Charging and Remissions Policy

Last Reviewed by:	Pam Sayle
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This document sets out the Charging Policy of Highfield School and provides information to parents on the circumstances where the school would charge for activities, whether these are within school hours or out of school hours. It also provides information on activities where no charge is made.

Educational Visits, Extra-curricular activities and independence skills.
The Governors will support off-site activities which the Headteacher considers to be of good educational value and intrinsic to the curriculum.

Where costs are above a normal cost of a curriculum activity, parents may be asked to contribute so that each activity is part-funded. Staffing and transport costs will be met by the school. If funds received are insufficient, the visit may be underwritten by the school or cancelled, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Voluntary Contributions for Non Curriculum Activities
When organising school activities that are not part of the curriculum but enrich the educational experience of the children, the school will invite parents to contribute to the entire cost of the activity. These contributions are necessary to fund the activity but are voluntary as the school cannot make contributions mandatory. The level of contribution is decided by the Headteacher and is designed to cover the cost of the activity without affecting the school budget allocation. Staff costs will always be met by the school. There are circumstances where the school will contribution towards an activity, but if the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, the school may decide to cancel the activity. If the activity goes ahead, it will include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. In these circumstances the school would not treat these children differently from any others.

Parents have the right to know how each trip is funded and the school will provide this information on request.

Residential Visits
The school organises residential visits in school time for which there is no charge made for the education element. A charge will, however, be made to cover the cost of board and lodgings. Activities which take place out of normal school hours, costs of hiring trained staff for specialist activities will be charged in addition to board, lodgings. Staff costs will be met by the school and a contribution to help with transportation will be requested.

Swimming
The school organises swimming lessons for students, which take place in school time and, although they exceed the National Curriculum requirements, the school does not levy a charge to parents.

After School Activities
Where these are provided there will be a charge to cover costs, unless the school received funding from other sources such as grants.

Damage
In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of School books or equipment, the school will render the parent liable for the cost of repair or replacement.

The School does not accept liability for any items of personal property lost or damaged whilst students are attending school or extra-curricular activities.

Free School Meal Eligibility
Students who are eligible for Free School Meals are able to attend after school clubs free of charge, can attend extra-curricular school trips free of charge, can attend residential visits free of charge and can have school dinners free of charge. The School received additional funding through Pupil Premium for all students registered for Free School Meals.

Students may be able to get Free School Meals if any of the following apply:-

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit.
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190).
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 .

In addition, the following pupils will be protected against losing their free school meals:

- Since 1 April 2018, all existing free school meals claimants have continued to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit is rolled out. This applies regardless of any change in household circumstances, including if their earnings rise above the threshold during that time. Protections will remain in place until the end of the 2025/26 school year.
- From the start of the 2026/27 school year, the Department for Education will extend entitlement to free school meals to include all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit. It is our intention to end transitional protections alongside this change in threshold, with eligibility for all pupils reverting to whether they meet the eligibility criteria, regardless of whether they were previously protected. We will issue further guidance ahead of September 2026.

A pupil is only eligible to receive a free school meal when a claim for the meal has been made on their behalf and their eligibility, or protected status, has been verified by the school where they are enrolled or by the local authority.