

Charging and Remissions Policy



1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information about charging and voluntary contributions for Vale School's activities.

2. Voluntary Contributions

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours. Vale School follows the West Sussex County Council policy for charging for school activities that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education's current advice document.

(<https://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00213976/school-charging>).

No compulsory charge will be made for any activity which takes place during school hours. Any contribution is entirely voluntary, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute are not discriminated against. However, 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.

Arrangements

All letters regarding contributions for school activities will make it clear that these are voluntary, and that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated differently. If any parents have any financial difficulty (no child will be prevented from taking part) they will be invited to talk to the headteacher who will come to an agreed arrangement.

3. Residential Trips

Special rules apply for residential activities.

In School Hours

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time (50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs within school hours), it meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for education or for the cost of travel. However, charges not exceeding the actual cost for the individual pupil will be made for board and lodging. Voluntary contributions (as per section 2 above) will be requested.

Children whose parents are in receipt of the support payments as stated in Section 11 below (i.e. entitled to Free School meals) will also be entitled to the remission of the Board and Lodge payment. Voluntary contributions (as per section 2 above) will be requested. For families in receipt of Free School meals the school will consider requests for payment adjustments as appropriate to individual needs in relation to the voluntary contributions.

4. Outside School Hours

An activity is deemed to take place out of school hours if 50% or more of the whole time spent

on the activity occurs out of school hours. In this case, and for a residential trip, this will be considered as an 'optional extra' and a charge will be levied which includes an appropriate element for travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and other equipment, non teaching costs and teaching staff costs. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

5. Music Tuition

There will be no charge for musical tuition if the teaching is an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. For other musical tuition, charges will be made for individuals or groups to play a musical instrument, and for the hire and repair of instruments which are used for instrumental tuition at school. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

6. Clubs or Activities Outside School Hours

We have three types of clubs and activities that take place at Vale School.

- i) Clubs and activities solely run by staff that are free to all participants, but we may ask for a voluntary contribution towards materials used during that activity.
- ii) Clubs and activities organised by the school in partnership with an external provider, where a charge may be required for participation.
- iii) Clubs and activities solely provided by external providers who charge for participation.

7. Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Year 4. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of this transport. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

8. Fundraising/Charity Events

During the school year we hold various charity or Friends of the Vale fundraising events. Children are encouraged to do something or wear something for a small voluntary contribution. This is not compulsory and no child is excluded if they don't wish to contribute.

9. Damage/Loss to Property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide it right to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

10. Other Charges

The headteacher, school Governing Body or delegated committee may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services.

11. Remissions

Children whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement for Year 3 to Year 6, will also be entitled to the remission of voluntary contributions for day trips and remission of charges in respect of board and lodging for residential trips.

To qualify for free school meals the parent/carers must be in receipt of one of the benefits, see link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

12. Refund of Monies

A - Cancellation of Activity by the School

In the event of the cancellation of an activity by the school, we will refund all monies in full, unless a comparable activity is to be rearranged.

B - Cancellation/Withdrawal of a Pupil by a Parent/Carer non residential trip (involving a voluntary contribution)

In the event of a decision by a parent/carers to reverse their consent and financial commitment to any activity, the school will refund voluntary contributions at 50% for notice periods that exceed 20 clear school days before the activity (excludes day of notification and day of activity). No refunds will be given for notice less than this 20 school day period.

C - Cancellation/Withdrawal of a Pupil by a Parent/Carer non residential trip (involving a compulsory payment/optional extra)

In the event of a decision by a parent/carers to reverse their consent and financial commitment to any activity, no refunds will be given.

D - Cancellation/Withdrawal of a Pupil by a Parent/Carer for a residential trip (involving a compulsory payment/optional extra and voluntary payment).

In the event of a decision by a parent/carers to reverse their consent and financial commitment to a residential activity, the school will adopt the refund policy as stipulated by the operator for that trip.

E - External Activities paid to a third party

Refunds for external provisions are not a school matter.

F - Additional External Activities - provided by the school

Where the Vale School organises an activity that requires the purchase of event tickets or transport to any venue for the benefit of parents/carers or their family. Payment in full is required at the time of booking. In the event of a decision by a parent/carers to reverse their commitment the school will not refund any monies received or participate in the reselling of tickets or travel spaces.

13. Insurance

Parents are reminded that West Sussex County Council offer a Pupil Personal Accident Insurance scheme for parents. Further information regarding this can be obtained via West Sussex County Council Legal Services, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

14. Delegation

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy and dealing with individual circumstances raised by parents/carers.

15. Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Governing Body will review this policy annually, and as necessary due to any change in legislation.