



Federation of Alver Valley Schools

Charging and Remissions Policy

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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

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 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#). This policy also complements the school's equal opportunities and child protection policies.

Definitions

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

Overview and Purpose

Alver Valley schools endorses the principles of the Education Act (2011, 1988) in maintaining the right to free education for all children. The act allows us to request voluntary contributions to broaden children's educational experience. We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered at the same time and will try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

When providing activities which take place during the school day the school may have to meet additional expenses, for example specialist groups working with pupils in school or additional equipment and resources which need to be purchased. The school reserves the right to ask parents for voluntary contributions for any activity organised by the school which takes place, wholly or mainly during normal teaching time.

Such enriching activities are an important aspect in supporting the curriculum. Non contribution would not prejudice a pupil's place. However, there may be cases where unless most parents were prepared to contribute, the school may have to cancel the activity such as educational visits or residential activity. Voluntary contributions will, in all circumstances, be invited through individual letters to parents.

Roles and responsibilities of Executive Headteacher and governors

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that the following applies and that the information is available for parents:

No charges will be made for:

- Education during the school day. All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.
- Education outside of the curriculum which is offered as an after school extra - curricular activity.
- Tuition fees for musical instruments or singing, if the tuition is part of the national curriculum
- Education provided for religious education outside of school hours
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at school.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, such as entrance fees and workshops. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may find it necessary to cancel an event. Children whose parents have not made a contribution will not be excluded from any event. Parents have a right to know how each event is funded. The school will provide this information.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents, who may, if they wish, ask the headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Activities we charge for

- **Residential activities** -charges will be made for board and lodging cost on residential trips, which take place during school hours. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits may not be charged for board and lodging costs.
- **Residential trips** deemed outside of school hours
- **School Minibus** -Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school minibus. Charges made for travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the school.
- When a trip is arranged, parents will be notified of the procedure for payment and booking a place
- **Music tuition** for individuals.
- **Breakfast clubs and after school clubs** provided by an **external** provider – Currently TJs. Any costs occurred by using this facility are charged directly by the provider themselves to parents/carers.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

- To remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remains at the discretion of the school and will depend on the activity in question. This remission policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reduced.

Parents in receipt of-

- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support underpart VI of the immigration and asylum
- The guaranteed element of pension credit
- Child Tax credit, providing working tax credit and is also not received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.
- Guaranteed state pension
- Eligibility for free school meals/pupil premium.

If parents wish to talk to the school about their individual circumstances please contact the business manager.

Additional considerations

The governing body 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:

- We advise parents in advance of visits (and their approximate cost) so parents can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments over an extended period of time for residential visits
- 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

Breakages

The school will not charge for accidental breakages of school property however deliberate or wilful acts which result in breakage or damage to school property will be charged for at a rate appropriate to replacement costs. In such cases parents/guardians will be expected to pay for the replacement rather than the cost of the original.

School Lunch Money

Payments are required in advance for all lunches booked. The school has a strict no debt policy relating to the school meal service. Alver Valley Schools is committed to taking all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. For further information please refer to the School Debt Management Policy.

- To ensure that the school is not financially disadvantaged by the actions of an individual or group of individuals.
- To safeguard the school's funds and specifically to ensure that no individual or group of individuals take advantage of the school causing it to be unable to recover funds that are owed to it.
- To ensure that the funds available to the school are used to the fullest advantage of all pupils
- All income will be banked using HCC systems which aids the debt identification and recording. Please refer to the School Debt Management Policy for full details.

Arrangements for monitoring

The Executive Head teacher and governing body will review this policy annually.