



Governors' Charging and Remissions Policy

Effective Date: January 2013

Reviewed: January 2014

January 2015

January 2016

Next review: January 2017

Review Committee: Resources

This policy has been informed by *The Governors Handbook* and the DfE charging for school activities (oct 2014) and the Governors have made the following decisions

1) During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

- a) (i) Most parents buy their children their own pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, calculators, etc. although, subject departments will loan such equipment on request and many of these items are available for purchase from the Finance Office.
(ii) Books and stationery are provided free.
(iii) Parents of pupils who lose or damage books, DVDs or equipment lent to them are expected to pay the cost of replacement or repair.
- b) The school will not impose a charge for visits in school hours to museums, art galleries, places of historical interest, day field courses and similar study activities but will normally ask for voluntary contributions. Parents/guardians will be informed about this as preparations for each visit are made.
- c) Any payment from parents for these activities is voluntary but if parents are unable or unwilling to contribute, it may be that the activity will not be able to take place. Pupils will never be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any such payments. If an activity is cancelled refunds will be made to parents where possible.

2) Activities outside school hours

A charge will be made for all non-residential activities which take place wholly or more than 50% outside school hours, where the child's participation has been agreed in advance by the parents. The charge will include the cost of travel, entrance fees, insurance, books, equipment, administration costs and any staff (teaching or non teaching) engaged specifically for the activity.

For residential visits which involve overnight stays, such as field courses, but which take place mainly within school time, a charge will be made for the cost of board and lodging.

3) Optional extras

Other activities, such as the foreign exchange visits, are sometimes so arranged that most of the time involved falls outside school hours. They then are regarded as “optional extras” and a charge to parents for the full cost will be made.

An activity or trip is treated as an optional extra when one or more of the following criteria applies:

- (i) Falls wholly or mainly outside school hours.
- (ii) Does not form part of the School Curriculum.
- (iii) Is not part of a syllabus towards a prescribed public examination.
- (iv) Is not part of religious education.

Parents will be advised at the outset whether any deposits made are non-returnable, e.g. this may arise when non-returnable deposits have to be made by the school when booking trips via a tour operator. In instances when parents have fully paid for a trip and their child is unable to go, it may be necessary for them to make a claim from the travel insurance cover arranged by the school. Any excess deducted by the insurance company from the claim will have to be borne by the parent concerned.

4) Cancellation/setting aside of Charges

All charges are normally payable in advance of a trip or activity taking place.

The setting aside of charges only applies to board and lodgings charges which are levied directly by the school and where they relate to activities deemed to take place wholly or partly in school hours. This will not apply to such charges when they relate to activities wholly outside school hours except if the activity is prescribed in a syllabus for a public examination if it is prescribed by the National Curriculum or fulfils duties relating to Religious Education.

Only parents who are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Job Seeker’s Allowance, Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190 or the Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit or an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27th October 2008 are eligible for setting aside of charges.

The Headteacher is prepared to consider requests from parents for reduced fees in cases of hardship. When relevant he will be pleased to assist parents to make applications for assistance from charitable bodies including WAVES and the Chandos Trust.

5) Extended School Activities

The school has the option to charge parents for the full cost of extended school services, but will consult with parents about activities before obtaining their mutual agreement to do so.

The governors may use their delegated budgets to subsidise a child's access to chargeable extended school activities, where they consider that the activities are provided for the purposes of the school, because they are of educational benefit to the child. Where extended school activities are offered through third party providers from the voluntary and private sectors, whether on the school site or elsewhere, parents must meet the full cost charged by the provider.

6) Charges for materials

There may be instances when it is necessary for the school to purchase ingredients and materials for practical subjects, e.g. Food Technology, Design and Technology or Art. Parents will normally be asked to fully reimburse the school with the full cost of such ingredients and materials if they indicate in advance that they wish to have the finished product. A voluntary contribution at KS4 for all pupils taking GCSE D & T, graphics, art and art textiles of £10 per year is requested to cover materials costs. At KS3 a £5 donation is requested if pupils wish to take their work home. Cooking ingredients can be supplied by parents for pupils' use at school or parents can make a payment of £45 for year 9 and 10 and £30 for year 11 to cover the cost of basic ingredients. Whenever possible, wood which is donated to the school will be used for practical woodwork projects and in these instances no charge will be made to parents even when pupils take the finished product home.

7) Transport costs

Pupils will have to meet the full cost of transport for activities such as Work Experience but the governors will repay the cost of any such travel in excess of a round trip of twenty five miles per day in cases approved by the Headteacher.

8) School mini-bus

Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school mini-bus. Charges can only be levied if the school has a permit issued by the traffic commissioner under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. No permit is required if no charge is made to the user. Charges made for the travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the school.

No charges will be levied to parents of children travelling locally in the minibus if the activity forms part of the national curriculum. A charge per pupil may be made to cover the fuel cost for any non local activities taking place after school hours.

9) Instrumental Music Tuition

The level and type of musical instrument tuition provision will be determined by the Headteacher and Governors. If the school is unable to provide instruments for pupils use these can be hired by parents at very reasonable cost from Gloucestershire Music (Colwell Arts Centre).

