

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Spring Term Version4



Conisborough
College

Signed: Chair of Governors/Finance: _____

Signed: Headteacher: _____

Date

Date of Review: Spring Term 2019

Date to be Review: Summer Term 2020

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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**CONISBOROUGH COLLEGE
CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

Conisborough College believes 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 are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

1 Review Procedures

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Governing Body's Finance Pay & Resource Committee and will be adjusted in line with any subsequent guidelines from the DfES or Local Authority.

2 Aims

We believe in the highest quality of provision for our students and we allocate resources appropriately and within guidelines to ensure that good value for money is achieved.

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1988 and in accordance with Sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996 no charges are made to any registered pupil for any books, materials, equipment or apparatus used during school hours.

We apply the charging policy in line with Section 457 of the Education Act 1996v which e.g., allows charges to be made for residential school trips and artifacts made in school and taken home.

Questions and queries about this policy or discussions regarding the application of this policy to an individual student can be addressed by contacting the main school office and enquiries will be dealt with in confidence by a senior member of staff.

3. Voluntary Contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, Conisborough may always seek voluntary contributions when organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experiences of the students. The school invites parents to contribute to the cost of trips. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then a trip may be cancelled.

We believe that no student should be disadvantaged as a result of home or family background circumstances and apply a remissions policy. The Headteacher and Governors may remit some charges in part or in full as reasonable in particular individual circumstances.

The charging and remissions policy is an integral part of our inclusive arrangements for students and is applied equally to all students.

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Spring Term Version4

In normal cases, letters sent out when a charge is made (e.g. for a trip) will be accompanied by a clear verbal instruction by the organiser that arrangements may be available to support parents/families who are eligible for remissions. The school keeps fund which is administered by the School Business Manager, following a recommendation for support by the Headteacher.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the student to participate fully in the trip or activity. Pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will not be treated differently from those who have.

All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasize their voluntary nature.

Departments can seek support for students via their line manager for activities which would normally incur a charge according to the policy.

School Trips and Visits**Voluntary Contributions and Responsibilities of Staff**

Nothing in legislation prevents a Governing Body or Local Authority from asking for voluntary contributions that would benefit the School or any School activities and the School will invite parents and others from time to time to make voluntary contributions to enable the provision of activities and visits which may not otherwise be possible. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Headteacher will make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No student will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, it may not go ahead. Staff organising visits should make this clear to parents. Staff organising a trip will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on the visit will be.

Activities outside of normal lesson times and not within the National Curriculum (ranging from visits abroad to school matches) are classed as 'optional extras'. Parents may be asked to meet the full cost of these activities. In the case of residential experiences, every effort will be made to offer value for money but the cost might be quite high. It is intended that School-based extra-curricular activities should be free or very low cost. The School will do its best to offer assistance or remission of charges in any case where there is hardship.

For activities during normal School hours and/or within the National Curriculum, parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the activity to enable it to go ahead. Each year, such visits are likely to include visits to museums, theatre trips etc. The costs of visits will vary accordingly.

4. School Funds

School fund provides an extra subsidy for school. Each family may be asked to contribute per annum up to a maximum of £10. This money can then contribute towards school trips, transport and purchases of additional books and equipment.

5. Where Charges do not apply

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Spring Term Version4

- 5.1 Education provided within school hours will be free. This includes materials, equipment, books and other equipment. "School hours" are those when the school is actually in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the school day.

6. Activities, Services and Goods for which Charges are made

The school charges for:

- The full costs of food and accommodation on residential visits.
[If parents are experiencing financial difficulty, they are invited to write in confidence to the class teacher – see remissions statement].
- The full costs of activities which take place outside or mainly outside school hours, and are not required as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
- The full costs of activities which take place outside or mainly outside school hours, and are not required in order to, fulfill statutory duties related to the National Curriculum or Religious Education.
- The full cost to each pupil of all approved activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside of school hours.
- The costs of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations and for preparing the pupil for such examination outside school hours.
- The full costs of a pupil re-sitting prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school.
- The full costs of entering a pupil for a prescribed public examination where the pupil has failed without good reason to complete examination requirements.
- The costs of ingredients or materials for practical subjects where the parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.
- Contribution for music lessons.
- The cost at the Head teacher's discretion towards damage, neglect or loss of property/equipment caused by pupils' behaviour (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or a lower cost may be set at the decision of the Head teacher or School Business Manager.
- Staff and others using the school telephone may do so at the normal provider's costs.
- The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance, Pay and Resource Committee.
- The school may charge for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services
- Schools may charge for transport in their minibuses only if they hold a permit issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. A permit is not required if no charge is made in cash or kind. The Local Authority supplies permits for school minibuses.
- Any charges made may be used to recover some or all of the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value. The service may not make a profit either directly through the fares charged or incidentally as part of a profit making activity, even if any profit would go into the school's other running costs or for charitable purposes. A charge is any payment in cash or kind (for example a club subscription) by or on behalf of a person that gives him/her a right to be carried.

7. Remissions Statement

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Spring Term Version4

in which charges will be reduced up to a maximum of 20% or waived in extreme circumstances upon decision by the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

8. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

The criteria qualification for remission, are given below.

Parents in receipt of

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the limit for that tax year
- Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27th October 2008

Parents who believe that they may qualify for this remission must apply in writing to the Head teacher. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters.

Authorisation for such remissions will be made by the Headteacher or School Business Manager and be allowed for the following:

- The full costs of food and accommodation on residential visits in school time.
- The full costs of food and accommodation on residential visits outside school time which are covered by the following criteria:
 - a) to fulfill any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination.
 - b) Specifically to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or Religious Education imposed by Section 10 of the 1988 Act.

9. 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:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits at the beginning of each term so that parents can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in installments.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection where possible.

The Board of Governors reserves the right to amend the above policy in light of any changing circumstances during the year.

Policy agreed by the Governing Body – Spring Term 2019

Review Date – Summer Term 2020

Staff member responsible – School Business Manager