

St Agnes C.E. Primary School

Charging & Remissions Policy

Approved by: Finance & Resources Committee **Date:** November 2022

Last reviewed on: February 2021

Next review due by: November 2023

Charging policy

Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. It aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

It acknowledges the two main points that:

- School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed below of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

(Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England).

Charging and not charging

The School **may** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them
- optional extras (see below)
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- certain early years provision (3)
- community facilities (4)

[(1) It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

(2) However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

(3) The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

(4) The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act]

The School may **not** charge for:

- an admission application - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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 (1) , or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of 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;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school (2).

Optional Extras

The School may charge for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - part of the national curriculum;
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - part of 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/governing body have 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

The charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset.

The governing body or head teacher makes it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

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. School will 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.

School will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. School will not send colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates to parents when requesting contributions.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case. Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Residential Visits

School may **not** charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

School **may** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside hours.

However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the

national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening

If school informs parents about a forthcoming residential visit, it will be made clear that parents whose child is a Pupil Premium pupil will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

Remissions Policy

If the parent/guardian of a pupil is in receipt of income support, income based jobseekers' allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or Child tax credit charges **in respect of board and lodging** will be remitted in full.

The Headteacher, Finance and Resources Committee or Governing Body may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Headteacher, Finance and Resources Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

Quick Summary of the Above

Educational Visits

Day Visits. No charge will be levied in respect of day trips that take place during school hours or are part of the curriculum.

Residential trips – Essential. For residential trips which are essential to the National Curriculum, statutory RE or in preparation for prescribed examinations, a charge will be levied for board and lodging.

Residential trips – Non-essential. For residential trips which are not essential to the National Curriculum, statutory RE or in preparation for prescribed examinations:

- a) if the amount of school time on the trip is less than half of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied up to the full cost of the trip.
- b) if the amount of school time on the trip is half or more of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied for board and lodging.

Textbooks

Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

Activities Outside School Hours

No charge will be made for activities outside school hours that are part of the National Curriculum or religious education, or that form an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

For all other activities outside school hours, a charge up to the cost of the activity will be levied.

Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of willful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

A charge will be levied in respect of willful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

Voluntary Contributions

Where the school cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, then it will be cancelled.

Lettings

The school does not make its facilities available to outside users.

Other charges

The Headteacher, Finance and Resources Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

Remissions Policy

If the parent/guardian of a pupil is in receipt of income based state benefits and/or the child is a Pupil Premium pupil, in respect of board and lodging, will be remitted in full.

The Headteacher, Resources Committee or Governing Body may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Headteacher, Resources Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.