

# DOWNTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY



Dream, Believe, Achieve

Love, Peace, Joy

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## **Introduction**

1. This policy statement has been developed in accordance with the Governance Handbook as published by the Department for Education in November 2015 and the Department for Education publication "Charging for School Activities" published in May 2018.
2. This policy statement considers each type of activity that can be charged for, and explains when charges will be made.
3. If a charge is made for each pupil it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising.

## **Education During School Hours**

4. No charge will be made for admitting pupils to the school. Education provided during school hours will be free. This includes the use of 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 break in the middle of the school day.

## **Musical Instrument Tuition**

5. There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing providing that it is at the request of the pupil's parent.
6. 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), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.
7. No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

## **Voluntary Contributions**

8. Although we cannot charge for school-time activities, we may invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further.
9. All such requests to parents will make it quite clear that the contributions are voluntary. The Governing Body will clarify that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently.
10. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this will 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, then the activity will be cancelled. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

11. Pupils eligible for pupil premium grant (PPG) funding, can be supported with extra-curricular activities, including sport, outdoor activities, arts and culture, for example music lessons and school trips.
12. Parents/carers not wishing to make a voluntary contribution in whole or part, but wishing their child to be included, must make the fact known directly to the Headteacher who will treat any such approach in strictest confidence.

### **Education Outside School Hours**

13. Parents will only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not:
  - part of the national curriculum;
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - part of religious education
14. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Headteacher in conjunction with Governing Body will decide whether to make a charge.

### **Education Partly During School Hours**

15. Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education. Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours.
  - If 50% or more of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity is considered to take place during school hours and no charge will be made. However, voluntary contributions may still be requested from parents.
  - If less than 50% of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity is considered to take place outside school hours and a charge can be made.
  - For the purpose of this calculation, time spent on travel is included only if it takes place during school hours.

### **Residential Activities**

16. 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.

17. On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9 pm on Sunday would last for nine half-days, including five school sessions, and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9 pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, including three school sessions, and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50% or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, this should be treated as the whole of that half-day being spent on the trip.
18. For a residential activity taking place mainly during school time, that concerns the National Curriculum or Religious Education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges may be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for those pupils whose parents are receiving:
  - Universal Credit
  - 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 guaranteed element of Pension Credit
  - Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by HMRC, that does not exceed £16,190 for the year 2023-24, or the equivalent figure for later years)
  - Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
19. The head teacher should advise all parents, including those in receipt of PPG, of the right to claim free or subsidised activities if they are receiving these benefits.

### **School Minibuses**

20. Only the school's pupils, staff, parents or helpers may travel free of charge in a school's minibus for activities taking place within school hours.
21. The school may charge for transport in their minibuses only if it holds a permit issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. In some cases, the permit exempts the school from Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator and driver licensing requirements. A permit is not required if no charge is made in cash or kind. The school should apply to their LA for a permit for each minibus.
22. Charges may recover some or all of the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value. But the service may not make a profit, either directly through the fares charged or incidentally as part of a profit-making activity, even if any profit would go into the school's other running costs or for charitable purposes. A charge is any payment made in cash or kind (for example, a club subscription) by or on behalf of a person that gives him or her a right to be carried.

## **Activities Not Run By The School Or LEA**

23. When an organisation acting independently of a school or LA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their children out of school for a family holiday. However, where an activity is organised by a third party and is approved by the school, is educational, or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the DCSF's view that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school and no charge should be made to the parents or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an "approved educational activity" within the meaning of Regulation 4A (a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended).