



POLICY NAME: Charging and Remissions

<u>Purpose:</u>	To establish clarity on the items which the school provides free of charge and areas where there may be a charge.
Statutory:	YES
Status:	Approved
Date Approved:	18 November 2020
Date of Next Review:	November 2023
Frequency of Review:	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Years
Approving Authority:	Resources
Cross references/ related policies:	
<u>Audience:</u>	Parents/Carers
<u>Summary of Contents:</u>	Detailed list of items the school may charge for
<u>Impact Statement:</u>	Consider asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is implementation going as planned?• Is the policy making a difference?• What impact is the policy having on improving standards?• What are the strengths and weaknesses of the policy?• What more is being done, or needs to be done?
Recommendations for Amendments:	



The Vineyard Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items, which the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge. During the school day (8.45am – 3.25pm) all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. This policy is linked to our Equality Policy. This policy makes reference to DfE guidance 'Charging for School Activities', Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 which set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This guidance complements the information given in "A Guide to the Law for School Governors" (Chapter 23), DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook.

If you require a copy of this document in large print please contact the School Office.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will ensure:

- staff are familiar with and correctly apply the procedures set out in this policy;
- the School Business Manager is advised of any proposed changes to policy;
- changes in legislation and guidance are promptly incorporated into this policy;
- parents / carers are able to discuss charges and remissions with the Headteacher and/or School Business Manager in private and in confidence.

Voluntary contributions

The restrictions on charging for school activities do not in any way prohibit the school from seeking voluntary contributions in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential. The School may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school-time activities to assist with funding, subject to the following conditions:

- parents will be informed at the outset that there is no obligation to pay for a particular activity;
- any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently;
- where there are insufficient contributions to make the activity viable then the activity will be cancelled;
- details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities. Whenever possible, the school will give sufficient notice to allow parents / carers to pay by instalments.

Where an additional voluntary contribution is requested for a specific activity, this will usually be where the activity is for a particular year group and / or where the funding required to run the activity would exceed the amount available.

Annual Voluntary Contribution to 'Friends of the Vineyard'

The Vineyard Governing board encourages a voluntary contribution of £30 per year per child, which is paid into 'The Friends of the Vineyard' fund and is used to support the provision of a wide range of activities to enhance and enrich the curriculum in its broadest sense. Using a Gift Aid declaration form (attached to the policy), The Friends of Vineyard can reclaim additional 28p of tax for every £1 paid (applicable only for taxpayers). Also, further tax relief can be reclaimed for higher rate taxpayers via Self-Assessment tax return.

Activities without charge

There will be no charge for the following activities:

- education provided wholly or mostly during school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments, other equipment and also transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the School and an activity;
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil is being prepared at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental and vocal music tuition which is part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil or the first access to the KS2 Programme of Instrumental and Vocal Tuition (Wider Opportunities);
- instrumental and vocal tuition for children in care;
- a non-residential activity that happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it.

Chargeable activities

The School may recover the full costs of the following activities / materials which may be provided directly or through commissioned services but charges will not exceed actual cost:

- educational or other activities provided wholly or mainly outside school hours which are not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination which the pupil is being prepared for at School or
 - c) part of religious education;
- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child will own them;
- board and lodgings on residential visits (subject to remission arrangements). Where a parent / carer withdraws a child from a residential visit, after a place has been reserved, he / she will be liable for the full cost of the residential visit;
- cost of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, and for the cost of preparing a pupil for that examination outside school hours;
- provision of instrumental and vocal tuition, which takes place during the school day and which has been requested by parents / carers.

Optional Extras

Activities outside of normal lesson times and not within the National Curriculum (for example, visits abroad, school matches and other similar activities) are classed as 'optional extras'. Parents may be asked to meet the full cost of these activities. In the case of residential experiences, every effort will be made to offer value for money, but the cost may be necessarily reasonably high. It is intended that school-based extra-curricular activities should be free or very low cost. The School will do its best to offer assistance or remission of charges in any case where there is hardship.

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It will not include an

element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In 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, this includes 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.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

Activities and Visits

Parents will be asked to meet the full cost of board and lodging, and to make a voluntary contribution towards travel expenses for residential visits which fall, in the main, during normal School sessions. Refunds Charges and contributions should cover the anticipated costs. If contributions from an activity exceed the actual cost, the School will refund £5 or more per pupil where the charge for the activity is £100 or more. A charge may include an allowance for the cost of staff from the School who supervise optional extra activities if those staff have been specifically asked to cover the activity as an 'optional extra'. There will be no refunds (full or part) for non-attendance of chargeable sessions.

