



The Winston Churchill School

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Review by:	Business Manager
Adopted by the Full Governing Body:	September 2023
Next review:	September 2024

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to be clear what costs are covered by the school as part of the national curriculum and what costs are the responsibility of parents or carers. The policy also outlines when charges are due to parents from the school.

Objectives:

Our charging and remissions policy will address the following:

- What costs for a student's education are the responsibility of the school.
- What costs are the responsibility of the parents or carers of students.
- What are the cost implications of activities outside the control of school.
- In what circumstances voluntary contributions may be requested.
- Charges that may be due for activities outside of school hours or that are deemed to be optional.
- Outlining what sort of costs will be charged for.
- The arrangements for students who may not be in a genuine position to fund their place on a school trip.
- The arrangements for students who participate in representing the school.
- What cost implications are applied to public examinations.
- What happens if trips raise insufficient funds to be viable.
- Information regarding a variety of school related costs such as books, clothing, and school meals.
- School transport costs and use of school minibuses.
- Arrangements for students who damage school property and particularly when payments are not forthcoming to repair or replace damaged property or items.

1.0 Introduction

The governing body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of educational activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards a student's personal and social education.

It aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students and as additional optional activities.

2.0 Procedures

2.1 Education during school hours

No charge is made for national curriculum based activities during school designated hours (except for optional items/activities as outlined below).

2.2 Musical instrument tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or groups of up to four, to play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

The cost of such activity will include the professional and support fees connected with the provision of the tuition. These charges will be a private arrangement between the music tutor and the student.

2.3 Voluntary Contributions

The school does not charge for school time activities necessary as part of the curriculum, although a small voluntary contribution could be requested by some departments. These cover mainly the practical subjects, in order to assist with the high cost of supporting material.

In addition some departments provide work booklets in return for a donation to school funds and this cost basically covers the production of the items.

The children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently to those that do.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make an activity possible, and there is no way the shortfall can be made up, the Governing body reserve the right to cancel the activity.

2.4 Activities not run by the school or LA

When an organisation acting independently of a school or LEA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their children out of school for a family holiday. However, where an activity is organised by a third

party and is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it should be treated as if it were provided by the school and no charge should be made to the parents, or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an 'approved educational activity' within the meaning of Regulation 4A(a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended).

2.5 Education outside school hours

Parents will be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

If the activities fall within one of these categories then voluntary contributions may be asked for in these circumstances.

2.6 'Optional' trips

The school organises other educational based trips throughout the school year, which although not essential as part of the curriculum, do provide interest as part of the individuals development, both educationally and socially. These trips are not an essential part of the curriculum and are 'optional'.

As per DfE guidance, where 50% or more of the time spent on the trip occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. In these instances voluntary contributions will be sought from parents. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. It will also be made clear to parents that there is no obligation to contribute. However, in the case of a residential trip then the school will charge for the full cost of board and lodging. Some trips may have other chargeable activities and should this be the case they will be specifically identified in the introductory trip letter.

No child will be excluded from any activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the visit, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unable or unwilling to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The school will make it clear to parents at the outset the policy for allocating places on school trips.

2.7 Basis of charging (for trips in excess of 50% outside school hours)

If charges are made for the above activities, they shall mainly be for:

The cost associated with undertaking / providing the activity.

- Accommodation
- Transport
- Board & Lodgings and other refreshment provisions

- Insurance, Taxes and Administration costs
- Entrance fees
- Materials & Consumables
- Health and safety costs
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (but not for any supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school on a residential trip)

If additional adult support on school trips is required for SEN students, then any offers from travel companies (eg free places) will be used for this purpose, but the school will then pay the balance for the additional support.

2.8 Support for disadvantaged students

Parents of students who are eligible for Pupil Premium (FSM & EV6) who wish their child to participate in optional school excursions, activities or extras, or have difficulty in equipping their son/daughter for school and find this difficult due to reasons of hardship, should apply to The Senior Leader, Pupil Premium. Any other requests should be made to The Governing Body, C/O The Head Teacher at the school. The application will then be considered on an individual basis, as to whether funding can be provided, either in part or full.

Support for Pupil Premium (FSM & EV6) students for this purpose is not guaranteed. Each student's situation is considered individually. If support is provided, parents of the child will still be required to fund the deposit, or a value determined by the Senior Leader for Pupil Premium.

2.9 Extra curricular activities undertaken to represent the school

The costs associated with attending activities whilst representing the school during competition shall be met by the school on behalf of the Governing Body. The only exception to this would be a particular team or individual who may have received disproportionate funding. In instances such as these either parental support or sponsorship would be sought.

2.10 Insufficient funds

If for whatever reason a trip is considered financially unviable, the school reserves the right to cancel such an activity, unless the required funds can be sourced elsewhere. Should this situation occur refunds will be forwarded within the conditions of the trip to the parents of the affected pupils.

2.11 Public examination Fees

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that the school has prepared the pupil for. This does not apply if the governing body believe there

are educational reasons for not entering the pupil, or if the pupil's parents ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered.

The LEA may not override the governing body's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LEA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
- the examination is a resit of an examination previously taken by the student.

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. But charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

Where a student fails, without good reason to sit the exam, charges will be made for the exam missed. If the request for payment is not met within 30 days of the invoice date, the school reserves the right to take the appropriate legal action to recover these amounts.

