

Wroxall Primary School


Charging and Remissions Policy

Last Updated: November 2023

Signed by:

.....  Headteacher

Date: November 2023.....

.....  Chair of Governors

Date: November 2023.....

At Wroxall Primary we recognise the valuable contribution a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences, can make towards pupils' education. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities for all our pupils.

Statement of intent

Wroxall Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

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.

1. Legal Framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

2. Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

Activities in school hours: Charges may be made for the board and lodging element of residential activities that take place mainly during school hours e.g. annual residential trips.

Activities out of school hours: A charge will be made to cover the full cost of each pupil of the activities deemed to be 'optional extras' taking place outside school hours e.g. theatre visits, sporting and musical events.

Clubs and extended day services: The school offers many after school clubs. A set charge will be made for all after-school clubs or extended day services offered to pupils which will be used to offset expenditure incurred in providing these clubs/services.

Materials: Charges may be made to cover the cost of materials used to produce a finished article, which parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own, i.e. for Food and Textiles, Design and Technology, Art and Design.

Breakages/Loss: Parents/carers will be asked to pay the full cost or a reasonable amount towards the cost of damages or repairs where this is the result of poor pupil behaviour e.g. replacing a broken window; repairing damage to buildings, furniture and fittings; or defaced, damaged or lost books/instruments.

Community use: Schools are allowed to provide facilities that can be used by the local community, for example out-of-hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions. These facilities further any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated. Schools can charge for the use of these facilities, and a profit can also be generated, providing it is spent on the purposes of the school and/or on community facilities.

3. Voluntary Contributions

We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

When additional activities are planned during school time parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the activity. These activities are known as 'optional extras'.

Examples of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents, include: visiting theatre groups, artists, writers or musicians; sporting fixtures; outdoor adventure activities; visits to places of educational value; and the travel and activity elements of residential visits held largely within school time.

We will not charge parents for education provided during school hours or education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum or part of religious education.

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.

If the activity or event is a unit cost e.g. £4.50 per child and a child is absent on that day the contribution could be returned (on request). If the activity or event is calculated as a collective cost and a child is absent then the contribution will not be returned as commitment would have already been given for the activity to take place.

4. Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. There is a charge for individual or group music or vocal tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum.

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. The charge may include the purchase of music, instruments (or hire of instruments), minor repairs to loaned instrument and case, and such items that need replacement on account of wear and tear or misuse.

Parents/carers will also be expected to pay in full any examination fees of the Associated Board and transport children to the examination centre, or to lessons elsewhere, at their own expense. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

5. Transport

We will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated (such as specialist provision).
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

6. Residential visits

We will not charge for:

- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on 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 or part of religious education.

- If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
- If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

7. Remissions

We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Parents will be asked to provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefits in order to be eligible for exemption.

To request assistance, parents should contact the School Business Manager by email sbm@wroxallprimary.co.uk

In the cases of family/financial hardship, the Governing Board will invite parents/guardians to apply in confidence for the remission of charge in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Headteacher.

No charge will be made for vocal or instrumental tuition in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

8. School trip refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.

In the event that a school trip is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The headteacher will discuss options with the governing board, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute (e.g. due to illness), it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. If the excess is less than £1 per pupil, this will be paid into the school's account.

Excess expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

9. Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The school's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board or a committee of the governing board.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024.