



Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge.

Definition

The school day is defined as: 8.40am to 3.10pm – 32 hours and 30 minutes per week.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Head of Finance at Coombe Dean School will review the policy every two years.

Policy statement

During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge. There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination unless:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at this school
- the examination is not on the set list but we arrange for the pupil to take it
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example field trips.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as – a visiting drama group for example, to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents/carers, who may, if they wish, ask the Headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Voluntary Contributions

The school can ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activity. Certain activities, school trips etc. will be funded through voluntary contributions. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions and not enough voluntary contributions are made the activity/trip will be cancelled. There is no obligation to parents to make any contribution. The child will not be excluded from any activity due to their parents/guardian/carer either unable or unwilling to pay.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.



Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits.

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the pupils totals half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. In such cases parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example, a theatre visit. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus. Where we wish to charge we will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities we will subsidise the charge to the extent permitted by the funding.

Optional Extras

Charges will be made for some activities 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 that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the School has 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;

* 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, 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. It will not include a subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

A charge will not be added for the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

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

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.



Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

Music Tuition

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

Charges will be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum.

In cases of hardship the school will consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils who they consider will benefit from such tuition.

Eligible benefits - September 2023

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Further Guidance and Reference to Legislation

Charging for School activities - [Charging for school activities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)