



WEST TYNE FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS



Charging and Remissions Policy

The West Tyne Federation of Henshaw and Greenhead Primary Schools are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and have created this policy to ensure we adhere to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities and meet all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

The school will ensure that this policy is published on its website and provides the school community with details of activities for which the school will charge parents, and the circumstances in which they will waive any charge parents would otherwise expect to pay.

The Federation is committed to the personal development of all involved and aim to provide life- long learning. We aim to provide extended facilities in both our schools in order to support each child on their learning journey.

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

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

- Academies Act 2010
- DfE (2024) 'Academy trust handbook 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy trust governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online'
- 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'
- The Trust's Funding Agreement

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Financial Procedures Policy

Introduction

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: the cancellation of a charge, partly or wholly, which would normally be payable

This policy is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of the school budget.

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.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, visits and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

Charging Policy

Any charges made by the school must meet the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1996. The governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges.

Charges

No pupil should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges. However, the Federation reserves the right to levy a charge in any circumstances permissible under statute as detailed below.

Charges will not be made for any activities which form part of the National Curriculum requirements. No charge can be made for education during school hours. The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

Activities Outside School Hours

The full cost to each pupil of any activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours. This includes residential visits; a charge will be made for the cost of board,

lodging (including that of necessary supervisory staff) and travel costs (subject to statutory exceptions). The cost will not exceed the actual cost of provision. When we inform parents about a forthcoming residential, we will make it clear that children entitled for Pupil Premium will be able to access subsistence.

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.

Individual/Group Instrumental Tuition

Providing that the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, for either an individual pupil or groups of up to four.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all pupils except for Reception. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for the swimming lessons, however, due to a severely restricted budget, the Federation will ask for a voluntary contribution to support this activity. Insufficient voluntary contributions may result in this activity being cancelled. We will refund all contributions if this activity is cancelled and if a child is absent due to illness.

Breakfast and After School Club

Breakfast and After School Clubs are held during the school week.

Parents may apply for a place for their child(ren). Current charges and times are available on the website and from Club staff.

Damage to School Property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to school property, including the loss of books and equipment on loan to pupils, the Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body, may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion. The charge is based on the replacement cost.

Voluntary contributions

The school 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, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil 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.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when the school requests contributions.

Examinations

The school may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.

If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded

Music Tuition

The school is aware that instrumental and vocal music tuition is an 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.

There will be no charges applied if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Residential visits

The school will not charge for:

- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

- The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- 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 they are 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 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)

The school will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

Damaged or lost items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

Remissions

The school will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be 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 or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or 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)

To request assistance, parents should contact the school office via 01434344324 (Henshaw) and 01697747347 (Greenhead)

School visits

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 a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take 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.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take 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.

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

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 will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Income generation

In line with the ESFA's ATH, the trust will set fees for chargeable services at full cost, and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

Freedom of information

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

Summary

The school will not charge for:

- 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning in groups, unless 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 resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.

The school may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- Certain early years provision.
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

General

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories for which a charge may be made. The Governing Body reserve the right to review the Charging and Remissions Policy as necessary.

Remissions Policy

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 a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances.

In other circumstances, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence to the Executive Headteacher for the remission of charges in part. The Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will make authorisation of remission.

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The management of the school's delegated finances
- Ensuring the school acts in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring money is spent for the educational benefit of pupils attending the school, and for the benefit of pupils in other schools.
- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the DfE.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Prioritising and allocating financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Informing parents on low incomes and in receipt of specific benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- Liaising with parents and staff regarding any charges being applied and making decisions regarding appropriate remissions on a case-by-case basis.

The SBM will:

- Process and record payments for activities, taking into account any remissions applied.
- Ensure that the correct invoices are sent to parents, and that payment is received.

Signed: 

Date: June 2025

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