



## CHARGING POLICY

### General Principles and Information

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in publicly funded schools in England. As an Academy Warlingham School & Sixth Form College is required within our funding agreement to comply with this law.

Subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this policy schools cannot charge for education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment. The charging policy and remissions is referred to in the Tandridge Learning Trust Finance Policy. This provides the overarching requirement to charge at full cost as per annex 6.1 of HM Treasury's Managing Public Money and the DfE guidance. The charging framework is defined by the DfE and reiterated in the Finance Policy at a Trust level.

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum<sup>1</sup>, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, 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 examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- and examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

<sup>2</sup> However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

Schools **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them
- optional extras (as outlined below)
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- certain early years provision<sup>3</sup>
- community facilities<sup>4</sup>
- Examination re-sit(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 syllabus

<sup>3</sup> The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

<sup>4</sup> The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act

## Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

### Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the national curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In 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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- and 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 exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, 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. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## Voluntary Contributions

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College may request voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the local governing body or Headteacher will make it clear to parents at the outset. The local governing body or Headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

For Educational trips and visits, It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

As per the mandatory paragraph on all school trip letters, located in the School Fund Department Procedures: "Although every effort is made to accurately cost school activities occasionally there maybe surplus balances available once all costs have been met. In this eventuality any remaining balances of accounts will be used to provide extra curriculum materials for the benefit of the students within the department organising the trip."

Credit balances of over £5 per student on trips up to 20 students or over £10 on 20+ students will be refunded via WisePAY and refunds for all balances may be requested by parents should they wish to do so via the finance department at The Tandridge Learning Trust.

## **Remission**

Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed below of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers 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)

The school may remit a percentage of the charge upon parental request.

## **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.

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College will not charge for class tuition or group musical activities within school hours if it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. Where the law requires that provision be free, parents/guardians will not be required to purchase or meet hire costs for musical equipment or to provide sheet music. They may be invited to do so on a voluntary basis but only on the understanding that no child will be penalised because his/her parent/guardian does not contribute.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, 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 who provide the tuition. They also make clear that 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).

## Individual Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument

Instrumental and vocal tuition which take place outside the school hours, at weekends or during the school holidays will normally be treated as optional extras

## Transport

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the local governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school
- and transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

## Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;<sup>5</sup>

- education provided on any visit that takes place 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 at the school, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.
- <sup>5</sup>See section 452 of the Education Act 1996 for guidance as what counts as during school hours.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.
- optional extras as defined above

## Residential Visits

### Charging

The School will normally charge the actual cost of providing board and lodging to each participating student for visits arranged by staff at the School.

### Remission

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College will remit a percentage of the charges upon parental request for board and lodging in the case of students whose parents/guardians are in receipt of one or more of the benefits detailed in the general principles section above, where the activity is deemed to take place in school hours, or if it is out of school hours but covered by the criteria for not charging.

The School reserves the right to remit a percentage of the board and lodging costs of residential visits organised by the School in appropriate circumstances, for example when sponsorship or voluntary contributions or financial support granted from Warlingham School & Sixth Form College Parent Teacher Association to enable a general reduction in charges.

## **Non-Residential Activities**

### **Charging**

The School will normally charge for optional extra activities organised by the School. The basis for calculating the charge will be the proportionate cost where appropriate to each participating student for travel costs, materials, books and equipment, entrance fees, insurance, certain staffing costs as defined in the general introduction. It will be made clear at the outset that the activity may not be viable if insufficient contributions are received to defray expenses.

### **Remission**

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College reserves the right to remit a percentage of the charges for optional activities where voluntary contributions, sponsorship or other forms of subsidy permit.

## **Cost of Entering a Student for a Public Examination**

### **Charging**

A charge will be made for examination entries for prescribed public examinations for which students have not been prepared by the school.

Entry fees paid by the School will be recovered from parents/guardians when a student fails to complete examination requirements (such as failure to complete coursework or non-attendance at the examination without acceptable reason). In each case, the basis for calculating the charge will be the actual cost of the entry fee plus administration costs.

A charge will be made for an investigation of a particular examination result by the appropriate board when this is requested by the student or by parents/guardians.

If a student requests to re-sit public examinations, where they have achieved their target grade and/or it is judged that they achieved the original grade because they failed to fully complete examination requirements to the best of their ability, they will be charged an agreed amount to meet the exam entry fee and the cost of administration and invigilation.

### **Remission**

In cases approved by the Local Governing Body, no charge will be made for an investigation of a particular examination result.

## **Work Experience**

### **Remission**

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College will remit travel expenses to work experience placements in the cases of students whose parents/guardians are in receipt of one or more of the allowances detailed in the general principles section.

The School reserves the right to remit a percentage of the travel expenses in appropriate circumstances, for example, when sponsorship or a grant from Education Trust enable a reduction in charges.

## **Charging in Kind**

### **Charging**

The School will charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials used in the production of items which parents/guardians have indicated in advance they wish to own. Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to state in writing their desire to own (and hence be charged for) items made by students on the admission of the student into the school. Students will not be treated differently whether or not materials are being provided by their parents/guardians.

A voluntary contribution may be requested to support the supply of, ingredients and materials used in the production of items, however there is no obligation to make any contribution and parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

### **Remission**

Warlingham School & Sixth Form College reserves the right to remit the charges in kind in cases where the parent or guardian is in receipt of one or more of the allowances detailed in the general principles section or in other appropriate circumstances.

### **Book Deposits**

For some GCSE and A level courses a deposit may be required for textbooks; the deposit will be refunded on return of the item in good condition

### **On-line Payments**

The school includes an element reflective of the bank charges levied by banks and service providers in costings for charges and voluntary contributions.

### **Breakages and Fines**

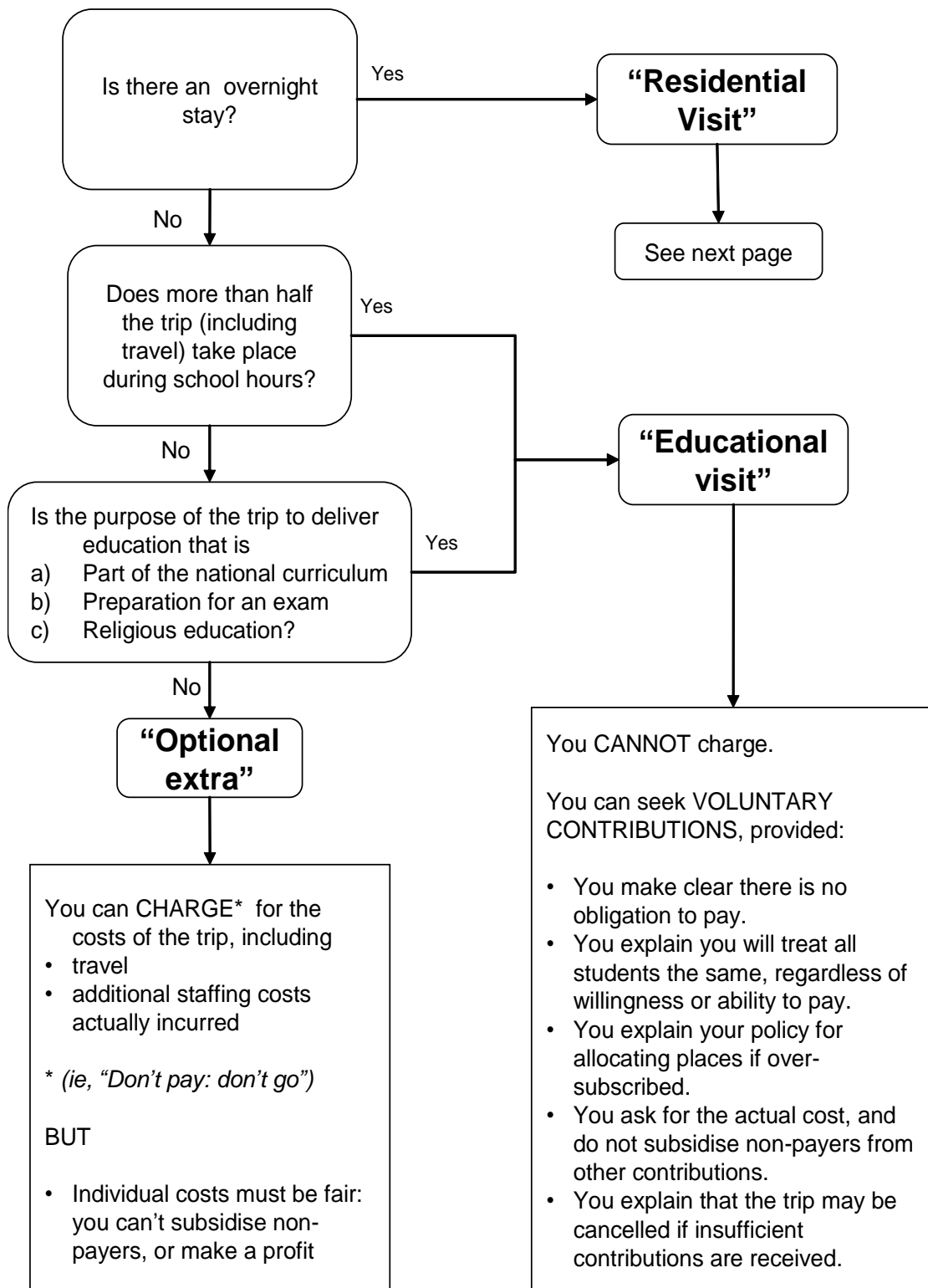
Parents/guardians of students who deface, damage or lose text books or items of equipment, or who cause damage to school property through inappropriate behaviour, will normally be required to pay or contribute to for the cost of replacement or repair.

