Policy Number: F7

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Governing Body recognises that the curriculum as it exists at present cannot continue without asking for voluntary contributions from parents in certain circumstances.

Under the terms of the Reading School Funding Agreement with the Educational Funding Agency, boarders may be charged for the full costs of boarding provision plus an agreed rate of return. Boarders will not be charged for tuition or education in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

Activities including off site visits:

1. No charges will be made for any activity or materials, books, instruments or other equipment which are essential to fulfil the statutory curriculum.

2. Voluntary contributions may be asked for to enable extra activities, which are deemed educationally desirable, to take place. These may include a nominal contribution to enable school staff to be first aid trained. It may also be stated that such an activity will not be able to take place unless enough contributions are received to finance that activity. The contributions requested will reflect the full cost of that activity (including for example administration, banking costs, first aid cover and insurance) less any subsidy from funds available to the school.

3. Materials required which would result in a finished product, may be charged for as long as parents have been asked in advance if they wish to own that finished product and the cost approved.

4. Parents will be expected to provide items of clothing such as lab coats and sports kit.

5. Outside of school hours charges for activities may be made except where the activities are required either:

(a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination

or

(b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education in which case no charge may be made with the exception of
board and lodging charges for a residential visit.

6. Where charges are made the cost may not exceed the actual cost to the student and cannot subsidise any other students participating. The cost of those students remitted from charging will be met by funds available to the school.

7. The costs incurred by teachers providing the activity may be included in the costs to students.

8. A student's participation in such an activity will be a matter for parental choice and on the basis of a willingness to meet any charges applicable. Thus such an agreement is a pre-requisite to a student's inclusion.

9. If the charges levied do not cover the cost of the activity the resulting loss will be charged to the organising department.

10. Residential activity is defined as being one which involves students spending one or more nights away from home.
Where such activity is deemed essential to fulfil the National Curriculum (see 1 above) or as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination:

(a) the full actual costs per student for board and lodging may be charged to the parent.

and

(b) such a cost must be fully remitted if the student qualifies for pupil premium funding.

Where such an activity is not deemed essential to fulfil the National Curriculum an appropriate charge for the full cost of the activity may be made to parents.

Note 1

Within or outside school hours
For an activity to be considered wholly or mainly outside school hours, the bulk of the time spent on the activity must lie outside normal school hours. For example, if a group of pupils is going to a musical concert and has to leave mid-morning and arrive back an hour after school normally finishes, the visit would be considered to be within school hours. On the other hand, if pupils leave mid-afternoon and arrive back in the late evening, the visit would be considered to be taking place outside school-time, so charges could be made. See appendix 1

Residential activities are treated in a similar way to educational activities that take place wholly or partly outside school hours. A residential trip counts as falling within school-time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to at least 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Bearing in mind that the school day is divided into two sessions and that each 24 hour period is divided into two half days beginning at noon and at midnight, a trip taking place during term time that begins on Wednesday at 8.30am and finishes on Saturday evening at 9pm would count as eight half days. Of these eight half days,six count as school sessions so this trip would be considered to take place during school-time. On the other hand, a trip starting at 8.30am on Friday and finishing at noon on Sunday would count as five half days of which two would be counted as school sessions. This trip would therefore be considered as taking place outside school-time and could be charged for in total, including board and lodging. See appendix 1.
For a residential trip that takes place largely during school-time, or that is essential to the curriculum provided by the school, no charge can be made for the education element or the cost of travel, but charges can be made for board and lodging.

Entry for Examinations

11. No charge will be made for a student's first entry to any prescribed public examination for which the student has been prepared at the school, whether during or outside school hours. Re-sit examinations will be charged unless the students is in receipt of Free School Meals or has suffered illness or a 'life event' that caused the student to perform worse in the examination than would normally have been expected.

12. Parents and/or students requiring scripts or remarks will be charged in accordance with the fees charged by the exam boards plus an administration fee to cover the School's expenses in administering the process. Where grades increase and the exam boards refund fees, these will be passed back to the parents.

13. Parents and students will not be required to provide or pay for any materials (excluding clothing) necessary for the purposes of examination entry.

14. No charge will be made for transport provided to enable a student to take such an examination.

15. Students will be entered for each examination in a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the student has been prepared for entry by the school except where;

(a) in the opinion of the Headmaster there are educational reasons for not doing so.

or

(b) where the student's parents request in writing that the student should not be entered.

16. Where it is agreed to enter a student for a prescribed examination for which the student has not been prepared by the school, the full cost of the entry may be charged to the student or parents.

17. Where a student has, with parental agreement, been entered for a non-prescribed public examination a charge may be made for:

(a) entry fee and administrative costs

(b) actual cost of any preparation provided by the school outside school hours

(c) costs relating to the school's teaching staff if the staff have been specifically engaged under a contract for services for the purpose of providing the optional extra

(d) invigilation costs

18. Examination entry fees may be recovered from parents if a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements for any public examination for which fees have been paid by the school. Requirements may include coursework or the sitting of final examinations.

19. No charge will be made in connection with the sitting of the entrance examination.

20. Parents requesting a remark of the entrance examination will be charged £200. Should the outcome of any remark improve a student's place on the Admissions list the fee will be refunded. Students scoring below the pass mark are not deemed to be on the Admissions list.

Music Provision

21. Charges will not be made for class music tuition during school hours.

22. All students are encouraged to learn to play a musical instrument. The School may charge a small fee should students wish to hire an instrument to take off the School premises.

23. No charge will be made for group activities e.g. school orchestras, which take place during school hours.

24. A charge is made for individual and small group music tuition not forming part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum. See the 'Instrumental Tuition Terms & Conditions' document.

25. Serious consideration will be given to requests for tuition from parents suffering financial hardship or whose student is in receipt of Student Premium funding, with each case being judged independently and given at the school's own discretion.

26. School reserves the right to terminate tuition if it does not consider groups to be viable, or if progress/commitment is unsatisfactory. This will always be done after consultation with the instrumental teachers and parents.

Note: For activities such as music tuition, field trips, concert and theatre visits, see Appendix 2 which indicates the school's policy on which activities will be charged for.

Voluntary Contributions
27. Any such contributions must be genuinely voluntary and it will be made clear to parents if contributions are requested that:

(a) there is no obligation to contribute.

(b) students will be treated the same whether or not their parents have contributed.

(c) there is support for low income families, in which case the student is in receipt of Free School Meals, and this is the criterion used to assess whether support is needed.

28. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents in an initial letter indicating:

(a) the nature of the proposed activity and its education value

(b) the contribution per student which would be required if the activity were to take place

and

(c) the activity would not take place if insufficient contributions were forthcoming.

29. If the costs of the activity are not covered by voluntary contributions and the activity goes ahead, any resulting loss will be charged to the relevant department.

Breakages
30. Parents may be asked to pay for the cost of any damage resulting from a student's misbehaviour.

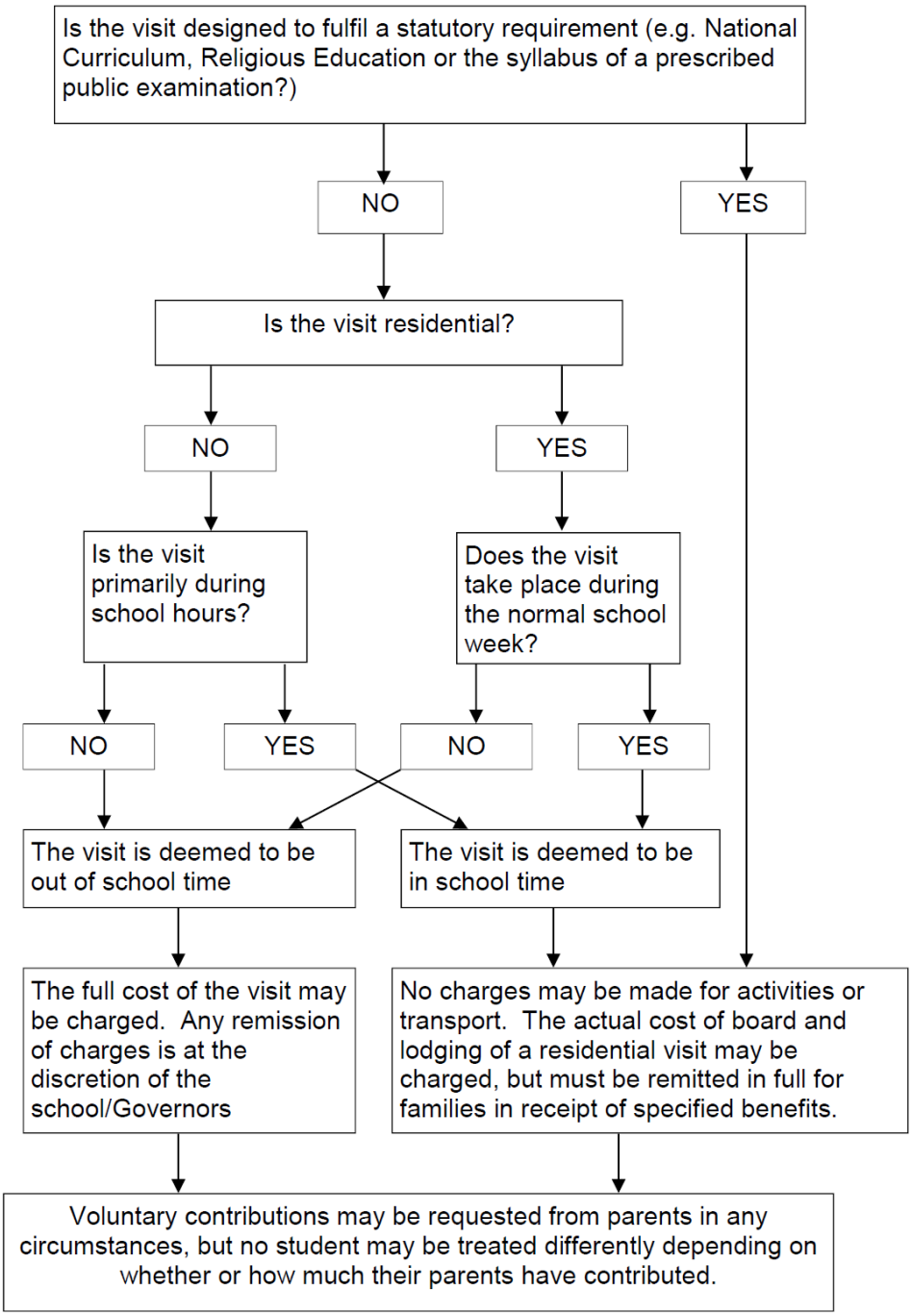
31. Parents may be asked to pay for the replacement of any lost or damaged material in the care of the student.

Monitoring and evaluation
This policy will be monitored and evaluated in the light of changes to legislation and comments received from parents and other interested parties.

Approved by: Finance Committee 28 September 2026
Date of next review: October 2027

Appendix 1: Defining visits for charging purposes

Visit organisers should be aware that any financial losses – whether relating to chargeable visits or those funded by voluntary contributions – will be charged to the organising department. When a potential for loss is identified the organiser should discuss this with the Finance Director at the earliest opportunity to enable the loss to the school to be mitigated.



Appendix 2 – Activities to be charged

Activity	Comment
Individual instrumental music tuition that is over and above the national curriculum, and/or an approved examination syllabus.	A charge will be made per lesson. This will be reviewed when the charges made to the school by the music service increase. Parents in receipt of certain benefits could be eligible for a reduction of fees. The first child in the family pays full fees; the second and subsequent child will pay half fees. Any examination fees are paid by parents.
Transport to work experience	Parents will pay directly (except statemented pupils where the statement refers to transport).
Activities outside school time not related to statutory duties.	Charges will be levied.
Board and lodging on residential visits.	Parents are to be charged, except in cases of statutory remission where families receive benefits.
Rescrutiny of exam results.	Parents to pay all charges.
Exam entry for prescribed exam for which pupils have not been prepared by school.	Parents to pay all charges.
Entry for an exam which is not on prescribed list where preparation takes place outside school hours.	A charge will be made.
Recovery of wasted exam fees.	Parents to be charged.
Educational visits and field trips.	Parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution.
Education or use of facilities for persons who are not registered pupils at the academy.	Under the academy's funding agreement a charge will be levied.