



Charging & Remission Policy



'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'

Reviewed By	Cate Gregory & Annette Hixon	Jan 2024
Ratified by	Local Governing Committee	Feb 2024
NEXT REVIEW		Jan 2025

The aim of our Charging and Remissions policy is to support our safe and purposeful, extended provision for young people and community activities of an educational, recreational, social or cultural nature. The purpose of this 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. The Headteachers have overall responsibility for the consistent implementation of this policy and its requirements.

Shirley Infant & Shirley Junior Schools endorse the principles of the 1988 Education Act in maintaining the right to free education for all children. All education during school hours is free, including the supply of materials, books and equipment. This excludes musical instrument tuition of individuals or groups by specialist teachers. The act allows us to request voluntary contributions to broaden children's educational experience.

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 infant universal free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount as determined by our catering provider.

3. Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school. However, if the pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the school may recover the fee incurred from that pupil's parents. This includes re-sits.

There is a charge of the examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school (see Optional extras under section 5).

4. 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 8). There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

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 5)
- music or vocal tuition (section 8).

The school may seek voluntary contributions for any activity organised by the school which takes place wholly or mainly during normal teaching time. Non-contribution would not prejudice a pupil's place; however, unless most parents are prepared to make a contribution, the school may have to cancel the activity.

5. 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 (for example breakfast/after school club, after-school clubs)

The cost of optional extras

The headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. 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.

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.

6. 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.

7. 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
- residential activities that take place during 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 will be exempt from paying this cost (see section 11 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).

The school will also request a voluntary contribution to cover the remainder of the cost of the trip e.g. travel costs and activities. However, as with day visits, where voluntary contributions are insufficient to cover the costs involved the visit may be cancelled.

8. Music tuition within school hours

Our 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 the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. 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 or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

9. Community facilities

School may allow the community to use site facilities out of school hours. Schools may charge for the use of these facilities. Any profit generated will be used for the purposes of the school and/or on community facilities and to pay charges arising.

10. 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.

11. Remissions and concessions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances. Criteria for qualification for remission are:

Parents/carers in receipt of

- Universal Credit – must have annual net income of £7,400 or less (after tax and not including other benefits), assessed by statements up to the three most recent assessments periods
- Asylum Support – as per Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Pension Credit – recipient of the guarantee (main) element
- Child Tax Credit – applicants from before Universal Credit rollout; provided you're 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 four weeks after you stop qualifying (applicants from before Universal Credit rollout)

There are also occasions where parents approach school because they may be struggling financially. In such circumstances, the school may choose to remit in full or in part the cost of chargeable activities. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Our 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 for pupils receiving Free School Meals.

12. Voluntary contributions

The Local Governing Committee may ask for voluntary contributions to the school to fund activities or trips that will enrich our pupils' education. In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school endeavour to ensure that parents and carers do not feel under pressure to make a contribution.

13. Refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.

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, taking into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

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, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to unforeseen or foreseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The headteacher will consider options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

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 £1 per pupil. If the excess is less than £1 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 Hamwic Education Trust Complaints Policy and Procedure.

14. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Our school is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an educational 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 may 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.