant allocation
- Allocation of delegated school budget
- Charitable donations, for example, Trigg Trust

As a general rule, PTFA funds will be spent for the benefit of all children, rather than that of a few.

5. Debt Management

Payment should be obtained as and when goods and services are provided wherever possible; in particular where the value of the goods and services is relatively small, ie less than £100. School meals and After-School Club charges should be paid in advance.

Where payment is not received at the time when the goods or services are delivered an invoice must be raised as soon as possible but normally within 10 days after the debt becomes due. Invoices should require payment within 30 days from the date of issue.

Final reminders should be issued if no payment is received within 35 days. The final reminder should make it clear that legal action will be taken if payment is not received within a further 14 days.

At each Premises and Finance Committee meeting, the Headteacher will inform the governors of any debt which is still outstanding after the 14 day period following the final reminder together with any proposed action.

Outstanding debt may be written-off by the Headteacher provided that the appropriate follow-up action outlined above has been taken and the details of the debtor, amount of write-off and reason for no further action being taken is reported to the Premises and Finance Committee for information.

Write-off of outstanding debt in excess of £50 must be approved by the Premises and Finance Committee following submission of details of the debt by the Headteacher together with reasons for no further action being taken.