



DAVISON CE HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

POLICY AND MANAGEMENT DOCUMENT

**CHARGING AND REMISSIONS
POLICY**

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1. Policy Statement/Summary

Our Vision is that at Davison Church of England High School for Girls, students are free to choose any faith or none, but as a Church school, we want them to flourish, to live life in all its fullness as God intended. We reflect on what God has done for us through Jesus. We model his work through our Christian values. In our school we strive to reflect these values in the way we treat one another, conduct ourselves and care for those in our community and around the world.

At Davison CE High School, it is a prime aim that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly. We are a caring Christian community, whose values are built on trust, friendship, thankfulness, hope, forgiveness and friendship. This outworks in the form of respect, love and care for all, as reflected in this policy.

Davison CE High School is committed to the care and well-being of all staff and students, although we recognise that it is not possible to provide everything offered to students by the school without financial support from parents. This policy sets out Davison CE High School's approach to asking for costs to be fully or partially covered. It follows the West Sussex guidelines on charging for school activities which follows legislation provided in the Education Act 1996 sections 449-462.

2. Context

Davison CE High School is committed to providing a wide range of activities for all students to enhance their classroom experiences. These activities may take place entirely within, in part or totally outside during the school timetabled day, the timing of activities affects the application of the charging and remissions policy as does the motivation for offering the activity as an essential part of the national curriculum or examination programme or as an 'optional extra'.

The implementation of the charging and remissions policy also works within the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy and reflects the school's Christian ethos and desire to be as inclusive as possible.

Since September 2015, the school has charged for the hire of lockers, should they be required by students. There is no obligation on the part of parents or students to hire a locker but most choose to do so for the safe keeping and security of personal possessions. All students in receipt of Pupil Premium are allocated a locker free of charge.

3. Stakeholders and Users

3.1 Policy Stakeholders

Governors

Headteacher

Business Manager

Teachers

Support staff

Parents

Students

3.2 Policy Users

Headteacher

Business Manager

Teachers

Support staff

Parents

Students

4. Aims and Objectives

The charging and remissions policy aims to support the activities of all Davison students by making clear what must be charged for, what requires 'voluntary contributions' to enable an activity to go ahead and what arrangements are available for financial support across the range of situations which may involve parents contributing financially to cover the costs of activities undertaken by their daughter.

The charging and remissions policy sets out to promote full involvement of all students in school life, regardless of their parents' ability to pay.

Implementation of this policy supports the Equal Opportunities Policy.

5. Detailed Guidelines to Implement Policy

5.1 Education

School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge 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 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; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

Schools and local authorities can charge for:

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

5.2 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. If a charge is made for a particular type of activity, parents will be advised how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information will be made available to parents. 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; or
- 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 local authority/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; and
- 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

5.3 Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

5.4 Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

5.5 Transport

Schools cannot charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when she has

been prepared for that examination at the school; and

- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Guidance on school travel is available.

5.6 Residential visits

Schools cannot charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit 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 religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools can charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- 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 HMRC) does not exceed '£16,385 (2020 to 2021).
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.
- or are otherwise in demonstrable financial difficulties.

Parents will be invited to seek support with their voluntary contribution, in confidence, via the Headteacher. The school will use the School Fund Account and any other funding available to support activities, to partially or totally cover costs as required as long as the funding is available.

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during

school hours (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 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

5.7 Education partly during school hours/Non-residential activities

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

5.8 Pupil Premium

All students who are currently in receipt of Free School Meals or have received free school meals at any time in the last six years may apply for a pupil premium funded place on any trip or activity during the school day, even if voluntary contributions have been requested. All trip letters falling under this category will clearly state this provision on the reply slip.

All pupils in any group taking part in an activity that is not an optional extra for which charging is permissible, ultimately will not be excluded, whether or not the parent makes a voluntary contribution, if the activity goes ahead.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors establish the policy in line with West Sussex Guidelines and oversee its implementation in the event of a complaint.

The Headteacher ensures the day to day application of the policy for all school activities, ensuring equality of access to activities for all students.

The School Business Manager has responsibility to administer the school fund and to oversee all payments made by parents and carers for their daughters' activities, ensuring that monies are appropriately handled, accurate records are kept and receipts provided.

Teachers and support staff need to work within the charging and remissions policy when

establishing the costs of visits and activities (see appendix A).

Support staff involved in collecting monies for visits and keeping records need to be aware of the working of the charging and remissions policy to ensure their actions are in line with the policy.

Parents and carers need to be conversant with the charging and remissions policy, especially if they are unable to pay for their daughter's additional activities.

Students benefit individually from the application of this policy.

7. Additional Information

7.1 For Staff

The school is committed to equality of access and therefore does not in any situation operate on a 'first come, first served' policy. If a visit or activity is oversubscribed, all names will be entered into a draw and, to ensure fairness, the draw will be made in the presence of an independent witness.

7.2 For Parents/guardians

Davison has a commitment to being a "cashless" school for the security of payments and safety of our students. Therefore, payments should be made on line using Wise Pay through the school website. Reply slips for the trip/activity can also be submitted through Wise Pay to support a paperless system, clearly stating the name of the trip, amount paid and the pupil's name and form group. E-mail receipts are automatically issued for all on line payments through Wise Pay.

Any parent needing to apply for financial assistance should apply in writing to the Head teacher, except in the case of pupil premium, where the return slip will provide the option of a fully funded or part funded place/resource in line with the charging and remissions policy.

7.3 Refunds

Once a place has been confirmed, all voluntary contributions for deposits, instalments and final balances are non-refundable unless:

- i) There is a valid medical reason that the student cannot participate which would be covered by the school's travel insurance **or**
- ii) a substitute can be found for the place on the trip. This cannot be guaranteed.

By booking a place on a trip, parents are deemed accepting to honour all stage payments as set out in the trip letter. After the payment deadline, if any trip balances remain outstanding, the Headteacher reserves the right to prohibit that student from attending any other trip until the debt is cleared.

7.4 Monitoring

The application of the policy will be monitored by the Headteacher who will report annually to Governors on the extent of support being requested and offered to students.

8. Document Information

8.1 Date of next policy review

March 2022 unless regulations on Charging are changed before this date.

8.2 Change History

Changes made	Date	Person responsible
Rewritten in new policy format	November 2008	Della West
Amendments following guidance from county	November 2009	Della West
Amended policy Written by Ann Scales	September 2013	Chris Keating
Amended policy in line with DfE guidance 00244-2013 by	January 2016	Ann Scales
Amended policy written by Ann Scales	September 2017	Carly McGuckin
Amended policy to include new on-line payment system written by Ann Scales	March 2020	Carly Bradley
Reviewed and Child Tax Credit/Working Tax Credit amounts updated	March 2021	Carly Bradley

APPENDIX A

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is a charging and remissions policy?

A. Under the charging provisions set out in legislation, governing bodies and local authorities of state funded schools may choose to charge for certain defined activities, but only if they have first drawn up charging and remissions policies. These policies should be made available to parents on request.

Q. A visit involving staying overnight has been arranged for children at my school. Can the school charge for this?

A. Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home, the school is allowed to make a charge for board and lodging. This is with the exception of pupils whose parents are receiving: Universal Credit; Income support; Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £16,385 (2020 to 2021) and an income related employment and support allowance. Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. The headteacher must inform all parents of the right to claim free board and lodging if they are receiving these benefits.

Q. With regard to the remission of board and lodging payments, explain who pays for the expense? Would it come out of the school budget or is there a grant available to claim?

A. Although the criteria for being eligible for the remission of charges for board and lodgings is the same as free school meals, that is where the similarity ends. The costs involved in the remission of board and lodgings are to be borne by the school from any contingency funds. There is no return to be completed to re-claim the money back.

Q. Our school has a large number of pupils eligible for free school meals. This means that they would also receive remission for board and lodgings expenses for residential visits. How can the school fund/organise residential visits?

A. Government funding for schools to each local authority recognises the different needs of each area. In terms of the allocation to schools, each local authority sets a funding formula which is agreed with the local school's forum. All local authorities are required to include an element in their formula to reflect the needs of deprived pupils. The amount that individual schools receive from the local authority reflects their relative need compared with other local schools.

In addition, schools receive pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils, based largely on those who are eligible for free school meals. This funding is provided by the

government to raise the attainment of eligible pupils and narrow the attainment gap between eligible pupils and their peers. It is for headteachers and school governing bodies to decide how to use their formula funding and pupil premium allocation.

Schools cannot exclude children from taking part in an activity that is part of the national curriculum purely on the grounds that the parent or carer cannot make, or refuses to make, a contribution. This can clearly place schools in some difficulty on occasions where a number of parents/carers might be in such a position. The school then has to decide whether they can cover the costs of such activity from within the budget or by fundraising, or whether the activity has to be cancelled.

If there is a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.

Q. Can governing bodies charge for educating children in maintained schools and academies?

A. The local authority or governing body cannot charge for education that takes place in school hours. Nor can they charge for activities that take place outside school hours if these are part of the national curriculum, necessary as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education. They can charge for permitted 'optional extras', provided they have drawn up a statement of general policy on charging and given details of 'optional extras' they intend to charge for. The governing body's policy does not have to be the same as the local authority's policy, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

Q. Can a school charge for an activity that takes place out of school hours?

A. This kind of activity is often referred to as an 'optional extra'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

The actual charge for the optional extra cannot exceed the actual cost of the provision. Schools cannot and must not make a profit from charging for optional extras. 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Q. Can a school ask parents for voluntary contributions?

A. Schools may invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it clear that the contributions would be voluntary. It should be remembered that education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials, equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the local authority or by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. Governing bodies should also

clearly explain that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently, and that the activity might be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

Q. The school has sent letters out to parents asking for contributions towards a school visit, do parents have to pay?

A. Headteachers or governing bodies may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment; and
- school funds generally.

Children of parents who are unable, or unwilling, to contribute may not be discriminated against. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to cover the cost of the visit, or activity, and there is no alternative method to make up the shortfall, then the school should cancel the activity/visit. It would be advisable to make parents aware of a possible cancellation to the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received from the outset.

Q. Can a state boarding school make compulsory charges for day pupils?

A. State funded boarding schools cannot charge for education during school hours. They may however charge for extended services offered to day pupils, but this must be optional. Compulsory charges must never be made for extended day services including breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, evening meal and supervised homework sessions whether the pupils take up these services or not. Many maintained schools provide wraparound services but they are not part of the school day and it would be unlawful for state funded boarding schools to make wraparound services compulsory.

Q. What happens if the school is not able to raise enough voluntary contributions to cover costs?

A. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, for example school funds and/or fundraising activities, then it must be cancelled. The possibility of the activity/visit being cancelled due to a shortfall in contributions should be made clear in the information sent to parents.

Q. What if a parent is unable, or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution? How does this affect their child(ren)?

A. The school cannot exclude a child from taking part in an activity that is part of the national curriculum purely on the grounds that the parent or carer cannot make, or refuses to make, a contribution. This can clearly place schools in some difficulty on occasions where a number of parents/carers might be in such a position. The school then has to decide whether they can cover the costs of such activity from within the budget or by fundraising, or whether the activity has to be cancelled.

Q. What support can a school offer a parent/carer who has difficulty making a financial contribution?

A. Schools must ensure that parents in receipt of Universal Credit, 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 HMRC) does not exceed £16,385 (2020 to 2021) are aware of the support available to them when being asked for contributions toward the costs of school visits. Some schools also have funds available to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. Parents should be encouraged to speak to the head teacher, in confidence, in order to establish if such funding arrangements exist.

No charge may be made if there is a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination. In addition, if the activity is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel for any pupil, not just those whose parents are in receipt of benefits.

Q. What about charges for transport during school hours?

A. Any transport provided by the school in school hours must be provided free of charge (though a voluntary contribution could be requested).

Q. Can the school charge for something like cooking ingredients or materials needed for a technology lesson?

A. The school can make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

Q. Can the school charge entry fees for examinations?

A. An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

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

Q. Can a school make a charge to pay for the administration required as part of the admission process?

A. Paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'Schools Admission Code 2012' rules out requests from admission authorities for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process. Legislation prevents state funded schools from charging fees for admission or for providing education during school hours.

Q. Can a school ask for a direct debit to the school fund?

A. No. A school may ask for voluntary contributions, as long as it is clear that they are voluntary, but we are clear that state education should be free and we have no intention of changing this policy. No contributions may be sought as part of the admissions process.

Q. Can a school ask parents to contribute to (or pay in full) the cost of a tablet or computer?

A. Sections 451 and 454 of the Education Act 1996 prohibits schools from charging for education and the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment (this would include tablets), during school hours. However, there is no prohibition on asking parents to make voluntary contributions. Additionally, there is a specific exception in the legislation which enables schools to charge for materials where the pupil's parent wishes them to own the materials. All contribution requests to parents must make clear that the contributions are voluntary and that, if a parent cannot make or refuses to make a contribution, their children will not be treated any differently and will not be excluded from taking part in any activity or related equipment.

Q. What are community facilities?

A. Schools are allowed to provide facilities that can be used by the local community, for example out-of hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions. These facilities further any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated. Academies should seek guidance from the Charity Commission if they are in doubt. Advice from the Charity Commission can be found [here](#).

Schools can charge for the use of these facilities, and a profit can also be generated, providing it is spent on the purposes of the school and or on community facilities.