Winchcombe School will arrange for teachers of musical instruments to attend the school and give lessons to pupils when a parent has requested tuition. These lessons are arranged directly with the music teachers themselves and all payments and agreements are between the parents and the music teachers. The School will provide contact details to parents for the music teachers and provide practice rooms free of charge in order for the lessons to take place during school hours.

The exception is Piano lessons which are provided directly by the school and arrangements will be made between the school and parents for payment of lessons. The current cost is £90 for a series of 10 lessons of 20 minutes on an individual basis.

Bursaries will be provided for those pupils who are in receipt of free school meals up to £40 per term or 50% of the term's music fees, whichever is the lower.

10) Public Examinations

A parent who asks for examination results to be re-scrutinised will be asked to pay any charge made by the examining body for the service. The criteria used by the school to judge whether a re-scrutiny should be sought can be found in the Governors' Policy, Request for re-marking Examination Scripts.

The parents of any pupils who, without good reason, fail to complete the requirements for any public examination will be charged any fee which has been or will have to be paid for that examination. This could apply to failure to finish prescribed coursework as well as to failure to sit the final examination.

A parent will be asked to pay for any examination re-sit(s) if the pupil has not been prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

If requests are received from parents for external candidates who are not pupils on the school roll, the examination board's full charge plus a one-off administration fee of £50 per child and any additional costs, e.g. invigilation fees, will be due to the school. The charge should be paid in advance. The Headteacher has the right to refuse requests of this nature if deemed appropriate.

11) Calculating the cost of visits per pupil

When charges are made for an activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

The following will normally be included in calculating the cost of visits:

- (i) Cost of tickets, transport etc. of supervisory staff and volunteer adults (including salary payments to supply staff as long as they go on the visit).
- (ii) The running cost of the school mini bus when appropriate.
- (iii) 10% will normally be added to the overall cost to cover the school's administrative overheads. This may be reduced for the more expensive "optional extra" residential/visits abroad trips.

(iv) Following the completion of a trip or activity where a surplus of more than 10% of the total cost including the school's administration fee arises and is in excess of £10 per pupil the school will make refunds of the appropriate sums to each appropriate parent.

12) Damaged or lost school property

Parents are required to make a contribution towards replacing damaged or lost school property caused wilfully or negligently by their children. The Headteacher will report incidents costing in excess of £50 to the Governors via the Resources Committee.

13) Pupil Lockers

All pupils will be offered the use of a locker free of charge, but a returnable deposit of £10 will be due from parents when a locker key is issued. If the key is subsequently lost the school will charge £5 in order to obtain or issue a replacement. This charge will include a small contribution towards administration costs as well as the cost of the key itself. Parents may if they wish obtain duplicate keys at their own expense in case to save possible inconvenience and the school's replacement costs. Initial £10 deposits will be returned to pupils upon request when lockers are no longer required.

14) Cashless Catering system

The school has installed a biometric cashless catering system and parents pay for pupils' meals using Parent Pay. If any parents object to their child using the systems biometric finger reader they must advise the finance office in writing so that the pupil can be issued with a swipe card free of charge. Following receipt of this initial free card if a pupil loses it, parents will be asked to pay £5 for each and every replacement card.

15) Charges to Hirers of School Facilities

The Governors' objectives are to attract, support and retain local community hirers and whenever possible generate additional income to be used in support of educating the schools' pupils.

The Governors through the Resources Committee will agree the fees to be charged to hirers of school facilities and the published tariff will be reviewed by them annually. All fees charged to hirers must at least cover the additional support staff costs for managing individual lettings. Subject to this proviso the Headteacher and Business Manager may when necessary discount fees in order to attract or retain business. The various terms of hire are laid down in the document headed "Conditions of Hire of Facilities at Winchcombe School" and all hirers must sign and abide by the contents therein. Hirers will be fully liable for the cost of rectifying any damage to school property caused by them or their members whilst hiring the facilities.

Any potential bad or doubtful debts will be advised to the governors and the DfE as laid down in the School's Finance Policy

16) Provision of Data

When the school receives a request for written evidence under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Data Protection Act 1998 a charge of up to £10 for responding to a subject access request, and up to £50 (on a sliding scale for photocopying charges) for access to a pupil's educational record may be levied. Any further costs incurred by the school may be charged up to the overall statutory maximum of £450. If the costs will exceed this maximum the school will decide whether to comply with the request.

17) Complaints Policy

Please see the school's separate Complaints Policy, a copy of which is published on the school's website or upon request a printed copy is available from the school's main office. Most concerns or potential problems can be settled best in informal discussions with the Headteacher and/or other staff in the school. The school has a library of statutory documents, policy statements, schemes' of work, guidance booklets and syllabuses followed in the school, which may be viewed upon request to the school office.

18) Review

- (i) The Headteacher, in consultation with the staff, will undertake systematic monitoring and conduct regular reviews of the Charging and Remissions Policy and procedures in order to evaluate them to ensure that the operation is effective, fair and consistent. The Headteacher will keep the Governing Body informed via the Resources Committee.
- (ii) The Governing Body will regularly review this policy and associated procedures to ensure its continuing appropriateness and effectiveness.
- (iii) The outcome of the review will be communicated to all those involved.