

Avanti House School

2015-16

Charging and Remissions Policy

This policy specifies the conditions under which the school may charge pupils for activities initiated by the school. The policy must underpin all decisions on charging for school activities

Date Reviewed:	September 2015
Date to be Reviewed:	September 2016
Responsible Person:	Principal

1.0 Legal Background

1.1 In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to state funded community and free schools and academies or for the provision of education to them. Where education is provided *wholly or mainly during school hours*, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums etc. during school hours.

2.0 Voluntary Contributions

2.1 Head teachers or governing bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- Faith Nurture
- Purchase of school equipment and books;
- General voluntary school funds.

2.2 The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute *may not be discriminated against*. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

3.0 Residential Trips

3.1 Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision. The school may ask for contributions to the above and the transport costs.

3.2 Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed the current statutory limit.
- The guarantee element of the state pension

3.3 A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is necessary as part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the pupil to sit, or the syllabus for religious education.

4.0 Instrumental Music Lessons

4.1 A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition for up to and including four pupils, unless the tuition forms part of the school curriculum or syllabus for a prescribed examination in music, that the school is preparing the child to sit, or is part of the National Curriculum, in which case a charge is not permissible.

5.0 It is agreed that:

5.1 The provisions of the 1988 ERA will be followed.

5.2 In addition to free provision of education during the school day, pupils whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit will have the charges withdrawn or subsidised for board and lodging where otherwise applicable to residential activities.

5.3 Charges will normally be made for the following activities:

(a) Board and lodging on residential visits.

(b) The proportionate costs for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:

- 1) Travel
- 2) materials and equipment
- 3) non-teaching staff costs
- 4) entrance fees
- 5) insurance costs

(c) Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument.

(d) Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited.

(e) Recovery of cost to repair or replace lost books and musical instruments or computing equipment **or** deliberately damaged school property such as equipment and/or school fixtures and fittings.

6.0 Staff responsibilities:

6.1 Staff must not pay on behalf of the children where the parents have decided not to fund the activity. Such action risks compromising the liability that school carries for taking children on visits without the essential parental consent. The economic circumstances of the family must be kept confidential and not in any way be used for raising funds for them to attend school visits. It is essential that the privacy and dignity of children and families is fully respected at all times.