

Charging and remissions policy

West Moors Middle School



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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. 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 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

3. Definitions

- Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

The finance officer, Headteacher and Finance and Resources Committee will be responsible for:

- The management of the school's delegated finances
- Ensuring the school acts in accordance with this policy at all times
- Ensuring money is spent for the education benefit of pupils attending the school, and for the benefit of pupils in other schools.
- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the DfE.

4.1 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.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Finance and Resources Committee.

4.2 Headteachers

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

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances that 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.

4.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) is free if charge
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer
- 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

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport

- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- Optional visits/ activities outside curriculum wholly or mainly (Ref: DCSF guidelines) outside school hours will be charged at an appropriate cost. Such visits will only take place if the full cost can be met.
- Residential Visits as part of the curriculum
 - If a deposit is received but balance is not paid, this means the child should not go on the visit.
 - Where the parents/guardians of a pupil are in receipt of the following benefits the Governing Body will offer to remit in full the costs of the daily activities for any residential activity which is deemed to take place in school hours or where it forms part of the syllabus for the National curriculum:
 - Income Support
 - Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based)
 - Child Tax Credit (but only when the recipient does not also receive Working Tax Credit and has an annual income of less than £16,190) support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Disability Working allowance (DCSF guidelines from 6 April 2008).

However those parents/ guardians must pay the balance of the total costs of the residential visit.

- Once a visit has been booked – the full costs for which the school is liable has to be paid by the parent/ guardian.
- The school will not be liable for refunds in the following situations:
 - If the child withdraws from the visit
 - If the child is removed by the school on the grounds of behaviour related to health and safety.
 - If the child is unable to participate due to medical reasons/ accidents or injuries.
 - Parents/ guardians are advised to take out travel insurance in order to be able to recover the cost.
- Once all accounts have been settled with travel companies and all costs are paid, the remaining money will be shared equally between the pupils who were removed or withdrew from the visit. This

will be organised on a visit by visit basis. f) The school will not be liable for refunding the cost due loss of equipment or belongings on the visit, parents/ guardians are advised to take out travel insurance. g)

- The school is covered for accidents/loss etc by Dorset Council Insurance for schools. However, parents/ guardians are advised that they may purchase their own travel insurance should they wish.

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus
- Accidental Loss or damage of equipment: Where, as a result of a pupil's behaviour, school property is damaged, the school reserves the right to charge the parents for all or part of the cost of replacement or repair. This could be as a result of willful damage or where the school is certain that the pupil has taken no heed of established health and safety guidelines.

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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. This includes the replacement of homework diary which is provided for free at the beginning of the year. To replace a homework diary, the cost incurred is £2.50.
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- School trips
- Sporting activities
- Team sports kits

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

West Moors Middle School may, if feasible, make provision through voluntary contributions for costs incurred by the children of parents/ guardians who are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. The School must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- After-school clubs organised by external providers are subject to fees set at the discretion of the individual providers. The school will only engage with external providers whose fees are deemed reasonable and appropriate in the context of our school community.

For regular school-run activities, charges will be set by the governing board and reviewed annually in September. Parents and carers will be notified of the applicable charges for the forthcoming academic year during that month.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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 you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Finance Officer monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Finance Officer and Headteacher annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Finance and Resources Committee.