



# **Charging & Remissions Policy**

# CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY

## SUMMARY

Charges and remission for pupils

According to the provision of Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, the Governing Body issues this policy statement on charges and remissions.

Summary:

Charges are not allowed for any activity in school, with the following exceptions:

- Individual music tuition with parental agreement
- Board and lodgings on residential trips. The full cost of board and lodging may be remitted for children of parents in receipt of certain benefits listed later in this policy
- Optional extras, that is, those activities which take place mainly or entirely out of school time.
- Certain materials, in Food Technology and Design Technology, for example, where pupils are taking the product home
- Examination fees in certain circumstances, for example where the pupil has not been prepared for that examination by the school or where a pupil does not complete examination requirements without good reason.
- Wilful damage to buildings, equipment or materials.

The school **may** ask, but not require parents to make voluntary contributions to such activities as trips in school time. As well as remission for pupils of parents in receipt of family credit or income support, the Governing Body may remit charges for 'optional extras' out of the 'School Fund' established to sustain and encourage such activities.

## STATEMENT OF CHARGES AND REMISSION OF CHARGES

### INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body of The Westwood Academy is conscious of the valuable contribution which can be made to children's education by educational activities beyond the school and beyond day to day curriculum. They are required by law to state the circumstances in which they will make charges for such activities and to say when they will exempt particular individuals from those charges.

The following statements on Charging Policy and Remission Policy are intended to fulfil the legal requirements in this respect.

However, it will be recognised that many activities, if not most, would be put in jeopardy by a shortage of funds unless supported by voluntary financial contribution from parents and by funds raised through the efforts of the school and all associated with it.

The Governing Body has established a fund "The Westwood Academy Discretionary/Hardship Fund" which they intend to use to sustain and encourage activities and they will from time to time invite contributions to this fund.

## A. Charging Policy

Having regard to the provisions of the Education Act 1996, the Governors of The Westwood Academy will make the following charges:

### 1. Board and Lodging on residential visits

Schools **cannot** 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; and

supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

The Westwood Academy will remit these charges in full in the case of pupils whose parents were, at the time of booking the visit, in receipt of:

- 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 £15,910
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;

### 2. Optional Extras

Optional extras are those activities which take place mainly or entirely out of school hours and which are provided in addition to the school curriculum. Charges may be made for these activities where an optional extra is being provided; a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **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; or
  - 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 required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

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;
- support 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; and
- 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, e.g. peripatetic music tuition

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **3. Tuition in the playing of a musical instrument**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching 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. Charges may only 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). This charge will be in accordance with the scales laid down from time to time by the Governors of the School.

### **4. Materials used in school**

The school will provide all materials and equipment (but not clothing) required for purposes of the curriculum. Essential protective clothing for example safety goggles will be provided by the school. In the case of Design Technology and Food Technology, a charge may be made for, or parents may be required to supply ingredients and materials if parents wish their child to take the product home. The charge in such cases will be not more than the actual cost of the materials and will be declared in advance to parents.

A charge may be made, at the discretion of the Head Teacher, for any wilful damage to buildings, equipment or materials, or for any loss of such equipment or materials when these have been placed in a pupils care.

## 5. Public Examinations.

A list of prescribed public examinations is available at the school for inspection.

A charge covering the cost of entry will be made where the governors agree to enter a pupil for a prescribed public examination for which he or she has not been prepared by the school, for example where a pupil has received private tuition for the examination as in re-sitting an exam for which no additional preparation has been given since the first examination.

A charge will be made covering the entry fee where a pupil with parental agreement is entered for a public examination other than one on the prescribed list.

A charge will be made, covering incidental costs associated with preparing a pupil for a non-prescribed examination of the preparation takes place outside school hours. This charge will include teaching staff costs where the teacher has been specifically engaged to supply this optional extra.

A charge will be made covering the examination entry fee if the pupil without good reason fails to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the Governing Body or LOCAL AUTHORITY has paid or is liable to pay. Failure in this context, meaning not completing course work or not sitting a final examination(s). Good reason in this context will normally mean either a doctors letter in support of health related problems or satisfactory parental and / or other written testimony in other cases.

A charge will be made covering the examination body's charge, where a parent asks for examination results to be rescrutinised by the examination body.

## 6. Transport

Charges **cannot** be made for:

Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;

Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school;

Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

## 7. Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher **must** also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds.

Schools should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting for contributions.

## **B. Remission of charges**

Having regard to the provision of the Education Act 1996 and the policies of The Westwood Academy the Governors of The Westwood Academy will remit charges in the following circumstances :

### **1. Board and lodging on residential visits**

Charges will be remitted by The Westwood Academy from its budget in respect of board and lodging charges for pupils whose parents are in receipt of the benefits listed earlier in this policy.

1.2 Other residential visits deemed to take place during school hours or provided as part of a prescribed public examination or in order to fulfil statutory requirements relating to the National Curriculum or religious Education.

Charges will be wholly/partially remitted by the Governing Body from the School Funds in respect of board and lodging charges for pupils whose parents are in receipt of Family Credit or Income Supplement under the terms of the Social Security Act 1986. Should funds not be available the trip will be cancelled.

### **2. Optional Extras**

The Governing Body may at its discretion remit charges in respect of individual pupils or groups of pupils to enable them to take part in activities which are classed as "optional extras". Such remission will be granted in whole or in part having regard to the recommendation of the Head of the School and will be financed from the Westwood Academy Hardship/Discretionary Fund