Charging and Remissions for School Activities Policy

The Vyne Community School

Approved at:	F&R Committee	Date: 17th November 2026
Last reviewed on:	17th November 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Contents Page

Section 1: Introduction Page 2

Section 2: Definition Of In Or Out Of School Hours Education During School Hours Page 2

- Education Partly During School Hours Page 2
- Education Outside School Hours Page 2
- Residential Activities Page 3
- Voluntary Contributions Page 3
- Activities Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras Page 3

Section 3: Charging For Visits Page 4

- Activities Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras Page 4

Section 4: Individual Instrumental Tuition Page 4

Section 5: Ingredients/Materials/Equipment Page 4

Section 6: Broken Equipment/Damage (Replacement) Page 5

Section 7: Examinations Page 5

Section 8: School Minibus Page 5

Section 9: Surplus Page 5

Section 10 : Admin Charge Page 5

Section 1: Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' 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 students of the school and as additional optional activities.

The Governing Body cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school;
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education;
- Entry for prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school; or
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for students.

Section 2: Definition Of In Or Out Of School Hours Education During School Hours

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials and equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. "School hours" are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the breaks in the school day.

Education Partly During School Hours

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours). As an example, a long-distance trip might involve travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge.

By contrast, a trip that involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place outside school time. Charges would then be allowed.

Education Outside School Hours

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or do not form part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. In addition, no charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination (see section on examinations).

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities that can be charged for as “optional extras”.

Residential Activities

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24 hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and at midnight.

On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9.00pm on Sunday would last for nine half-days, include five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9.00pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, include three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50 per cent or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day should be treated as spent on the trip.

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination and is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except where students are entitled to statutory remission (see appendix 1).

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Governing bodies should also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this should be explained to them at the planning stage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, **the activity must be cancelled**. The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not, make a contribution of any kind. The school must first decide which class, or group of pupils, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity, or by general fundraising.

Activities Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras

If the school organises activities (including residential visits) that are deemed to be “optional extras” the school can charge for the full cost of the trip, including board and lodging for residential visits.

An optional extra does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education and is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination.

The parents’ agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail should always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for students whose families do not meet the full charge.

Section 3: Charging For Visits

The school will use the following criteria to establish whether financial support should be provided

As far as practically possible, pupils should not be excluded from taking part in educational visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

1. All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Headteacher, in advance of the visit.
2. To be eligible for assistance the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of at least one benefit or eligible for the pupil premium.
3. In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments or would consider any individual application on its own merit

Activities Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras

- Current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- Current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit;
- If insufficient numbers of students opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled;
- Regular payments must be made towards the cost of the trip as stated in trip letter to parents; and
- Any outstanding payments must be discussed by the parent/guardian with the Business Manager to ensure students can go on the trip.

Refunds of deposits, full payments and partial payments in relation to cancellations due to travel company or venue cancellation will be subject to a review by the Headteacher and will depend on any costs incurred for cancellation through the travel agency/trip organiser or venue.

Where the child no longer wishes or is unable to attend a residential educational visit, the initial deposit will not be reimbursed unless a replacement attendee is found.

For a day educational visit which has been partially paid or paid in full, no reimbursement will be given if the child is no longer attending due to; illness, needing to attend an appointment; no longer wishing to attend or their behaviour requires them to be removed from the visit.

Section 4: Individual Instrumental Tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to specify circumstances where charges can be made for music tuition. The regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

Fees will be termly in advance, or by agreement on a payment plan through SCOPAY. Students joining part way through a year will be charged on a pro rata basis. No refunds will be available due to the schools commitment to the music services.

Section 5: Ingredients/Materials/Equipment

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask for a voluntary contribution for ingredients or items made or produced within school.

Section 6: Broken Equipment/Damage (Replacement)

The Governors will allow the School to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students. This may include the purchase of a replacement book, should the student's book be lost, have graffiti or be damaged.

Section 7: Examinations

The Governing Body may recover any fee in respect of the entry of a registered student at the school for a public examination in any syllabus for that examination either -

1. Where the school has not prepared the student for the examination, fees will be charged in full together with the appropriate administration charges.
2. The student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus.
3. For a re-sit examination taken at the student's request.
4. Where a student opts to take an examination against the school's advice
5. For non-attendance at an examination without good reason
6. Where a result is contested at a student's request

Section 8: School Minibus

Charges will not be made for transporting pupils to or from the school premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated or in connection with an educational visit.

Section 9: Surplus

Where charges have been levied for activities and a surplus of income over expenditure generated, refunds will be made in line with Hampshire County Council guidance.