



Wootton-by-Woodstock CE Primary School

Policy Agreed: January 2021

**Policy for Charging
2021**

POLICY ON CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which is kept under regular review. The Act requires that no charges be made for activities taking place wholly or mainly within school hours. Voluntary contributions only, for these activities, may be asked of parents.

Wootton School believes that all 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.

Visits that are arranged in school time are based on sound educational principles, that:

- Young children learn most effectively through first-hand experience.
- Visits bring the area of interest or topic "to life" and provide the necessary motivation for a sustained and involved period of time.
- Valuable links are forged with the local community, the world of work, and life beyond the school and home.

This policy identifies activities for which:

- voluntary contributions may be requested
- charges will be made
- charges will not be made
- charges may be waived.

The Law states:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Governing Body or Head Teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.
- If insufficient funds are received, the trip or activity may have to 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.

No charges will be made for:

- An admission application to the school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of materials, books, and equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of



- the National Curriculum, or part of religious education
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
 - Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours
 1. if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
 2. part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
 - 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.

Charges may be made for:

- a) Activities which take place **out of school hours**, residential and non-residential, but only if the majority of activity takes place out of school hours. (Time spent on travel is included in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours.)
- b) Board and lodging costs for residential visits taking place **during school hours**. Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.
- c) Music tuition which is for individuals or groups and is not part of the National Curriculum

Allocation of places

When a trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. The school recognises that some parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

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% 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 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip then it is deemed to have taken place in school time. A half day means any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for any items where a parent wishes their child to own them. This may include, for example, items baked in food technology lessons when the child takes the product home. At Wootton it is not usual for the school to charge for other items such as clay models.

Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, the school may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. We endeavour to keep the costs of events to a minimum to make them more accessible to all children.

- **All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature**
- **The pupils of parents who do not make contributions will be given an equal chance to take part in the activity.**
- **No child will be excluded from an activity because he or she has not made a contribution.**
- **Any financial shortage from a proposed trip or activity for the children would have to be met from school funds.**



- **Parents should understand that if there are insufficient funds to meet these extra demands the activity may be cancelled.**

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from pupils, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities 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 some charges will be waived

Children entitled to free school meals will qualify for remission. If a child qualifies for remission then charges may also be waived for optional extras.

Parents do not have to pay for school lunches if they receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, that does not exceed £16,190
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Working Tax Credit-paid for 4 weeks after the end of qualification for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit-as long as household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and excluding benefits)

Additional categories of parents may benefit from help with some costs in the following circumstances:

If the Governing Body decides:

- That additional help for other categories is justified
- That objective decisions can be made.

Additional considerations

The Governing Body 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 we will try to 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
- Have an established system for parents to pay in instalments
- If an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments 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 if ever the need for selection arises.