Charges will be made for any remarking of scripts or appeals at parents' request.

2.12 Books

Core textbooks will be provided for lessons by the school as necessary under the national curriculum.

2.13 Clothing

Parents must provide appropriate clothing, conforming to uniform regulations, such as that for Physical Education and activities in Art, Home Technology and Craft Design and Technology. Essential protective clothing will be provided.

Support for Pupil Premium students (FSM & EV6) for appropriate clothing will be considered on an individual basis by the Senior Leader, Pupil Premium but is not guaranteed.

2.14 Lockers

Lockers are no longer available for students.

2.15 School Meals

The school provides a daily breakfast, morning break and lunch menu, which is chargeable to pupils, unless they qualify for free school meal status (FSM). The FSM qualification entitles the student to a meal deal subsidy of £2.60 for lunch per day.

More information on the requirements of qualification can be found on the school website.

On occasion and in specific circumstances free school meals may be provided to non-qualifying students. These are assessed on an individual basis by the Senior Leader, Pupil Premium.

2.16 Transport to and from School

Transport to and from school is not normally paid for. However, under certain qualifying conditions support may be available. You should seek further information from the Surrey County Council website.

On occasion support may be provided for Pupil Premium students. Qualification is at the discretion of the Senior Leader, Pupil Premium and considered on an individual basis.

2.17 Other Charges

The school may charge for the cost of materials, ingredients or equipment (unless provided by parents) forming part of a product produced within school. The school may also charge for optional extras e.g. activities or trips whether within or outside the school day. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. Where there are optional activities on offer during the school day, there will always be an alternative non-cost option for students.

2.18 School Minibuses

In general, the school's pupils, staff or parents as agreed by the governing body can travel in school minibuses at no cost, unless otherwise pre-advised.

The governing body may charge for transport provided in school minibuses, as the school holds a permit issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985.

Charges for use of a minibus may be included in the cost of an optional school trip.

Charges will be agreed on an individual basis but will only account for fuel and reasonable wear and tear charges, at a rate determined by the Business Manager. Essentially no profit shall be made from such charges.

2.19 Payments

Parents are strongly encouraged to make payments to the school (including dinner money) through our online payment system Scopay. Instructions on how to set this up can be found via the school website – Log In – Scopay.

2.20 Outside visitors to individual classes or focused groups

We do not want any student in specific classes or focused groups to miss these valuable experiences. The school funds the cost, if necessary, so that the entire class can benefit. Voluntary contributions may however be asked for.

2.21 Educational visits and field trips

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to assist with the cost of an educational activity as part of the curriculum.

2.22 Uninsured trip cancellation costs

Parents/carers will be liable for any uninsured costs of a trip cancellation. Refunds for trip payments will only be given once any insurance claims have been received by the school.

2.23 Breakages/damages or loss to school premises or equipment

Requests for meeting the cost of damages caused may be made to parents/carers by the school where damage results from a student's inappropriate behaviour or loss is incurred due to inappropriate use of school assets. Charges are determined on an individual basis and are non-negotiable.

Should such charges not be paid in the timescales determined by the school, then the Governing Body authorises any or a combination of the following actions:

- (1) Any parent/carer not paying outstanding damages may result in the student being barred from an optional school trip or activity, until these balances have been cleared.
- (2) Catering balances at the end of Year 11 for the student concerned may be used to cover the cost of damages outstanding.
- (3) Failure to clear any outstanding charges for damages could lead to the student being prevented from attending the prom at the end of Year 11.
- (4) In circumstances where outstanding balances have not been cleared in a reasonable amount of time and following an initial claim and recorded letter reminder, the governing body reserves the right to take appropriate legal action to recover the said amounts, should they be linked to a criminal act. The period between the date of the original written request and legal action being instigated shall be no less than 90 days. This will also apply to those no longer on role but who incurred the debt when on role.

2.24 School meal service

School meal account debts

It is the Parent/Carer responsibility to track any debts occurring and payment should be made immediately. If there are any disputes over meals taken Parent/Carer must contact the school office.

The procedure for recovering student dinner money debts, is as follows:

- 1st – A reminder call will be made to the parent.

- 2nd an Email will be sent to the address provided by the lead parent on our school information system, detailing how much is owed.

Payment must be made within 5 school days.

If the school is unable to recover any dinner money arrears from a Parent/Carer at this point, the school will not provide any further food/drinks/snacks for the student in the school canteen and the Parent/Carer must send the student into school with a packed lunch.

The school may also consider legal proceedings to pursue the outstanding school meal debt if necessary. The Parent/Carer will be informed of the intention to do this and a final deadline.

If requested the school will work closely with Parent/Carer to produce a formal payment plan to help resolve the situation.

Any outstanding debts written-off, must be approved by the Governing Body/Resources Committee following submission of details of the debt together with reasons for no further action being taken.

Lost payment fobs

Payment fobs have been an integral part of the school meal service for some time, providing safe and quick payment for school food. They protect personal data and help speed up the queuing process. However, students are become less organised to have them with them, or have lost them, leading to extended delays and queuing. In future, the school reserves the right to replace the fob at the service point for a fee of £ 0.50. This will be taken directly from the student's account.

Should you need any further guidance on any of the above issues, please contact the school office in the first instance on 01483 476861 or at office@winstonchurchill.surrey.sch.uk

Signed:
(Chair of Committee)

Date: