



Watford Grammar School for Girls

Charging and Remissions Policy

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| Committee Responsible | Finance and General Purposes Committee |

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1. Purpose, Scope and Principles

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the Governors and Headmistress which is robust and gives clear processes for charging and remissions. The policy will clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.

This procedure applies to all school activities

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) May 2018 on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headmistress. The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2. The Headmistress

The Headmistress is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3. Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently

- Notifying the Headmistress of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4. Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headmistress of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made:

5.1. Education:

- 5.1.1. An admission application
- 5.1.2. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- 5.1.3. Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum¹
 - Syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education;
- 5.1.4. Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- 5.1.5. Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- 5.1.6. Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

5.2. Transport:

- 5.2.1. Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- 5.2.2. Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- 5.2.3. Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- 5.2.4. Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

5.3. Residential visits

- 5.3.1. Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- 5.3.2. Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- 5.4. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

6. Where charges can be made:

6.1. Education:

- 6.1.1. Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them:
- 6.1.2. Optional extras (see Section 6.2);
- 6.1.3. Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see Section 6.2);
- 6.1.4. Community facilities³.

6.2. Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, the school can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- 6.2.1. Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- 6.2.2. Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- 6.2.3. Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- 6.2.4. Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- 6.2.5. Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- 6.2.6. Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- 6.2.7. The cost of buildings and accommodation
- 6.2.8. Non-teaching staff
- 6.2.9. Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- 6.2.10. 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 should not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

³ The powers to provide community facilities are under s.27(1) of the Education Act

7. Voluntary contributions

- 7.1. As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.
- 7.2. Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:
- Materials towards specific subjects
 - School trips & Educational Visits
- 7.3. There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.
- 7.4. If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.
- 7.5. The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents 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 it will be cancelled.

8. Summary of Key Activities:

Watford Grammar School for Girls recognises that it is the right of every student to receive a free school education and those activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be offered to all students regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost. The school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the curriculum. The Board of Governors has agreed the following charging policy

8.2 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 educational or travel elements, but may ask for a voluntary contribution.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging. See Section 9 on remissions for full details

8.3 Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus of £5 or more per pupil the school will consider making a refund. Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, e.g. £3 not £3.29.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that 'a surplus of £x has resulted and that if the parent / guardian would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by a date 'x' weeks in advance. If the school is not contacted by that date it will assume that the refund has been donated to school funds.'

8.4 Instrumental Music Lessons

Charges are levied in respect of individual music tuition and group music tuition if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil. Payment is set by the peripatetic music teacher and paid by the parent direct to the tutor.

8.5 Public Examinations

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in Regulations. However, parents may be charged under the following circumstances:

if the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
if the examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Board of Governors originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Pupils re-sitting examinations

Where parents/pupils have requested that an examination paper be returned or remarked

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in Regulations.

8.6 Materials and Textbooks

Charges may be made for the following:

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, the school may request a voluntary contribution.

Textbooks are provided free of charge (excluding Sixth Form), but in some subjects, additional revision guides and teaching materials are available, for which a charge is made.

Students may be requested to purchase textbooks where:

They are likely to annotate books

They are likely to retain them on completion of the course

Where they are additional to the resources provided by the department.

8.7 Lockers

A small voluntary contribution is requested from each pupil for the hire of lockers. This is payable on entry to the school in Y7 for the five years of compulsory school attendance, and on entry to the Sixth Form for the two years of advanced level studies.

8.8 Activities outside of school hours

No charge will be made for activities outside school hours that are part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education, or that form an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

For all other activities outside school hours, ie sports clubs, visual arts courses etc, a charge up to the cost of the activity will be levied.

8.8 Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Head may decide. Parents are asked to sign a letter to state that they are responsible for the costs of books and materials which are the property of the school.

8.9 Other Charges

The Head, Finance Committee or Board of Governors may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report. For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed in June each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in July each year.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Headmistress and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1. Remissions for residential visits

9.1.1. Universal credit in prescribed circumstances

9.1.2. Income Support

9.1.3. Income Based Jobseekers Allowance

9.1.4. Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

9.1.5. 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 £16,190

9.1.6. The guarantee element of State Pension Credit

9.1.7. An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

9.1.8. Any parent may apply for financial support by writing to the Headmistress.

10. Monitoring Arrangements

The Business and Finance Director monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by The Finance & General Purposes Committee every 2 years

APPENDIX 1

STATEMENT OF CHARGES, FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This statement is based on the current Charging and Remissions Policy which is reviewed bi-annually by the Board of Governors' Finance Committee.

1. Examination Fees and Charges

- (a) Charges will be made by the school for entry in examinations over and above a pupil's usual school approved entry.
- (b) The school will not pay the examination fee of a pupil in the Sixth Form who has consistently failed to produce work of a standard likely to attain a pass grade in that subject. If her parents decide to pay the fee instead, this fee is not recoverable, regardless of the result of the public examination
- (c) Pupils taking GCSE and GCE subjects not taught in school will be expected to pay a staffing and administration charge in addition to the entry fee for that subject. Pupils re-sitting GCE units will be expected to pay a staffing and administration charge per unit in addition to the unit entry fees.

2. School Trips and Activities

In order that school trips and other activities can take place, we will usually ask parents to contribute towards the cost. For residential trips these costs will include board and lodging. These contributions are voluntary but it would not be possible to run the activity without them. The amount requested includes a contribution toward the cost of administering and staffing the activity.

3. Financial Assistance

For activities in school time or which are required as part of the National Curriculum, help with contributions and charges is available through the school for families in financial need. Please contact Miss Tai in confidence.

4. Lost or damaged school equipment

We will usually ask pupils to pay for the replacement of lost or damaged books or other school equipment in their care.

5. Service Fund

The Service Fund is administered by Miss Tai to help girls in need to take a full part in school activities. Contributions of £5 per pupil will be requested as part of the annual Founders' Day commemoration in May, when we remember particularly the importance of service to others. A pre-printed envelope will be issued to each pupil for the return of the contribution.

6. Resource Fee

Year 7-11

On entry to the school a voluntary contribution is requested which covers use of a locker for five years, the WGGs Year Planner/Homework Diary ,a rough book for the first year at the school, and a calculator suitable for all Mathematics (including Sixth Form studies). It is not compulsory to purchase these items from WGGs. Any pupil whom is not able to make a voluntary contribution for a locker will be given a locker suitable for storage of their mobile phone only.

7. Voluntary Contributions from Parents

The Governing Body is determined to maintain the standards of the school, despite the endemic variations and shortfalls of education funding. Accordingly, all parents are asked to make a regular voluntary commitment to support the school financially. A request for a suggested minimum amount per month per family is made.

All parental donations are made to the Women of Vision Trust and the allocation of funds managed by the Trustees. A separate letter from the Chairman of the Board of Governors explains in more detail why this support is necessary.

8. Incidental voluntary contributions

The following list is not comprehensive and contingencies will arise from time to time at whole school and departmental level.

1. Incidental Voluntary Contributions

From time to time we will ask parents for voluntary contributions to defray the costs of specific items of activities. The following list is not comprehensive and gives examples of the type of activities that could be included:

- Copies of past examination papers for use at home
- Visits to the school by notable speakers who charge a fee
- Special subject activity days
- Booklets produced by the department for use at home
- Contribution towards the cost of materials in particular subjects