The Oak Tree Federation

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Reviewed: July 2026

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which Laughton Community Primary School and Firle Church of England Primary School will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge.

This policy statement has been drawn up by The Oak Tree Federation in line with the Local Authority and DFE guidance in accordance with the requirement of Section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. The policy will be effective from 1 April 1996 and applicable to all registered pupils in maintained schools and tutorial units in East Sussex and complements the school's prospectus and lettings policy.

Definition

The school day at Laughton CP is defined as: 8.45-3.15pm. The school day at Firle C of E is defined as: 8:45-3.15pm The midday break does not form part of the school day.

Responsibilities

The Head teachers will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

The Governors will review the policy annually.

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. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument**.**

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, e.g. field trips, theatre trips, swimming costs.
In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a visiting storyteller or drama group etc to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents, who may, if they wish, ask the head teacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example sport clubs, theatre trips etc. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were

calculated.

Residentials

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of eligible benefits.

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the pupils totals half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. In such cases parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

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.

Minibus

Only pupils of the school, school staff or parents may be charged for travel in the minibus. Charges made will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the school.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Charges may be made by the County Council to cover the cost of each of the following:-

a) Individual music tuition which takes place in or out of school hours and which is not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or to fulfill the requirements of the National Curriculum.

b) Activities which take place outside school hours and which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to Religious Education.

c) Board and lodging on all types of residential visits.

d) Examination fees for entering pupils' examinations which are not prescribed in Regulations made under the 1996 Act.

e) Examination fees for entering pupils for prescribed public examinations in a syllabus other than that for which they have been prepared at the school.

f) Preparing pupils for non-prescribed public examinations where the preparation takes place outside school hours.

g) Entering pupils for re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the educational establishment.

h) Materials involved in producing a 'finished product' of a lesson where a parent of the pupil has indicated in advance a wish to own the product.

Remission of Charges

Remission of any charges levied by a school will normally be granted (except in the case of the finished products of practical lessons) where:-

a) Parents are in receipt of family credit or income support (and in the case of board and lodging the activity can be classified as taking place in school hours, and if outside school hours is provided specifically to fulfill requirements of the National Curriculum, Religious Education or a syllabus of a prescribed public examination); or

b) parents are in receipt of a maintenance grant and/or free transport if the pupil is aged 16+ (and where board and lodging is concerned the activity can be classified as taking place in school hours); or

c) The Head teacher (the County Music Advisers for individual music tuition) has recommended remission of the charges in individual cases of hardship).

Voluntary contributions

Head teachers or governing bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity that takes place during school hours
- school equipment
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing

In cases of hardship the governors will consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils who they consider will benefit from such tuition.

Signed: