CHARGING, REMISSIONS AND VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS' POLICY

Rationale

This policy ensures compliance with current legislation on charging and remission and equitable treatment of students.

Aims

The Governors recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards a students' personal and social education. They see the promotion and provision of such activities as an excellent enhancement to a broad and a balanced curriculum, for the student, and as additional activities.

The school will use monies collected to offset costs and increase the opportunities for student learning. The school will endeavour to ensure all students and their families are treated equally, whenever charges or voluntary contributions are requested. On occasion, should there be a significant cost associated with a trip or activity that have not been met by voluntary contributions; the school reserves the right to cancel the trip or activity and refund any monies paid.

Funding from additional bodies, including the charitable school fund, will be sought where feasible.

Parents/Carers may be asked to consider a donation however no child will be excluded from an activity due to whether contributions have been made or not by parents/carers.

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset.

Guidelines

Charging

The Governors reserve the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

A charge will be made for the board and lodgings element of any residential trip up to the value of the actual cost.

A charge will be made for any educational activity that is an enhancement and experiential rather than essential e.g. outdoor education trips.

A charge will be made for replacing broken windows, defacing and /or damaging school property where this is the result of poor behaviour or negligence.

The LA may from time to time amend the categories of activities for which a charge may be made.

Remissions

Where the parents of a student are in receipt of:

- Universal Credit (where the family income is under annual Government agreed amount)
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the family income is under annual Government agreed amount)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

The student will in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges or voluntary contributions, particularly where the trip takes place wholly or mainly within school hours. A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is necessary as part of the national curriculum.

In cases of family hardship which make it difficult for students to take part in particular activities, the Governing Board invite parents to discuss the matter in confidence with the Head of Finance, who can authorise a full or part remission.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may seek voluntary contributions from parents/carers to enable some trips and in-school activities to take place. Some curriculum enrichment activities (i.e. cooking, DT, visiting theatre productions) carry a significant cost for the school and, where appropriate, the school may make requests for voluntary contributions.

School trip refunds

- All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.
- In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.
- In the event that a school trip is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the Head of Finance's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Head of Finance will take into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.
- In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the Head of Finance's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The Head of Finance will consider options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- In the event that a student or their parents cancel their place on a trip, it is at the Head of Finance's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Head of Finance will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.
- Where a student or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school reserves the right to refuse to allow the student to attend future trips and visits.

- In the event that a student cannot attend a trip at the last minute (e.g. due to illness), it is at the Head of Finance's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Head of Finance will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.
- Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, any excess will normally be credited to the school fund and applied to assist arrangements for future trips. Refunds will only be considered if the excess per contributor is significant.
- Excess expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.
- The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all students and their families are treated equally.
- If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Review of Procedure

This policy will be subject to annual review.

The Governing Board last approved this policy on date: 20th March 2025

Signed: Colin Hayfield, Chair of Governors

Signed: Helen Hannam, Headteacher & Principal

Date of review or revision	Description	Author or reviewing officer
June 2024	No changes made	Didem Allen
March 2025	No changes made	Didem Allen
November 2026	No changes made	Kane Ward