



# Charging and Remissions Policy

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Most recent review: **12<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

Next Review: **Summer 2017**

Member of Staff Responsible: **N/A**

Management Responsible: **Resources Committee**

Signed:

**Chair of Governing Body**

**This policy has been adapted from the policies of**

**Albury C of E School (2012),  
Christ Church C of E School, Ware (2010) and  
Hunsdon JMI School (2012)**

**with reference to  
policy ref. CSF0041 (January 2009)  
drafted by Peter Hobbs, Hertfordshire County Council**

## Charging and Remissions Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of the financial means of their parents/guardians. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.
- 1.2. In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. The exceptions to this are music and some practical activities.
- 1.3. The school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum.
- 1.4. School hours are those hours when the school is actually in session and do not include breaks (including the middle of the day). Some, but not all, residential visits and their activities may be deemed to be within school hours despite pupils being required to be present with staff either side of the normal school day.
- 1.5. Activities both within and outside school hours for which the school may charge are regarded as optional extras.
- 1.6. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.
- 1.7. Where charges are made, these will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

### 2. During School Hours

- 2.1. In the event of activities organised by the school during school hours, parents may be expected to pay for the following:
  - the cost of materials, books, instruments or other equipment *if the parent wishes the child to own them* (e.g. if the child wishes to take home a clay model, the school may charge for the cost of the clay).
  - individual or group music tuition
  - the board and lodging element of all residential visits
  - activities arranged by a third party such as a travel agent or tour company.

### 3. Outside School Hours

- 3.1. Charges may not be made for any activity which is required by the National Curriculum or to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.

3.2. Charges may be made for optional courses or activities which fall wholly or mainly outside school hours. Such charges may include an element for:

- pupils' travel costs
- pupils' board and lodging costs
- materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- non-teaching staff
- entrance fees to museums, theatres etc.
- insurance costs.

#### **4. Voluntary Contributions**

4.1. Where the school wishes to offer additional trips or activities but cannot levy charges and where it is not possible to provide these within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents/guardians to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip/activities. Activities for which such contributions are invited include:

- swimming
- school day trips
- workshops and visitors
- school journeys.

4.2. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation.

4.3. Where there are not sufficient voluntary contributions to make the trip/activity possible, then it will have to be cancelled.

#### **5. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges**

5.1. In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents/guardians in particular circumstances:

Parents/guardians in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the current HMRC rules
- Guaranteed State Pension

may be entitled to remission of or help with the charges.

## 6. Refunds and reimbursements

6.1. Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. In accordance with the guidance set out within the HCC Financial Handbook for Schools Wareside Church of England School will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
- £5 or more per person

6.2. Surpluses will be reimbursed in round amounts only, e.g. £3 not £3.29.

6.3. Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that

*“a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent/guardian would like to take advantage of this they should contact the office by a date ‘x’ weeks in advance. If the school is not contacted by that date it will assume that the refund has been donated to school funds.”*

6.4. All refunds to parents/guardians will be made in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail.

6.5. Refunds donated to the school and any residual funds after applying round amounts+ (see 6.2 above) will be transferred to an appropriate budget heading, following approval from the Head Teacher.

## 7. Additional considerations

7.1. The Governing Body 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:

- where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- we have established a system through which parents may pay in instalments
- when an opportunity for a trip/activity arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip/activity
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a first pay, first served+basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes, so where places on activities/trips are limited, we will avoid that method of selection.

## 8. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

8.1. The Resources Committee of the Governing Body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on an annual basis a financial report on

- those activities that resulted in charges being levied,
- the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and
- the source of those subsidies.

8.2. The Governing Body will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

## **9. Relationship to other school policies**

9.1. The policy complements the school's equality policy, curriculum policy, educational visits policy and the teaching and learning policy.