



# WINNERSH PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Charging and Remissions Policy

### 1. Introduction

At Winnersh Primary School, we recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities including workshops, visits, residential experiences and clubs can make to our pupils' education and personal development. We want all of our pupils to have an equal opportunity to benefit from these activities regardless of their family's financial means. This policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions. It describes how we will do our best to offer a programme of worthwhile activities whilst minimising the financial barriers that may otherwise prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities. The policy is informed by the Department for Education's advice for schools 'Charging for School Activities' which was updated in May 2018.

### 2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to set out where charges will be levied for activities, where remissions may be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

### 3. Activities During School Hours

In line with Department of Education guidance, charges are not made for:

- i. admission to the school;
- ii. education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- iii. education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or religious education; or
- iv. instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

However, charges are made for:

- i. any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them; for example food made in Design and Technology;
- ii. optional extras (see explanation below), which at our school, primarily relates to the board and lodging cost element of residential visits; and
- iii. music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see Music Tuition section).

### 4. Optional Extras

Charges may be made 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. Any 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. Therefore, it will not

include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## **5. Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school's governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. At Winnersh Primary School, parents are invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of some school activities. This is known as our *Smarter Way to Pay Scheme*, full details of which are available from the school. From the outset, it is made clear to parents that if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, it may be cancelled due to insufficient funds. The school will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution, and that it is not compulsory for them to contribute. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

## **6. Residential Visits**

When a residential visit is planned, the following applies:

- Board and Lodging: The school will charge the full cost of board and lodging
- Travel: The school is entitled to request voluntary contributions
- Activities: The school is entitled to request voluntary contributions

However, parents who can show they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal credit (provided you have a net income of £7400 or less)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of state pension credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that you are not also entitled to working tax credit and have an annual gross income of £16,190 or less
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

These benefits have now been rolled into a single benefit, called Universal Credit.

We will make it clear that children of parents who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. However, it will not be possible for residential trips to go ahead unless parents do contribute because the school has insufficient funds itself to subsidise the trips. We will make it clear to parents that unless sufficient voluntary contributions are made, the residential trip will have to be cancelled. In such circumstances, all monies received will be refunded to parents.

## **7. 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. 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 may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

At this school, pupils taking advantage of music tuition provided by Berkshire Maestros or other tutors is financed by the parents

No charge is 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).

## **8. Clubs at Lunchtime and Outside School Hours**

The school may charge for activities which take place at lunchtime or outside, or mainly outside, school hours. Such costs may include:

- Materials and equipment
- Staff costs, including first aid provision
- Entrance Fees
- Insurance costs
- Travel
- Administrative Costs

## **9. Remissions and Concessions**

The headteacher has the discretion to waive or reduce any charges properly made or any voluntary contributions paid or promised. Any written request by a parent or carer for waiver or remission of charges or voluntary contributions will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

Voluntary contributions towards off-site activities for the previous academic year will be monitored and reported to the Governing Body.

## **10. Breakages**

The School has the right to ask a pupil's parents or carers to pay for the cost of breakages, loss or damage to books, equipment or other articles, where the breakage, loss or damage is a result of the pupil's misbehaviour or carelessness.

## **11. Equalities Statement**

We note that we are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 (1) Equality Act 2010 when exercising our function. We do not consider any issues which arise from this policy would have any negative impacts on equality and we have considered appropriately the need to advance equality and foster good relations. As stated in this policy, the school will take every opportunity to minimise the financial barriers that may otherwise prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

Policy Last Reviewed:	March 2024
Approval Minuted:	Resources Minutes on 7.03.2024
Date of Next Review:	March 2025
Reviewing Governor Committee:	Resources

<b>HISTORY OF AMENDMENTS FROM APRIL 2015 – SCHOOL OWNED POLICY</b>	
April 2018	Point ii – transport for offsite visits - was removed from the paragraph starting Activities During School Hours which relates to those areas exempt from additional charge. The remaining points were renumbered.
March 2020	Addition of Equalities Statement. Update to benefits/eligibility criteria for support with costs.
March 2023	Removal of First Access Instrumental and Vocal Tuition programme as this no longer happens.
March 2024	Logo Updated, non-relevant text removed