School trips refunds

- In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip.
- In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to whether a refund is given.
- Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.
- In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the **headteacher's** discretion as to whether a refund is given.
- Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than **£5 per pupil for a trip of £100 or more**. If the excess is less than **£5 per pupil**, this will be paid into the school's account.
- 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 pupils 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**.

Cancellations of optional extra sessions

Fees for additional sessions are chargeable for a full term and cancellation of the agreement will result in a cancellation charge for the remainder of fees due up to the end of the term. The cancellation charge may be waived or reduced at the discretion of the Headteacher basing individual

requests on their own merit. All requests for waiving/reduction of cancellation fee must be put in writing to the Headteacher.

Note: late payment may incur additional charges (see Important Note and Late Payment Charges below).

Residential Trips

We offer residential trips to pupils in Key Stage 2. For residential trips during the time of normal school hours, parents will be informed about costs and how they have been calculated and asked to meet the full cost of board and lodging and make a voluntary contribution towards any travel expenses. The school will meet the costs for students whose parents receive the income support benefits, where it is still possible for the visit to go ahead. The School will do its best to offer assistance and remissions in any case where there is hardship.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Music Tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition provided in partnership with Richmond Music Trust, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. We make a charge for these lessons. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year. Payments for lessons must be received in advance.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. However, given the high costs of providing tuition, pool hire and transport, the school will seek a voluntary contribution from parents to contribute to the costs. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

Universal Infant Free School meals

All children from Reception to the end of Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal.

School Meals Year 3 - 6

Parents and carers of pupils in Years 3-6 will be provided with details of school meal costs, methods to pay and the Free School Meals (FSM) entitlement.

Wrap around care

We provide term-time morning and after school care for 4-11 year olds through partnership with an external childcare provider. Breakfast club starts at 7.30am and finishes when drop off time for school starts at 8.45am; a light breakfast (cereal and toast) is included. After school care starts at 3.20pm and finishes at 6.00pm; a light snack is included. Parents will be charged for use of this service directly by the external provider. Where children are collected late from school (after 10 minutes has passed after dismissal time) they will be transferred to the after school club after their parents have been attempted to be contacted. Costs for this attendance will be charged directly to the parents by the external provider.

Requests for Evaluation of Pupils by Independent and non-Maintained Schools

The Governing Body will levy a charge on each completed request from a private school for written evidence of a pupil's performance, aptitude and attainment and other relevant information in respect of each application. The school incurs costs in producing such materials (principally the cost of at least an hour of teacher's time) as these reports are:

a) produced outside of the normal schedule for report-writing; and

b) written to a format other than the usual transfer documentation.

The charge will be as determined by the Governing Body, and is currently set at £50 per request. However, a copy of the most recent school report for a child will be provided free of charge.

Confirmation letters

The Governing Body will levy a charge for each request from parents asking for a confirmation of their child's placement at school (for visa, passport renewal etc). On average these requests require 30+ minutes of administration time. The charge will be £15 per request.

Malicious damage

Where it can be proved that a child or group of children have caused damage to school property or resources, a charge will be made to parents in order to replace/mend the damage that has been caused. This can include damage to reading books and other equipment children may take home.

Invoicing and payment procedures

An invoice for any additional sessions will be sent to parents/carers monthly in advance. Where immediate payment of the invoice may cause hardship, parents are advised to contact the Headteacher in writing upon receipt of invoice. The school will do its best to assist with payment arrangements basing individual requests on their own merit. Late payment may incur additional charges and non-payment will result in the termination of the contract with immediate effect unless an individual agreement has been arranged.

Remissions

Pupils whose parents are receiving the following benefits should not be prevented from taking part in any School activity or trip that is open to other pupils:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers' Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the limit set by HMR&C;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- any similar income related employment and support allowances introduced by the Government.

Charges for other 'chargeable activities' may also be fully or partly remitted. Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

This effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher through numbers of parental enquiries, views expressed at Parent Class Liaison forum, Governing Board meetings and feedback from the School Visits Coordinator. The policy will be adjusted in line with new Government recommendations and legislation or if changes are made within school. Changes to the policy will be discussed with the School Business Manager before they are implemented.

Policy review information

This policy will be reviewed **every 3 years** by the 'Resources' Committee and recommended for approval by the full Governing Body.



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DETAILS OF DONOR:

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To The Manager,

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Please Pay "The Friends of the Vineyard School" the sum of £

On theof each month starting on

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Account Name

Account no

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WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR EVERY CONTRIBUTION THAT IS MADE.

For Administrative purposes only. Friends of the Vineyard Account no 50006481, The Co-operative Bank, Kings Valley, Yew Street, Stockport Cheshire. Sort Code 08-92-99

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Trustees: Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Chair of Finance, Chair of PTA