CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

See also Finance Procedures and Policy Document

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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.

3. Definitions

- **Charge**: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission**: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing body

The governing body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the finance committee.

4.2 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - 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
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 School Meals

- There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals.

5.3 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.4 Residential visits

- 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
    - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
    - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2 School Meals

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount. Payment should be paid **1 week** in advance, this allows the correct meals to be booked for your child in the week ahead.

> Parents / carers will be contacted through Arbor at the end of the week advising of their school account balance with an informal reminder for payment.

> Where informal reminders for overdue school meal payments have not been acted upon a formal invoice will be sent.

> School Meals will not be available to be ordered the following week after an unpaid balance and parents / carers will be called to advise them to make alternative arrangements for their child's lunch.

Guidance for the price of a school meal is determined by Albrighton Primary School (school dinner service providers) and Shropshire local authority.

All school dinner balances will be available daily through the Arbor Parents Portal.

Parents will be informed of any increase in the cost of school meals.

6.3 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
    - The national curriculum

- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
- 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 or governing board 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 (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- 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 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 be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

School can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- Trips and visits
- Sporting activities

- Fundraising
- Special visitors to the school where professional fees are charged, or the visitor names a charity

Sheriffhales Primary School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all students, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an 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 will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

- Extended offer hours for preschool, where there is no family entitlement to more than 15hours universal offer or 30hours entitlement for those eligible , see Early education and childcare (applies from 1 April 2024) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (In 2025, all 3+ children will be entitled to 30 free preschool hours).
- Preschool lunchtime supervision. This is charged at £5.00 per lunchtime supervision session, if not part of funded hours.

- Before school provision, including clubs. The charge comprises professional fees, food, equipment, licences, up to date food and hygiene provision, and insurance costs.
- Specialist music and sport lessons. The charge comprises professional fees.

  After School Club is run by external providers and any bookings and payments are not the responsibility of the school to manage. After School Club is bookable online directly with the provider.

  Wraparound care is not available for preschool children.

- Late collection of children: where children are regularly collected late from preschool or school– more than 3 times in a half term – charges of £4 per 10 minutes will be charged to cover staffing costs.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be approved by the governing body and reviewed in the summer term each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in July each year.

9. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been willfully damaged by a student, 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.

10. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

10.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits, but may make a voluntary contribution if they so wish:

- 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 that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)

11. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.

In the event of unpaid charges at the end of a period and to ensure a large debt is not incurred by school, a consultation meeting will be held with parent(s) and school to assist in resolving the debt. Debt resulting from unpaid school charges is owned by the Local Authority who will receive and process it if school is unsuccessful in securing payment.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and SBM annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.