Charging & Remissions Policy

2026 – 2027

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INTRODUCTION

Flamstead Village School abides by HCC official guidelines. In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

We believe that our pupils should have equal opportunities to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parent's / carer's financial means.

This Charging & Remissions Policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a 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 them.

The Governing Body's policy is aligned with Hertfordshire County Council's charging policy as stated in the Handbook of Financial Regulations.

We will ensure that the following applies:

- No charges will be made for:
    - 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.
    - education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.
    - education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum.
    - transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Activities for which charges may be requested:

- Activities outside school hours:
    - Non-residential activities (other than those listed above) 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).

- Activities during school hours:
    - Non-residential activities (other than those listed above) which take place during school hours. These activities are regarded as "optional extras", and voluntary contributions will be sought. The charge will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of the provision. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether their parents have made a contribution.
    - Activities provided by a private external company within school hours where the parents have entered into a payment agreement (eg, breakfast or afterschool club or music lessons).

FAMILIES QUALIFYING FOR REMISSION OR HELP WITH CHARGES

In line with national guidance, some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge to parents in particular circumstances. These are outlined below. Parents / Carers in receipt of:

- Pupil Premium Grant

- Any circumstance where the Headteacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, considers that the pupil would be disadvantaged as a result of not having the charges waived. This will be on an individual basis and any assistance given will be in the strictest of confidence.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Headteacher or the Governing Body may ask parents / carers for a contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours (e.g. enrichment trips and workshops);
- school equipment; and / or
- school funds generally.

When organising school trips, events, or visits to enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites the parents / carers to contribute to the cost of the activity. The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, and the pupils of parents / carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute will 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 the activity will be cancelled.

RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision. However, the school cannot charge for the full educational or travel elements but can ask for a voluntary contribution towards the costs.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children who are in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant, will also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS

All children study music as part of the school curriculum, and there is no charge for this. There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. Parents / Carers directly pay the organisation that provides the tuition. It is the responsibility of the organisation to give parents / carers information about additional music tuition at the start of each year and to keep them informed of the progress made by their child.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS

The school offers extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. Clubs run by school staff do not incur any charges. Where there is a demand for an activity not offered by the school staff (e.g. gymnastics, football, street dance), the school may set up an activity with an independent organiser. Charges for this activity can be made directly to the parents / carers by the organiser. Parents / Carers give their permission for children to take part in extra-curricular activities via Arbor or via the external club directly.

PTA / FOFS EVENTS

On some occasions Friends of Flamstead School (FoFS) run events that incur a small charge for participation. This is an agreement between FoFS and the individual parent / carer.

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 when voluntary contributions are requested. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- We shall publish information about school visits at the earliest opportunity, within the school calendar, so that parents / carers can plan ahead.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, it may be possible to arrange to pay beyond the date of the trip.

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.
When breakages and damage arise from a pupil’s behaviour, parents / carers may be expected to pay towards the cost of replacements. Parents / Carers would also be expected to pay for the replacement of any library book if damaged or lost.

REFUNDS

Refer to Section 2.9 in Schedule of Financial Delegation.

It is the school’s policy to refund surplus amounts made on any particular activity, if that amount exceeds £2.00 per child unless otherwise stated. Amounts less than this will be absorbed within the school’s funds for related expenditure.

- DINNER MONEY: Refunds given in accordance with HCL guidelines.
- MILK MONEY: No refunds given for milk not taken, as this has to be pre-ordered and is subsidised.
- SWIMMING: Children are not refunded for days when they are absent from school as the overall costs are calculated assuming that all children are included.
- TRIPS / SCHOOL VISITS: Refunds are made at Headteacher’s discretion if absent after payment made, with the exception of any residential visits where the companies’ own refund policies are operational.
- MUSIC TUITION: Administered directly by Hertfordshire Music Service.
- OUT OF HOURS CLUBS: Administered directly by club organisers.