

Heathland Whitefriars Federation Charging & Remissions Policy

Approved by the Headteachers: October 2021

Review Cycle: 3 yearly (at most)

Review Date: December 2024

Purpose

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. 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.

References

The policy has been informed by *The Governors Handbook* and the DfE guidance "*Charging for School Activities*" (May 2018).

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the School's equality objectives, curriculum statements and educational visits policy.

Roles and responsibilities of headteachers, other staff, directors

The Headteachers, staff and directors will ensure that the following apply:

1. No charges will be made for

- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, except where a child's parent wishes him/her to own them)
- education provided outside school hours if it is 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
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as an essential part of the National Curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme or for a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children's Act 1989)
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- examination re-sit(s)* if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school (*unless a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, in which case the fee may be recovered from the pupil's parents*)
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip
- an admission application or any part of the admissions process

2. Activities for which charges may be made

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”.

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

Examples of optional extras for which charges which will (or may) be made are indicated below – this is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Where appropriate, parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

b) Residential activities

- Board and lodging costs of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils who are registered for Free School Meals and whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.
- Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or groups, provided at the request of the pupil’s parent.

(d) Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the federation has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)

(e) Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast and after school clubs including penalties for late collection)

(f) Certain early years provision

(g) Wilful or negligent loss of or damage to school property

(h) Materials, books, instruments or equipment where a pupil’s parents wish him/her to own them

Optional Extras

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as “optional extras”. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision

Activity or goods which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available for qualifying circumstances
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them or bring home the finished product	For example, cooking ingredients or materials needed for an art or technology lesson.	Free of charge
Charges will/may be made for music tuition and instrument hire	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or appropriate groups	Free of charge
Charges will be made for the non-educational elements of residential trips including board and lodging components	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	50%* Remission on full charge for residential trips to cover board and lodging component <i>*may vary</i>
Charges will be made for school uniform	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	One of each item of compulsory badged (with school logo) uniform e.g. blazer, sweatshirt or jumper will be provided free of charge, -every other academic year or more frequently at the school's discretion

3. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Board of Directors 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 in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right-hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Qualifying Circumstances:

Pupils who have registered as eligible for Free School Meals and whose parents are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if applied for on or after 1 April 2018 the household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Parents may contact the Headteacher regarding remission of other costs in some other circumstances including those evidently enduring short-term hardship

4. Voluntary contributions

Our schools may ask parents for voluntary contributions which benefit the school or school activities, provided it is made clear to parents that there is no obligation for them to make any contribution. Where an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be made clear from the outset and no child should be excluded from participating in an activity because their parent/s are unable/unwilling to pay. Where insufficient voluntary contributions are sourced and the school cannot find funding from some other source then the activity may be cancelled.

5. Additional considerations

The Board of Directors 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 our schools will 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 so that parents can plan ahead
- We will allow parents to pay in instalments for higher cost services or visits
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

6. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Resources Committee of the Board of Directors will monitor the impact of this policy. SLT will evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support and report those through the Standards Committee.