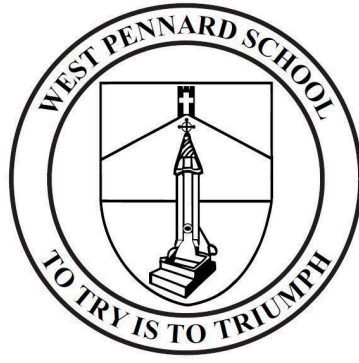




West Pennard C of E Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

October 2024

**Tony Wheat
Headteacher**

**Sylvia Smith
Chair of Governors**

Review date: October 2026

West Pennard CE VC School Charging and Remissions Policy

Our school vision...

'Since God so loved us, so we must love one another'

(1 John 4 v11)

Valuing our Christian foundation, we care for each other and our world.

We develop resilience, confidence and independence through our innovative and diverse curriculum; inspiring and motivating everyone to thrive.

Our motto, 'To Try is to Triumph' and growing Christian Values, are central to all that we do.

Purpose

West Pennard School believes the education of pupils is broadened and enhanced by well-planned and supervised visits, outdoor pursuits, and sporting and cultural activities.

The curriculum is enriched and teaching is stimulated by pupils' experiences outside of the school both in and beyond school hours. Although the school has full regard to and has always supported the principle of providing free education for all, it acknowledges that every worthwhile activity organised by staff and involving the use of physical and human resources does have cost implications. Such costs either come from the school's budget or has to be found from other sources.

It is therefore the school's policy to request, where necessary and reasonable, voluntary contributions to ensure the fulfilment of its educational aims through certain school activities. At the same time the school has due regard to the individual circumstances of pupils whose families may find it difficult to contribute

The Education Act 1996 requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities and school visits. The aim of this Policy is to set out what charges may be made for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents or carers. The detailed regulations for charging and remissions are exemplified in 'Charging for school activities: Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities - October 2014'.

We are unable to charge for the following:

- An admission application to any state-funded or public school.

- Education provided during school hours including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.
- Education provided on any trips that take place during school hours. (However, the Governing Board has agreed that voluntary contributions may be requested).
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. (However, the Governing Board has agreed that voluntary contributions may be requested).
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning individually or in groups unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.
- Entry for a prescribed public exam.
- Exam resits if the pupil is being prepared for the resit at school.

We are able to charge for the following:

- Activities outside school hours – non-residential activities (other than those listed above), which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).
- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment when the child's parent wishes him/her to own them.
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances – see below.
- Community facilities, such as the use of the school hall or school resources.

Specific activities or scenarios in which we may charge:

School Meals

The school provides cooked on-site meals which incurs staffing, resourcing and of course wholesale food costs. A pricing structure for on-site school meals can be found on the school website. A charge may be made for

pupils ineligible for universal free school meals or for free school meals through other eligibility criteria. Please contact the school for details.

Breakfast Club, After School Club and Extra-Curricular Activities

We charge for the provision of Breakfast Club and After School Clubs to cover the cost of staffing, food and resources. We may charge for extra-curricular activities and school clubs. See the school website for the individual price structure and lists of charged for or free of charge after school clubs.

Residential School Visits

We cannot charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside of schools hours if part of the national curriculum
- Supply Teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We can charge for:

- Boarding and lodging but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When we inform parents about a forthcoming visit, we will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- 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 (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria

Examinations

No charge will be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are on the National Curriculum.

However, an examination entry fee will be charged to parents / carers if:

- The pupil wasn't prepared for the examination at the school;
- the examination isn't on the National Curriculum but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Board or Local Authority (LA) originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

We may charge for:

- resits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school;
- costs of non-prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school.

Music Tuition

Charges may be made when the tuition is not an essential part of:

- The National Curriculum.
- A public examination syllabus.

Transport

We are not allowed to charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from school premises where the education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Governing Board or Local Authority have arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an exam requirement where they have been prepared for that exam at the school;

- transport provided in connection with an educational visit. (However, the Governing Board has agreed that voluntary contributions may be requested).

Trips and Visits

When we arrange trips and visits we are conscious of the costs for parents and always aim to make the cost as reasonable as possible, and ensure arrangements are within all the legal requirements. We need to cover all school costs – no profit is ever sought.

Letters about school trips contain a paragraph asking for voluntary contributions or donations. Regulations also state that no child can be excluded by the school from the trip/visit by reason of their Parents / Carers being unable, or unwilling, to make a voluntary contribution. No additional funds are provided by the Government for trips.

If parents / carers experience difficulties in contributing towards school trips they are offered the opportunity to discuss these with the Headteacher who will endeavour to help.

When we go on a trip we arrange for the children to be in small groups. Any costs for supervisory, additional adults are therefore an allowable charge against the trips. Anyone who is ill on the day will have their contribution returned. Financial assistance is sometimes possible for disadvantaged pupils / children looked after / service children or children from Traveller heritage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there are no other ways to get funds, the activity may be cancelled.

Breakages and Replacements

Parents/Carers will be required to reimburse the school for wilful or irresponsible damage to school property for which their child is responsible.

Specific activities or scenarios in which we may be able to provide remission or help from charging:

Qualifying family circumstances

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Governing Board has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived.

These may include parents / carers in receipt of:

- 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 (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

As thresholds and eligibility often change, parents / carers should contact the school for further information.

Children in Receipt of Pupil Premium

The school sets aside Pupil Premium monies to support with paying for individual music provision, extra-curricular activities, the residential, for swimming and school trips.

Making a Voluntary Contribution

Some school activities will only be possible if parents make a voluntary contribution, and where this is the case parents will always be informed at the outset.

We may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment.

The contribution is voluntary and pupils of parents who can't or don't want to contribute will not be excluded from the activity.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there are no other ways to get funds, the activity may be cancelled.

Additional considerations

The Governing Board recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

This policy will be implemented with due regard to the Equalities Act 2010 which ensures the right of all to freedom from discrimination within the Education Service.