



Winchelsea School

Guernsey Road
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Charging and Remissions Policy 2026-27			
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WINCHELSEA SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY 2025-2026

Introduction

The Governing Body recognises that Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England and those activities for which the school cannot charge.

The Governing Body further recognises that it is important to provide every child with access to a wide range of additional activities including clubs, trips and residential experiences. These activities are considered to make a valuable contribution to a pupil's personal and social development and the Governing Body will promote and provide these activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils and also as additional optional activities, having due regard for the information given in '*A Guide to the Law for School Governors*' (Chapter 23) and the guidance contained in the Department for Education (DfE) advice '*Charging For School Activities (May 2018 update)*':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

A hard copy of this document is held by the School Business Manager. This document sets out very clearly those activities for which the school may charge and those for which it may not. In principle, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in the DfE advice, the school cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment. There will be occasions where voluntary contributions are requested from parents, however, any such requests will stress that parental contributions are being provided on a voluntary basis and that no child will be excluded from the relevant activity in the event of non-payment.

The school aims to make the minimum number of requests for money from parents/carers and seeks a far lower level of parental contributions than most mainstream schools.

The Governing Body understands that it must ensure that the school inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of qualifying benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Residential Visits

Charges will be made for any residential visits, as the level of costs for such visits cannot be fully subsidised from the school's budget. The costs for pupils who meet the qualifying criteria as detailed in the DfE advice '*Charging For School Activities (May 2018 update)*' must be met from the school budget unless alternative financial support is available to the school. In essence, the qualifying criteria are the same as those which apply to Free School Meal funding. The availability of funded places is made very clear to parents as part of the process of formal notification and for parents to confirm their qualifying status when responding. This is most usually funded via Pupil Premium.

It is recognized that a residential visit represents a financial obligation for parents who would not qualify for a funded place. In order not to exclude children from this activity, the Friends of Winchelsea (FoW) School have previously agreed to partially fund any shortfall for parents who would not be exempt from a requirement to pay for board and lodgings as it is not possible to use delegated funding for this purpose. Discussions with the FoW around funding support will take place in the planning stages of the residential visit. Paying parents will be charged on a not for profit basis for the cost of board and lodgings including a contribution towards the cost of any overnight workers.

The Friends of Winchelsea School have previously indicated a willingness to make a 50% contribution to assist such parents to ensure maximization of opportunity. However, it must be noted that the contribution to be made by the Friends of Winchelsea School will be agreed on a visit by visit basis and formal confirmation should be sought by the school in each instance. Any assistance which is available for parents will be clearly communicated to them and they will be under no obligation to separately apply for this support.

Participation is optional and where parents elect not to send their child on a residential visit, then alternative arrangements will be made by the school for the education of any non-attending child for the duration of the residential visit.

Off-Site Extracurricular Visits

Each visit is carefully planned to support educational delivery but school trips are not a statutory requirement and therefore the school receives no delegated funding to pay for this provision but as the school believes in the educational benefits for the children at this school of such visits, it has taken the view that it will support a sensible number of planned visits. Generally speaking, additional parental contributions will only be sought where the cost of a visit exceeds £5 per child. Even in these circumstances, it will always be made clear that contributions are sought on a voluntary basis. No child is or will be excluded from an off-site extracurricular visit on the grounds that their parents/carers have not contributed.

For off-site visits which do not support the curriculum, the expectation is always that parents will pay. In the event of non-payment, alternative activities will be arranged for any pupil not taking part in the visit.

On-Site Extracurricular Activities

From time to time the school may invite a non-school based organisation (such as a visiting theatre group) to arrange an activity during the school day. Where the activity does not form a necessary part of the National Curriculum / school's recognised Curriculum, schools do have the right to make a charge provided that parents are given the option of withdrawing their child from the activity. However, it is the general policy of this school that no child should be excluded on grounds of cost and parents would therefore only be asked for voluntary contributions.

As far as is possible these activities are fully funded from the school's delegated budget or from funding sought from specialist charities but each activity is subject to individual review.

Extracurricular (Out of School Hours) Activities

The school does not currently run after school activity clubs. However, should this provision be re-introduced fee levels for after school clubs will be set at a level to encourage take up as it is acknowledged that these activities can greatly enrich the learning of a child at this school.

Non-Curricular Activities

Where an activity is organized which is not part of the Curriculum, then the school will reserve the right to seek parental contributions and to exclude any child from said activity. In the event of a child not being able to access such activity, alternative arrangements will be made for the education of the child for the duration of the activity. It is acknowledged that such activities are unlikely to happen more than once a year.

Special Materials

The school will provide free of charge any materials, equipment and transport required in order to deliver the school's Curriculum. However, voluntary contributions, in the form of money or materials such as ingredients, may occasionally be sought from parents for activities where the end product is to be taken home (e.g. craftwork, design technology, food technology). Any request for voluntary contributions is required to stress that funding is being requested on an entirely voluntary basis.

No child is excluded from an activity because their parents/carers have not contributed.

Music Tuition

Music tuition is an exception to the requirement to provide education during school hours free of charge. No such tuition is currently provided at this school and if it were, the school would cover the cost, however, the school would reserve its right to request parental contributions where considered appropriate.

Optional Extras

Whilst charges can be made for Optional Extras as defined in the Guidance Notes provided by the DfE, no such charges are currently made. The school no longer seeks voluntary contributions from parents for daily fruit.

The Governing Body reserves the right to request parental contributions where considered appropriate but is mindful of its wish to provide the maximum possible support to parents/carers.

Transport

No charge is made for child transportation.

Charging for Breakages, Damage or Loss

The school will seek to recover from parents/carers the costs incurred as a result of any item of school property being damaged, broken or lost as a result of willful vandalism, misbehaviour, thoughtless behaviour or carelessness. The Headteacher will assess such incidents on a case-by-case basis.

Refund Policy

Parents may ask for a refund of voluntary contributions if their child misses a school trip due to illness or unforeseen circumstances. However, in cases where the school has already incurred a direct and non-recoverable cost in including the child on the trip (for example, purchase of a ticket, which cannot be returned) then any such refund will be entirely discretionary.

This refund policy does not apply to charges made for out-of-hours activities, which are non-refundable except in the event of cancellation by the school. Where a child drops out of a school-led club or extracurricular activity which has been paid for in advance, a refund may be considered for the unattended sessions but any such refund will be entirely discretionary.