### **Governors' Charging and Remissions Policy**

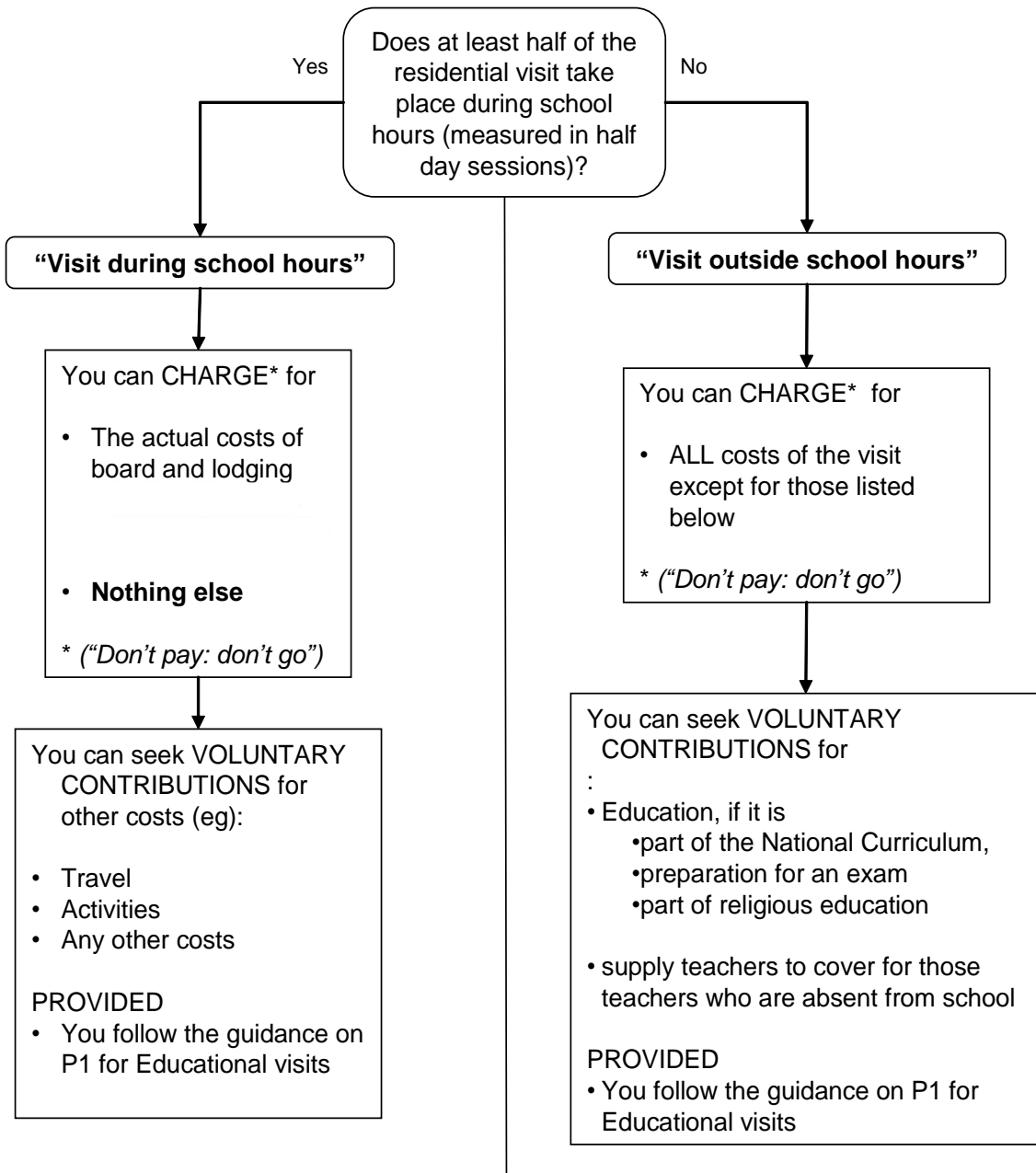
*The Governors' Charging & Remissions Policy reflects Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.*

Approved by Local Governing Body	Autumn 2024
Due for review	Autumn 2026
SLT Member	Mr P Foster

# Can we charge for this trip, visit or activity?



# Residential Visits



*Example 1: Visit during school hours*

*Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.*

*Example 2: Visit outside school hours*

*Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.*