



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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Introduction

The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and we warmly endorse that principle and are committed to upholding the legal requirements.

It is recognised however, that many educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependent on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the education programme provided for pupils. The school's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure as far as possible that all children can take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances – provided that each school has identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced or waived for certain pupils. The Governing Board of Alcester Grammar School has decided that its Policy will be as follows:

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and the [Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

It is also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- Charge : a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions policy, they have delegated this to the Principal.

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2. Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3. Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Charging and Remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Principal of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4. Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Principal of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions policy.

5. Where Charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1. Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) – see section 6 for exceptions
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - 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 the first attempt at a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school

5.2. Transport

Schools cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

Parents are required to make their own transport arrangements to and from school. There are several transport providers running Alcester Grammar School routes and costs are paid directly by the parent to the provider.

The school has no jurisdiction in this area.

Some families may be eligible for free school transport and must make enquiries directly with the local authority.

5.3. Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a compulsory core-curriculum residential visit.
- Please note: parents should advise their children not to bring valuables to school or take them on school trips. The school cannot take responsibility for any such items being lost or damaged.

6. Where Charges can be made

Below we set out what we can charge for

6.1. Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment (years 7 to 11), where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Mandatory materials, books, instruments or equipment for Sixth Form studies
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition (see section 6.3)
- Community facilities
- Examination resit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2. Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment.

The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Examination resits and the cost of an examination paper remark
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Governing Board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)
- The school may sell additional equipment, books such as revision guides and calculators for sale to pupils, these will be sold at the cost to the school (including any parent pay fees incurred).
- Optional AS Level examinations entry fees.
 - AGS fund 1 external AS level examination at the end of Year 12. Pupils can, optionally, request to enter more than 1 AS level examination the additional examination entry fees and administrative charges (for managing the external examination process) will be payable in advance by the parents
- Optional Courses in the Sixth Form, such as the below, the charges will include the cost of delivering the course, staffing costs and the external examination fee.
 - Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
 - Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)
- Extra-curricular & super curricular activities and trips

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3. Music tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority.

6.4. Residential visits

Schools can charge for board and lodging, the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

6.5. Other charges

Parents will be expected to pay the replacement cost of property which has been damaged by a pupil through negligence or maliciousness.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- School trips – non-curricular, e.g. pantomime, theme parks,
- Sporting activities and fixtures
- Practical subjects for specific materials where the project can be taken home, such as Design Technology, Food Technology and Art & Design
- Additional printing credit, over and above the core allocation

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Remissions

In some circumstances, there may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to participate in particular activities for which a charge is made. Parents may apply to the School for financial support in whole or part towards the charges for curriculum activities. To request help, parents can write in confidence to the Principal and, if requested, provide proof of their income or benefit.

Sixth Form students/parents can apply for a 16-19 Bursary, details are on the school website.

In the main, subsidies may be made for Children who are Looked After and students on the Free School Meals Register or in receipt of Pupil Premium or 16-19 Bursary.

Any subsidy would be reviewed on a need-by-need basis in light of budget constraints and the level of demand for remission.

Remission cannot be guaranteed.

8.1. Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for mandatory core curriculum residential visits:

- 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 that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits you get).

9. Monitoring arrangements

The Finance & Operations Director monitors charges and remissions, to ensure these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed by the Finance & Operations Director every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.