



WILLOWCROFT ACADEMY TRUST

Charging & Remissions Policy 2024/25

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1. Aims

Willowcroft Community School believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review will take place every three years.

The policy identifies activities for which:

- charges will not be made.
- charges will be made
- charges may be waived
- Voluntary contributions maybe requested

2. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law says:

- *No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.*
- *If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.*
- *If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.*
- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parent/carers from the outset.

3. No charges will be made for

1. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
2. Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
3. Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
4. Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours
 - a. if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
 - b. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or
 - c. part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
5. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
6. Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

4. Universal Infant Free School Meals

From September 2014 all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 are eligible for free school meals.

5. Activities for which charges may be made

- Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 3 above) which take place outside school hours but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

- Residential activities

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take

place during school time, However pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs. Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 4 above).

- **Music tuition**

Music tuition for individuals or groups of appropriate size.

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

6. Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

7. How will charges be made?

It is the policy of Willowcroft Community School that charges will be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as ‘optional extras’. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

| Activity which will or may be charged for | Notes | Remitted or help available |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Charges will be made for music tuition | The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils | Help available |

| | | |
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| Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips | The charge will not exceed the actual cost | Remission for category A & B (see below) |
| After school clubs where a cost is incurred, such as the ingredients for cookery club. | The charge will not exceed the actual cost | Help Available |
| After School Sports clubs run by external providers. | Some clubs are now funded by school from the DFE Sports Funding. | Help available |
| Provision of School Lunches KS2 | The charge is based on the amount charged by the catering contractors. | Remission for category A (see below) |

8. 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. This remissions policy below sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

8.1 Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

CATEGORY A

Parents (in 2016*) do not have to pay for school lunches if they receive any of the following:

- 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 Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

*Update criteria and figures at <http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/LandC/Resources/CFM/Eligibilityforfreeschoolmeals.pdf>

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in the following circumstances:

- For any parent whose child has been eligible for Free school meals at any point in the past 6 years and is therefore eligible for pupil premium funding.

8. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the term so that parents can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for larger amounts of money
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.