



Willingdon

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Charging and Remissions Policy

Prepared & presented to the Full Governing Body on 26th September 2024.

Signed :

(Chair of Governors)

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This guidance accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996, and the 1988 Education Reform Act, but it is not a substitute for those terms.

Willingdon Community School aims to provide a broad, balanced curriculum for all students within our care. However, it is recognised that many educationally valuable activities have been, and will continue to be, dependent on financial contributions, in whole or part, from parents/carers. Without that financial support, the school would find it impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of educational experiences provided for our students.

The purpose of the Charging and Remissions Policy is to ensure full and free access to a broad, balanced curriculum and to ensure that no student is excluded from a curriculum essential trip or activity because of financial hardship. The Policy also identifies areas of activity where a charge may be made on parents/carers.

Curriculum

The school will not charge for:

- an admission application;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum¹, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (or vocal tuition) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet the examination requirements for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents.

The school reserves the right to charge in full, or part in respect of the following circumstances:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below); and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below).

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.
- extended day services offered to students (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, and supervised homework sessions).

In 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;
- support staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a 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.

Education partly during and/or partly outside school hours

Non-Residential visits

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

- A) If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

- B) Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

A charge will be made for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, however, the cost will not exceed the actual cost.

The school makes remission arrangements, in accordance with statutory guidance, for those parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part 6 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the government set limit for that year.
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;

Music Instrument Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges may be made for instrumental teaching, either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing.

Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s). Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

Public Examinations

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents/carers if:

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

Voluntary Contributions

Parents/Carers may be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment;
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, and students of parents/carers who do not contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no alternative method to make up the shortfall, the school would have to cancel the activity/visit. Schools must make this clear to parents/carers. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

Damage/Loss to Property

A charge may be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head and/or Business Manager may decide.

DATE	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE	REVIEW DATE
Sept 24	To be reviewed by Full Governing Body	AWE	Autumn 25