



CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

ADOPTED :

N/A

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REVIEWED BY :

Executive Head Teacher

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October 2024

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

The staff and Governors of Gorse Ride Schools 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'/carers' financial means. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items/activities which the school will provide free of charge and for those items/activities where there may be a charge. In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to explain:

- what the school will make a charge for;
- what the school may request a voluntary contribution towards;
- how the school charges for the Y6 residential visit;
- the arrangements for pupils in receipt of free school meals (FSM).

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DDAT2's Funding Agreement
- This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
- Complaints Procedures Policy

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

We may charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - RE

- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Employment of non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- Teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge has been calculated if requested.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Schools are entitled to seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences which add excitement and enrichment to the children's learning. The school may ask for voluntary contributions to provide an activity that would otherwise be prohibitive due to the limits of the school budget. This includes visits, both internal and external. No child is excluded due to an inability or unwillingness on behalf of the parent to pay. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution and parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

CHARGEABLE ACTIVITIES

The school may recover the full costs of the following activities, which may be provided directly or through commissioned services but charges will not exceed actual cost:

- Educational or other activities provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, which are not:
 - (a) Part of the National Curriculum.
 - (b) Part of a syllabus for prescribed public examination for which the pupil is being prepared for at school.
 - (c) Part of religious education.

- Board and lodgings on residential visits (subject to remission arrangements).
- Provision of instrumental and vocal tuition, which takes place during the school day and which has been requested by parents/guardians.
- Provision of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Art & Design or Food Technology, where pupils take home a finished product.
- Before and After School Clubs run by the School

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Gorse Ride Schools are committed to equal opportunities for all pupils. When a child is in receipt of free school meals parents are notified in writing that whenever a request for a contribution is made, they will not be required to pay. They will still receive the letters and information so they are aware of what is taking place and so that they can give consent if needed.

Currently Pupil Premium funding provides a limited amount of money so children in receipt of free school meals at any time over the last 6 years have full access to the curriculum and all other enrichment and extra-curricular activities. This funding can be used at the discretion of the school for any activity that would be of interest/benefit to the child either as part of the school day or for external activities including events during the school holidays.

OTHER CHILDREN IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

There may be children whose parents have advised the school that they are experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to meet any or part of the cost of an activity. These cases are treated on an individual basis.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

The school currently has one residential visit per year for Year 6 children to Beaulieu. This is an optional activity and alternative provision made for children who do not participate. For this activity to be viable, parents are required to pay the full cost for board and lodgings and are additionally expected to make a full contribution towards the additional costs of the visit. However there are exceptions and help is available for those in need. For those in receipt of free school meals, part of or the whole cost can be met through an amount held by the school in a designated fund for that purpose. Other parents experiencing difficulties are encouraged to pay as much as they can reasonably afford and each case is considered individually and on receipt of a written request for help.

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

The School recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education. The school has a variety of clubs that operate before or after school and some during lunchtime. Some clubs are free but for others parents meet the full cost.

MAESTROS MUSIC TUITION

Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Parents can make private arrangements with Maestros for a child to learn a musical instrument. Lessons take part during the school day and the parent bears the full cost of the activity.

MATERIALS FOR PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

A voluntary charge for the cost of materials may be requested when pupils wish to take home items that they have made. This is to enable replenishment of the consumable resources.

LIBRARY BOOKS

A charge may be made for lost or damaged books.

WILFUL DAMAGE TO OR THEFT OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

As a school we expect our pupils to treat the school buildings, its contents and equipment with respect at all times. Wilful damage to school property directly affects the education of our pupils by taking much needed funds to repair or replace the damage caused. Such damage is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Should instances of deliberate damage or theft occur, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian detailing the damaged caused and requesting reimbursement for the cost of repair or replacement.

REMISSIONS

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.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Resource Committee of the governing body monitors this policy every three years. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if necessary.