



# Charging and Remissions Policy

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# Charging and Remission Policy

## Section 1 Introduction:

The education provided within the Wyvern Academy will be free but on some occasions a voluntary contribution towards the cost of an activity may be requested by the School. Parents are free to decide whether or not to contribute. This policy sets out the principles which the school will operate charges and remissions.

The Wyvern Academy recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. The School 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. However the School reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The School will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

## Section 2 Charging for visits

### a) All Visits:

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- the total cost of the visit;
- how much of the cost will come from school
- how much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit;
- how much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- Any surplus fund should be returned to parents. However in certain circumstances the surplus will be so small that the administration cost of returning the surplus will outweigh the benefits. For the avoidance of doubt if the surplus is in excess of £10 per pupil the funding must be returned to the parents.

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food, etc.

Where parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of an activity which takes place during school hours or to school equipment or school funds the contribution will be genuinely voluntary. Pupils or parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against.

When there are insufficient voluntary contributions to make an activity possible, and when there is no way to make up the shortfall, it will be cancelled.

### b) During Normal School Hours:

In all schools, except Independent Schools, visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit (or more to allow for those parents who cannot or will not contribute) and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled - parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/carers do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

The School may offer to remit the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which:

- takes place during school hours or;
- is not an optional extra (see following section for definition).

Full details of the remissions policy is detailed at section 9.

Parental permission should be obtained in one of two ways:

i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g.

I understand:

- that current legislation permits the School to ask for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved;
- that no pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay;
- that if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit may have to be cancelled.

ii) Signed Slip received back from parents:

A letter about the visit is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

"All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. Pupils who receive free School meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £\_\_\_ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed."

**c) Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras**

The Headteacher can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a skiing holiday during the school holidays is an optional extra.
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination - if an 'A' level Biology syllabus mentions fieldwork as a requirement then this in itself does not necessitate a residential fieldtrip to another part of the country as local facilities may suffice. However, if the syllabus mentions that pupils need to know about the ecology of rocky shores and they live in a city a long way from the coast then the fieldtrip would not be classed as an 'optional extra'.

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

Parental permission should be obtained as follows:

i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g. I understand:

- that current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- that current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit;
- that if insufficient numbers of pupils opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- that my child cannot attend this 'optional extra' visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.

### **Section 3 Transport in a minibus**

If any payment is requested/made towards the cost of passengers being carried in a minibus then a public service vehicle (PSV) licence is required by the Schools. A licence is required if the school owns or rents the minibus. There are two types of PSV:

- restricted (for up to two vehicles);
- standard national (more than two vehicles).

Under the current insurance arrangements Wyvern Academy are unable to rent the mini-bus for any profit. Additionally only authorised members of staff and other approved adults are insured when using the mini-bus.

#### **Section 4 Individual instrumental tuition**

The costs to the pupil for providing any instrumental tuition is not part the peripatetic provision. The fees for the peripatetic lessons are now centrally collected by the Durham Music Service due to the large administrative burden involved in pursuing non-payment.

#### **Section 5 Ingredients/materials/equipment (in kind)**

The School reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: Resistant Materials, Food Technology, Science, Art/Craft.

#### **Section 6 Broken equipment (replacement)**

The School will allow all departments to ask pupils 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 pupils part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief pupils thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the pupils.

#### **Section 7 The Freedom of Information Act & charging**

Members of the public have a statutory right to ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Naturally, no charge is made by the School for information sourced from the School's Website – which is very comprehensive.

For parents of present or prospective pupils (including parents who wish information to help them decide if they wish their child to attend the School), single copies of all relevant and available information are provided free of charge. However, should a request for information involve a large amount of non-standard paperwork or duplication, the School reserves the right to charge per sheet to cover duplication and administrative costs.

When a member of the general public or a member of a professional body requests the information, then the standard charge will be made to cover duplication, postage and administrative costs.

In all cases where a cost is to be levied the purchaser will be informed of the cost and requested to pay the correct amount in advance, (by cash paid or cheque) before the work is undertaken.

#### **SECTION 8 Examinations**

The School reserves the right to charge for entry fees for examinations where the following conditions are met:

- 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 arranges for the pupil to take it, or
- a pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of an public examination where the school originally paid for the entry fee.

#### **Section 9 Remissions**

The School may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship, or as a unique selling point for the school to attract additional pupils. When arranging a chargeable activity on an individual basis such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher.

Parents/carers may apply to the School for remission of charges in part towards the charges for activities.

To qualify the household income must be less than £17,500 or a pupil is eligible to pupil premium.

Support will be provided for school trips, with 90% of the cost of the trip support up to a maximum of £150 per trip.

To apply for this support a disadvantage subsidy claim form must be completed signed and return to the School, together with proof of the household income.

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