



Great Waltham CofE Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Adopted: January 2024

Review date: January 2025

INTRODUCTION:

This Charging and Remissions Policy complies with statutory requirements, has regard to the Authority's Policy Statements on charging and is reviewed on an annual basis by the school Governing Body.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims of this Policy are to:

- Set out what the school will not charge for, what it will make a charge for or request a voluntary contribution towards, from parents/guardians.
- Clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and guardians understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities.

1. Admissions

There is no charge for admissions.

2. School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or universal (infant) free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per meal determined by the *Governing body of the school and* reviewed annually.

We ask that all dinner money accounts are kept in credit, or at a zero balance. Where accounts go below £6, the ParentMail platform will automatically send reminders to parents to top up their accounts. When a debit balance reaches over £11.50, we ask parents to provide a packed lunch for their child until the balance is cleared.

The school reserves the right to refuse meals if there is an outstanding balance over on their account.

3. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)

There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music tuition (**section 7**).

We may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras (**section 4**)
- music or vocal tuition (**section 7**)

4. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum, including sports matches against other schools
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

Optional extras

The school will charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is **not**:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- transport that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body 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 (e.g. breakfast clubs, after school clubs etc)

The cost of optional extras

- The headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the headteacher on the recommendation of the finance committee. The charges, when determined, will be published on the school's website and appended to this policy.
- 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. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge (**section 12**).

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- The costs of buildings and accommodation.
- Platform charges from a school provider.
- Insurance

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

5. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site

Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 4**.

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 5**.

6. Residential activities

Our school will 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
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours

Our school will charge for:

Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost** (see **section 10** for more guidance on remissions).

Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities

The school may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of school hours (**see section 5**).

7. Music tuition within school hours

Great Waltham CoE VC Primary school follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups (of an appropriate size) to play a musical instrument during the school day. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum This includes instruments and music books.

Great Waltham CoE VC Primary school is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted by 50% for pupils on pupil premium.

8. Extended services

Great Waltham CoE VC Primary school is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services) for example Breakfast club, after school clubs, supervised homework groups. Extended services enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services (such as health, social care or special educational needs services)
- ways of increasing pupil engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

The total charge will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise others.

9. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher and dependent on the situation.

10. Remissions and concessions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The headteacher and chair of governors will authorise the remission of charges.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher.

11. Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents and carers to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents or carers have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents and carers have a right to know how each trip is funded, and the school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents and carers. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company
- school trips abroad
- musical events.

If a child is absent from school for any reason and does not attend an educational visit, the transport/entrance cost will not be refunded, where already committed. However, where possible, the school will endeavour to recover costs related to that activity and, if successful, will then refund the parent/carer. If a trip is cancelled by the school, parental contributions will be refunded.

12. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Great Waltham CoE VC Primary school is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

13. End of day late arrival charges

Families who are persistently late to collect their child/ren may incur a charge of £7 per half an hour, per child. This charge has been agreed and ratified by the governors.

14. Complaints

Complaints about the implementation of this policy or any decisions taken in line with the policy will be considered as part of the school's complaints procedures.
