



Oathall Community College
Policy on Charging and Remissions for School Activities

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Version History		
Version number	Date Approved	Change/Reasons for Change/Comments
1	October 2009	
2	14 November 2011	Amended income level for parents receiving child tax credit.
3	12 May 2014	No changes required.
4	19 May 2016	New model policy to update qualifying benefits & to comply with DFE advice 2013.
5	16 April 2018	No change
6	26 April 2021	Reviewed against DFE guidance & WSCC model policy. New section added on optional extras and refunds.

Distribution list
Governors
Head
Leadership Team



Oathall Community College Policy on Charging and Remissions for School Activities

Oathall Community College has and continues to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities are offered over and above the National Curriculum to enrich the experience students' have at college. Both educational and social, these activities form a vital part of the life of the college. As they are not funded by the LA the college relies heavily on the generous support provided by parents to cover the cost of these activities. We hope that this level of support will continue.

The law now requires that such parental support should be and be seen to be, on a voluntary basis. As such the College governors are required to have a policy on charging and remissions. The following policy summarises the position that the school adopts and is based on the fuller WSCC Model policy.

Voluntary Contributions

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours. Oathall follows the West Sussex policy for charging for school activities that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education's advice document published in November 2013 (<https://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00213976/school-charging>).

No **compulsory** charge will be made for any activity which takes place during school hours. Any contribution is **entirely voluntary**, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute are not discriminated against. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

Arrangements

All letters regarding contributions for school activities will make it clear that these are voluntary and that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated differently. If any parents have any financial difficulty (no child will be prevented from taking part) they will be invited to talk to the headteacher who will come to an agreed arrangement.

Residential trips

Special rules apply for residential activities.

a) In School Hours

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time (50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs within school hours), it meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges not exceeding the actual cost for the individual pupil will be made for board and lodging. Voluntary contributions (as above) will be requested.

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:



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- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, (provided that the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit, and their annual Income, assessed by HMRC does not exceed £16,190 for the year 2013/14)
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

b) Outside School Hours

An activity is deemed to take place out of school hours if 50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs out of school hours. In this case, and for a residential trip, this will be considered as an 'optional extra' and a charge will be levied which includes an appropriate element for travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and other equipment, non-teaching costs and teaching staff costs. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision. Parents in receipt of the allowances identified above have the same entitlements.

Music Tuition

There will be no charge for musical tuition if the teaching is an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. For other musical tuition, charges will be made for individuals or groups to play a musical instrument, and for the hire and repair of instruments which are used for instrumental tuition at school. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Optional extras

Schools are permitted to charge for some activities that are known as 'optional extras.'

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - part of the national curriculum
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - or 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).



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Discretionary Assistance

The Governing Body understands that sometimes circumstances make it difficult for parents who do not meet the criteria for support to meet the cost of the activities offered. In this situation parents are invited to contact the Head or the College Business Manager who will exercise discretion in accordance with individual circumstances in remitting some or all of the legitimate charges.

Refunds

Information on the circumstances for issuing any refunds will be detailed in letters to parents about each chargeable activity.