



# Ashwell School

## Charging & Remission Policy

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) 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.

### What was consulted?

The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors* and the DCSF guidance "*Planning and Funding Extended Schools*" and "*Charging for School Activities*" (October 2014).

### Relationship to other school policies

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

### Roles and responsibilities of headteacher, other staff, governors

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

#### 1. No charges will be made for

School governing bodies and local authorities, **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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<sup>1</sup>, 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school<sup>2</sup>.

#### 2. Activities for which charges may be made

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 6);
- certain early years provision<sup>3</sup>;
- community facilities.

## Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. 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 (other than transport that is 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);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- 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; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

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.

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.

## Voluntary contributions

Ashwell School's governing body will ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school and school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will 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, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

## Remissions

### Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

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

Parents in receipt of the following may qualify for assistance:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

The Authority operates a remission policy in relation to individual tuition in playing a musical instrument. Details of the current scheme are available from the HCC website.

[Hertfordshire County Council - Financial Assistance for Parents](#)

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part any of the cost of outside activities in certain circumstances:

- For parents who find, for example, that paying for a school visit presents financial difficulties which would make it difficult for pupils to take part in a particular activity, some help may be possible providing that there are school funds available to support the request

In such circumstances parents are invited to contact, in confidence, the Headteacher, for the remission of charges, in part or in full.

#### 4. 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 will inform parents in advance of visits and their approximate cost so that parents can plan ahead.
- the school will agree to a refund after a trip when costings show a surplus of income of 5% or £5.00 (whichever is the greater).
- we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments

A statement summarising the Governing Body's policy on charging and remissions will be available on the school website and in the School Office for any parent to inspect, should they request to do so.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing educational facilities for children.

**TB November 2016**