

WATFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS



CHARGING & REMISSION POLICY

Headmaster's signature

24/02/21

Chair of Governors' signature

24/02/21

Policy Statement

The intended aim of the governors of Watford Grammar School for Boys is to try to ensure that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (both curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how the governors will best ensure that a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers, which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

What was consulted?

The policy has been informed by A Guide to the Law for School Governors, DfE guidance Charging for Educational Visits and Charging for School Activities May 2018.

Roles and responsibilities of headmaster, other staff and governors

The headmaster, staff and governors will ensure that the Charging and Remissions Policy is adhered to.

1. No charge will be made 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the School, or part of the School's basic curriculum for 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;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;*
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours, although voluntary contributions towards the cost of such activities will be requested
- education provided on any trip 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 the School's basic curriculum for religious education
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit, although voluntary contributions towards the cost of such activities may be requested

** If a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge will be made.*

2. A charge may be made for the following activities:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances;
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities

a) 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
 - 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 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
- 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 must 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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

b) Residential visits

Non-residential activities which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

A charge for accommodation and meal costs (charge must not exceed the actual cost) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time will be charged. A voluntary contribution will be asked to cover the costs of transport and other costs.

Pupils whose parents are in receipt of Free School Meal may receive help towards board and lodging costs for any trip. Residential trips are deemed to take place outside school time if the number of school sessions is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent on the trip (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the School day, regulations require that the School day is divided into two sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

c) Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions are invited for those trips, which take place mainly within school hours. The level of contributions for each visit is expected to cover all the major costs involved, such as transport, use of school minibuses and admission charges. No pupil, however, will be excluded because of an inability to pay, but the School reserves the right to cancel the trip if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit. Reminders to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

d) Instrumental Music tuition

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for instrumental and vocal tuition for individuals and groups

e) Other Charges

An administration fee will normally be levied on the cost of a trip to cover any bank charges (including Parent Pay) and administrative costs. A flat-rate charge will be levied on trips that occur during school hours (other than residential trips) to cover the cost of providing cover. This charge will be made for every two teachers that accompany trip. Activities that can be charged during the trip (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as “optional extras”.

3. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

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 if resources allow. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges may be waived.

Additional help for some of the costs may be available for parents in some circumstances and this is at the discretion of the headmaster in the first instance. Pupils that qualify for the 16-19 Bursary Fund are able to use this fund to help meet the cost of trips. Further assistance may be obtained from a separate fund administered by the Trustees of the Watford Grammar Schools.

4. 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 avoid this, the School will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible the School shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the academic year so that parents can plan ahead
- have an established system for parents to pay in instalments
- 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
- acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and avoid that method of selection

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Finance Committee of the Governing Body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving an annual financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the School’s extended services on those children most in need of additional support.