

Charging and Remissions Policy

Heathcote School and Science College



Approved by:	Governors	Date: 16 th January 2023
Last reviewed on:	Autumn 2021	
Next review due by:	Autumn 2025	

Other Documentation

This Policy should be used in reference with the following documents;

- Equality Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Finance Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Contents

Purpose of Policy	4
Relationship to Other Policies	4
Roles and Responsibilities	4
Voluntary Contributions	5
Additional Considerations	6

Purpose of Policy

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy, describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, out of school trips, residential and experiences of other environments, can make towards pupils' all round educational experience and their personal and social development. We encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum. Although education during school hours is free for all children, the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in some circumstances for activities and small group tuition. We take into account, the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Relationship to Other Policies

The policy compliments the school's equality policy, curriculum policy, finance policy, educational visits policy and the teaching and learning policy.

Roles and Responsibilities of Headteacher, other Staff and Governors

The Headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

1. *No charges will be made for*

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.

2. *Activities for which charges may be made*

- Activities outside school hours – Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above), which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).
- Residential activities – Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not

be charged for board and lodging costs. Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above). When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

- Music tuition – for individuals or groups of any appropriate size.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits, the school invites parents 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 have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

The 1996 Education Act draws a distinction between the term 'charges' which are considered to be an obligatory cost and 'voluntary contributions' which are self-explanatory.

Subsidies from various sources e.g. School Fund, Heathcote School PTA, or other voluntary organisations, will be considered to cover deficits. We also use part of our pupil premium funding to enable such enrichment activities to take place.

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. In some circumstances the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. 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. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- Visits to museums
- Sporting activities
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to or by a theatre company
- School trips
- Musical events
- Transport

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

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 in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

Parents in receipt of –

- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing 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 may remit charges in full or in part for other parents after considering other specific hardship cases. The Governing Body invites parents to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full.

Parents of children who receive free school meals may be offered the option to make a reduced payment upon request. The Headteacher will authorise remission in consultation with the finance committee.

The services provided by Heathcote School that require payment from parents are listed below. It should be remembered that all parents choose to buy these services from the school. These chargeable services include but are not limited to:

- Provision of School Meals
- Deliberate damage to school property – the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window, where this is a result of a pupil’s behaviour
- Deliberate damage to third party property – the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window, where this is a result of a pupil’s behaviour
- Deliberate damage to school books

Additional Considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

Signed.....
(Chair of Governors)