



## Charging & Remissions Policy

<b>Policy Review</b>	
<b>Review schedule</b>	Every 3 years
<b>Reviewing Committee</b>	Strategic Resources
<b>Date of Last Review</b>	December 2017
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	December 2020

<b>Headteacher signature</b>	<b>Date signed</b>
<b>Chair of Governors Signature</b>	<b>Date signed</b>

# **CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY**

## **General**

The Education Reform Act (1988) requires school governors to notify parents of their policy in relation to “charges” for certain activities.

## **Introduction**

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of activities, including clubs, day trips, visiting experts and residential experiences can make towards pupils’ education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and to make the most of every opportunity to enthuse and engage the children in their learning. The Governors would therefore wish to ensure all children have access to all areas of school life regardless of their parents’ / carers’ ability to pay.

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activities provided as part of the National Curriculum; however we may ask for a voluntary contribution.

The Governors recognise their responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end the school will aim to:

- keep costs to a minimum when planning educational activities
- inform parents as early as possible of school trips & activities so that parents can plan ahead
- provide an electronic payments system which allows both debit and credit cards to be used
- where it is prior to an event, provide the opportunity for parents to pay in instalments where the cost is greater than £40
- where the amount is greater than £20, arrange for payments by instalments beyond the date of the trip when short notice is given (less than 2 weeks).
- not offer opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis which discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes.

## **Permitted Charges**

The Governors are permitted to charge and parents will be expected to pay for the following:

- ✓ Board and lodging on residential visits
- ✓ Individual or group tuition in playing a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours (unless it is provided as part of the syllabus)
- ✓ Optional extra activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours
- ✓ The cost of any scrutiny of examination results if so requested by parents
- ✓ The cost in cash or kind of ingredients and materials needed for practical subjects if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product
- ✓ The cost of wilful or malicious damage to property or equipment. Each incident will be dealt with separately and will be at the Head teacher’s discretion.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

The Governors are permitted to request voluntary contributions towards the cost of school equipment or school funds generally. They may also request voluntary contributions when organising school activities which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children. These activities which could include trips, visiting experts, arts performances or practical activities may take place during or outside of school hours.

All contributions are voluntary but due to budgetary restrictions if we do not receive sufficient financial support as requested by the school then, in fairness to all, the activity may not take place. The school may decide to fund costs in order to support an activity. If the activity does go ahead it may include children whose parents have not paid a contribution. In this case the other parents are not paying any part of these children's costs. These children are not treated any differently from others.

The voluntary contribution is based on a proportion of the charges that will be incurred to allow the activity and payments to take place. Parents may request this information for an activity in which their child is involved.

## **Refunds**

If a child cannot attend on the day for whatever reason, contributions paid in advance are deemed non-refundable. If, however, the school can obtain a refund on any element of the total amount contributed by the parent, it will endeavour to do so.

A refund will be offered to parents where the costs of a trip or activity are not as expected and there is a surplus of more than 5% of the total cost or £5 per person (whichever is the greater).

## **Remission**

Pupils whose parents / carers receive certain benefits may be entitled to remission of charges where there are charges that can legally be made.

The charges relating to the board and lodging component of a residential trip where it is deemed to take place within school hours or is required through the National Curriculum (and so can be charged as opposed to a contribution) or the charge for individual or group peripatetic music tuition outside of the curriculum may be remitted where parents are in receipt of:

- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- ✓ 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- ✓ Guaranteed State Pension

The Governing Body recognises that there will also be cases of family hardship which would make it difficult for some pupils to participate in activities for which there is a charge or voluntary contribution. In all cases parents are advised to contact the Head teacher as soon as the notice of the charge or contribution has been issued. The Headteacher will have discretion to consider each case and will endeavour to remit those they feel necessary or seek an alternative source of funding.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation**

The Strategic Resources Committee will monitor the impact of this policy through the financial reports.

