



Charging and Remissions Policy

Code: S09

Date of approval: 13th December 2023

Date of next review: Autumn 2024

Agreed by Whitchurch Primary School Governing Body	Name
Chair of Governing Body	Peter Tenconi
Headteacher	Joseph Pine

Version	Date	Updates
1	March 2019	Policy
2	June 2020	Updated Governor information, roles and responsibilities, updated Working Tax Credit information,
3	May 2021	Update reasons for subsidy, page 4.
4	June 2022	Added educational enrichment activities, annual donation towards trips, consideration of support for parents entitled to Pupil Premium.
5	December 2023	Removal of £30 upfront fee for school trips.

Aim

Whitchurch Primary School & Nursery wishes to provide, for all pupils, the best possible educational opportunities available within the funds delegated by the Department for Education. The law states clearly that education during normal School hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and carers. The School warmly endorses that principle and is committed to upholding the legal requirements. 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 which set out the law on charging for School activities in England.

It is recognised however, that many educationally valuable activities have been, and will continue to be, dependent on financial contributions, in whole or in part, from parents and carers. Without that financial support, the School would find it quite difficult to provide the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for its pupils. The School's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure, as far as possible, that all children are able to take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

Definitions

Charge: A fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: The cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Roles and responsibilities:

- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.
- Staff are responsible for implementing the Charging and Remissions policy consistently
- Staff are responsible for 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.
- Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions policy.

The Governing Body *will not* charge for: -

- Admissions applications
- School meals for those children who are entitled to Free School Meals or Universal Infant Free School Meals. Pupils who are not entitled to Free School Meals will be charged a set amount per meal.
- Activities which are provided specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or Religious Education, with the exception of Music tuition.

The Governing Body *will* levy charges for: -

- The cost of board and lodging in relation to optional residential trips taking place during School hours
- All costs for non-residential trips taking place outside School hours
- Optional music tuition and the hire of School instruments
- All costs for optional externally-led enrichment activities and exams, such as LAMDA
- The cost of replacing items lost or damaged, for example books or broken windows
- Pupils who are not entitled to free School meals will be charged a set amount per meal.

Optional Extras

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. The level of charge will be set in the term pertaining to that activity. Costs will be calculated by taking into account transport and tutor/workshops/ entrance fees (as applicable) and any payment fees applied. Parents/carers will be notified once the charges have been determined.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or attending LAMDA lessons and exams, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- Costs of buildings and accommodation.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The School will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. Terms and conditions of optional extra activities will be outlined in a contract to be agreed and signed by parents prior to the activity taking place. This contract is binding and full payment is compulsory even where pupils are withdrawn at the parent/carers request.

Voluntary contributions

For other activities which take place during the School day, for example day-trips, swimming lessons and visits by theatre companies to School, the Headteacher may ask parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost incurred, such as transport, admission and insurance. For planning purposes, we would seek a general commitment from parents/carers to provide these voluntary contributions.

A contribution may be asked for materials used in those subjects such as Design & Technology including ingredients used in food preparation, where the finished product will be taken home by the pupils (providing parents/carers have indicated, in advance, their wish to keep the product).

In situations where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the School. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be refunded to parents/carers. If the School is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, then it may be cancelled.

There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution towards educational enrichment activities, and no child will be excluded from an activity where parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

Inability or unwillingness to pay

- Whitchurch Primary School & Nursery is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay.
- If there is insufficient funding for a trip/activity, then it may be cancelled.
- The School will not ask other parents/carers to subsidise children who have financial difficulties.
- The identity of the child, or parents/carers of the child, unwilling/unable to make the payment will not be disclosed under any circumstance.

Miscellaneous

There may be occasions when an activity has a limited number of available places. In this situation a decision, regarding which pupils may participate, will be made without reference to parents/carers willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

Additional considerations

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 we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the School year or term so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for substantial amounts
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it may be possible to arrange payment by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- Deposits for some trips may not be refundable, in which case it will be stated on the letter informing about the trip/activity

Private fees

Any letters requested by parent/carers for proof of a child's attendance at School (e.g. letters for the UK Border Agency, Foreign Embassies etc.) will be charged for at a cost of £10 per letter. This rate includes a cost for staff time to sort and collate relevant information, as well as photocopying charges (not less than 10p per sheet) and postage if required.

This fee may be waived at the Headteachers discretion.

Damage to property and breakages

Where School property has been willfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent/carer, the School may charge persons responsible for some or all of the costs of repair or replacement. Where a pupil has damaged property belonging to a third party, and the School has subsequently been charged, the School may in turn charge some or all of the costs to persons/parents of the pupil responsible for the damage. Charges will be determined by the Headteacher based on the relevant situation.

Remissions and concessions

The Governing Body will make every effort to remit all or part of costs for activities, visits and journeys for those pupils who, in the opinion of the Head teacher and upon evidence of need, are deemed necessitous cases.

In these instances, the School may decide to subsidise a trip/activity depending on the pupil's personal circumstances.

Where there are multiple siblings in one Year group a 20% discount may be offered to parents on School trips and 10% discount for music instrumental lessons. Pupil Premium pupils are offered a 50% discount for both School trips/activities and instrumental lessons as stated in our Pupil Premium Policy.

The School will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments and are eligible to Pupil Premium and/or Free School Meals:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance
- 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).