



Charging & Remissions Policy

The status of the policy:	Final
Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to clarify the schools' procedure for charging and remissions. To set out robust, and clear processes in place for charging and remissions that set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.
Consultation:	Governors
Links with other policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Protection & Safeguarding• Teaching & Learning• Debt Recovery
Monitoring and evaluation:	The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed regularly.
Date established by governing body:	14 th June 2021
Date for full implementation:	14 th June 2021
Date for review:	June 2024

Principles

We are committed to a free school education for all.

We aim to:

- ensure that education in school is free
- ensure that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal school teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents'/carers' ability or willingness to help meet the cost
- ensure that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education; however, the school has the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours
- ensure that the school has the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of activities organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours

The Governing Body may charge for activities outside school session time.

All charges or requests for voluntary contributions must comply with the law.

Legislation and guidance

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 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently

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.

Admission

No charge is to be made for admission into the school.

Education During School Hours

'School hours' are those in which the school is actually in session, not the break in the middle of the day.

With very few exceptions a charge for education is unlikely to be legal. Where an activity is part of the syllabus of a prescribed examination or is required to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education, then charges may not be made for tuition, materials or transport.

A voluntary contribution is requested from parents each year to contribute towards the costs of arts and crafts materials, cookery and stationery. All stationery is provided by school so that parents do not provide pencil cases or other items. This contribution is entirely voluntary and resources are not withheld from any child should the contribution not be made.

In Year 6, a further voluntary contribution may be requested to help contribute towards the cost of leaver events celebrating Year 6's time at Birch Hill.

The only area of school curricular provision for which a charge may be made is instrumental music tuition for individual pupils or pupils in groups where that tuition does not form part of the National Curriculum or of a prescribed examination syllabus being followed by a pupil.

Parents will have to pay an annual fee to cover the cost of insuring instruments if they wish their children to take them home.

A non-school organisation which arranges an activity to take place during school hours may charge parents who want their child to join the activity. Parents wishing their child to participate in the activity must obtain the school's permission for their absence from school.

Public Examination

No charge can be made for entry to public examinations where the pupil is being prepared for entry to the examination by the school. No charge is to be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or trips required for the purpose of the examination.

The cost of the examination entry may be passed to parents/carers only:

If a pupil is entered for an examination for which he/she has not been prepared by the school. If the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it. Where the pupil 'fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements for that syllabus.' (however schools are advised to proceed with caution, in particular ensuring that parents receive adequate information at the time when examination entries are made).

Charges for Out of School Activities

An activity that takes place outside school hours cannot be charged for if it is an essential part of the syllabus of a prescribed examination or is required to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. Any other activity which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours, **before school**, **after school** and **residential**, is defined as an 'optional extra' activity and can be charged for.

Charges for 'optional extras' outside of school hours **should, where relevant**, include: staff costs – including **management**, support (**including site, ICT and other**) and **supervisor and** teacher costs, the additional cost of support services such as power, water and insurance, materials, books and equipment, travel, board and lodging for pupils and entrance charges to facilities

A separate contract should be given to staff involved in activities, otherwise no charge is possible.

With an 'optional extra':

Parents can choose whether their children attend or not;

No profit can be included from any charges made - it is to be based on the actual cost of the activity divided by the number of pupils taking part;

Charges on some cannot be used to subsidise others i.e. the cost will not include a share of the cost of any remissions - if further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising;

A charge cannot be made for alternative provision for any pupils not attending.

For day activities, if most of the time spent is during school hours then the activities count as taking place entirely within school hours and no charge may be made. If most of the trip is outside school hours then a charge is allowed. Only the element of travel that takes place during school hours may be counted as part of the activity.

School Run After School Activities

We will charge for use of materials during after school clubs if applicable. We will advise parents of the cost at the beginning of each term.

Residential Activities

For residential activities, a trip counts as falling within school time if the number of sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24 hour period is divided into two half days beginning at noon and midnight.

The Governing Body will charge parents for board and lodgings for trips that count as falling within school time.

Schools may charge pupils, staff or parents for transport in their minibuses only if they hold a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. The permit exempts the school from Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator and driver licensing requirements.

Damage to Property

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is a result of a pupil's inappropriate behaviour.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions may be made for activities taking place during or outside the school day. However, no child will be excluded because his/her parents/carers did not contribute to funds.

If insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming for an activity and insufficient subsidies are available, then that activity will be cancelled. However, such action will be avoided if at all possible

Costs per child will be the actual cost divided by the number of children taking part. No Profit will be made.

Swimming

If possible, swimming will be offered to all children in Year 5 during school hours. Parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the travel. We will notify parents of the cost at the beginning of each term.

Residential Activities

Children in year 6 will be offered a residential activity. Parents will be asked to pay for board & lodgings, if the trip is deemed to take place during school time, and make a contribution towards the cost of travel, insurance and education.

Material contributions

A voluntary contribution is requested from parents each year to contribute towards the costs of arts and crafts materials, cookery and stationery. All stationery is provided by school so that parents do not provide pencil cases or other items. This contribution is entirely voluntary and resources are not withheld from any child should the contribution not be made.

Year 6 contribution

In Year 6, a further voluntary contribution may be requested to help contribute towards the cost of leaver events celebrating Year 6's time at Birch Hill.

REMISSIONS

The Governing Body does not wish to see any child disadvantaged by virtue of the fact that their parent(s) are unable to pay. The Governing Body will:

Give consideration to remitting all charges otherwise payable by parents of a pupil in respect of board and lodging, provided for their child pursuant to the charging policy, for the duration of a residential trip if the parents meet the criteria for the 'benefits' that qualify them for free school lunch eligibility purposes.

Give consideration to remitting all or part of any charges payable by a parent of a pupil in all other instances pursuant to its charging policy