

Charging and Remissions Policy

The Observatory School



Approved by:

Date:

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

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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 be made

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 449-462 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

4.1 The School Governing Body

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 Observatory School Governing Body.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the School Business Manager.

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 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.

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)
- 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

Examination Entries & Review of Marking

- A charge will be made in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination.
- A charge will be made in respect of examination entries for pupils where:
 - The school has prepared the pupil for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the pupil should not be entered but the pupil's parent/guardian (or pupil him/herself when over 18 years old) requests that the pupil be entered.
 - Where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination when the school has paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
 - If the pupil's behaviour is deemed to be a risk of causing disruption to other pupils - for the cost of individual invigilation.
 - A parent requests a 'review of marking' without recommendation from the school.
 - The school believes following a review of marking, there is a possibility a remark could increase the grade of an examination and a parent agrees to fund this remark.
- All reviews of marking will be charged for in advance and must be paid before the school requests a formal remark from an examination board.
- The charge made will be the cost of the examination entry, plus any administrative costs.

- The Observatory School reserves the right to withhold exam certification until payments are made.
- A charge may be applied for pupils re-sitting an examination.

5.2 Transport

Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.

Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.

Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has 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 to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

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 wishes him or her 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

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 local authority 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
- 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 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 which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

School 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.

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 to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

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

- May be asked to provide Voluntary contributions towards the occasional school visit costs.

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.

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:

- Parents / carers will be asked to pay in cash or kind for materials, which are being used in practical activities if they indicate a wish to own the finished product. Parents will be asked before the activity is undertaken.
- Parents / carers may be asked for payment towards the cost of repairing or replacing any part of the fabric of the school or item of school property which has been damaged or lost as a result of their child's behaviour.
- Parents / carers may be asked to contribute towards activities defined as "optional extras" which are provided mainly out of school hours and which is not part

of the school curriculum. If parents would like their children to take part in such activities but are unable to meet the full cost, financial assistance may be available upon request.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed in September each year. Parents / carers will be informed of the charges for the coming year in September each year.

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:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits);
- Income Support (IS);
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA);
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance that was introduced in October 2008;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190 in financial year 2021/2022)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Charges for other 'chargeable activities' may also be fully or partly remitted. Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher/School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager every September annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Chair/Vice Chair of Governors.