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**Appendix 1** – Nursery Charges for additional sessions (see also Nursery Admissions Policy)

**Appendix 2-** Owls (After School Care) charging agreement (See also Owls Registration Agreement)

## APPENDIX 1

### NURSERY CHARGES

1. The government funded sessions you are allocated will be allocated first (Monday onwards). Any additional sessions and lunch clubs above your funding are to be paid for.
2. Sessions are set for the year. Sessions can only be increased termly and only if there is availability. A letter will be sent out advising you of available additional sessions. Your request for additional sessions must be returned by the date given on the letter for us to consider this.
3. An additional session is defined as a morning or afternoon as per our session times regardless of child drop off and pick up times, and is over and above their government funded sessions offered. Additional hours above your funded allocation will be invoiced as per our schedule of charges.
4. The Lunch Club session is defined as the 1 hour supervised session from 11.30am to 12.30pm. It is a supervisory charge and does not include lunch itself, which is provided by you, unless you choose for your child to have hot school dinners, where an additional charge will be incurred per meal, per day.
5. We accept payments by the following methods:
  - a. School On-line Electronic Payment System
  - b. Childcare Vouchers
  - c. Tax-Free Childcare
6. All additional sessions and lunch club sessions allocated will be invoiced half-termly, in the last week of the previous half term for payment in the first 5 working days of the new half term.
7. If payment is not received by the due date, a reminder letter will be sent for payment within the next 5 working days (day 5). If there is no satisfactory explanation or solution by the end of a further 5 working days (day 10), a warning letter will be issued that the sessions will be terminated after a further 5 working days (day 15) and the sessions re-advertised. After the expiry of those final 5 days the child will not be accepted for additional sessions or lunch club sessions.
8. Outstanding debts at “day 10” will be brought to the attention of the Governors.
9. If the school is closed you will not be charged for your paid additional sessions or lunch clubs.
10. Absence of the pupil during term time, e.g. through illness or holiday, will still be chargeable.

### SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

From 1st September 2017 the following charges apply:

Additional Session	:	£15.15
Lunch Club Session	:	£5.05
Hot Lunches	:	(set by provider)

## OWLS CLUB BOOKING AND PAYMENT AGREEMENT

Invoicing and payments for Owls Club are based on calendar months rather than half terms. A calendar of invoicing dates is available from the school office. Payment can be made using the school's on-line Gateway payment system, as is the case for school trips and dinner money. Childcare vouchers will also be accepted.

### **Invoicing:**

Invoices will be sent out monthly and will cover the whole month in advance. Invoices need to be paid by the end of the first term-time week of each month. Places are invoiced at £11.00 per session. Charges will be subject to annual review, in April with one terms notice of any increase.

Charging will be per session, for the sessions available. For example if your child attends on three afternoons per week, then the invoice will be calculated based on those 3 sessions per week for that month. Parents are not charged for school holidays, INSET days, Bank Holidays, or for the last day of the term when school finishes early and there is no Owls Club available. Invoices will take these days into account.

If you experience any difficulty with payments we ask that you contact Sharon Wheeler, the Owls Club Finance Administrator, as soon as possible. Repeated late payment may result in the place being withdrawn.

### **Cancellations and Refunds:**

Once the initial agreement has been signed a £15 non-refundable registration fee is payable in advance to secure a place.

As outlined below, any cancellation of the contract requires one months' notice. Sessions not attended during the notice period will be chargeable.

In the event of unplanned school closures due to snow or other emergencies invoices for the following month will be adjusted accordingly.

We are unable to refund payments for sessions when your child is booked to attend but is absent e.g. due to illness.

### **Notification of changes to sessions:**

Parents need to make any request to change their child/ren's regular sessions by the first Monday of any given month to be effective for the next invoicing period. Sessions will be invoiced and subject to payment in the event of short notice cancellation (less than one calendar month).

If the request is for regular additional days or a swap of days, we require 2 weeks' notice. Where there is availability we will endeavour to accommodate requests. This is subject to spaces being available on the days requested. We cannot therefore guarantee that all requests will be met. In cases where we cannot accommodate requests, the option of being put on a waiting list for a space on the requested day/s will be offered.

### **Short notice flexi-places:**

For children already registered with Owls Club there is limited capacity for additional short-notice flexi places. These can be booked subject to availability, via the school office and will be invoiced at £15.00 per session.\*

### **Late collection:**

A late collection fee of £5.00 will be charged for every full 15 minutes after 6:00pm that a child is not collected.

*We reserve the right to withdraw a place (with one month's notice) following persistent late payments or in the event of repeated disruptive or inappropriate behaviours.*

**I have read the above information; I understand the system for booking, invoicing and payment and agree to it. I also understand the position for changing or cancelling sessions (giving the required notice for the start of the next month) and will follow it.**

*In the absence of a signed agreement, regardless of whether a signed form is returned to the school or not, by continuing to use Owls Club it is deemed to be an acceptance of the revised terms and conditions.*

## **APPENDIX 2**

**\* Short notice flexi places must be booked via the school office before 2:00pm on the required day. Please do not assume a booking is secure until you receive a confirmation email.**