WOODBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

CHARGING POLICY

1. Introduction

This charging policy has been approved in accordance with s457 of the *Education Act 1996. It aims to: i) allow every student full access to the curriculum, irrespective of any charges; ii) make a broad programme of trips and activities accessible to as many students as possible; iii) establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the school budget.*

2. Educational Visits and Journeys

Under the terms of the 1996 Education Act, schools can only charge parents for the cost of board and lodging. To cover the additional expenses of transport, insurance, etc, the school will ask parents / carers for voluntary contributions. Without this contribution, however, except in exceptional circumstances, the trip cannot take place as the school has no alternative means of funding the activity.

Families who are currently in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) may receive 50% towards the cost of all day trips and 50% off the cost of any educational residential trips, up to a maximum contribution of £200. The decision to award a discount, and the amount to award (in exceptional cases, to increase it) is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

If a visit is an *essential* requirement of an exam specification or the National Curriculum and the school has finances available, then the school, at the discretion of the Headteacher, may make provision to waive the costs of all charges associated with the activity.

Generally, however, most visits and journeys are deemed as *non-essential* in terms of the fulfilment of the exam specification / National Curriculum and, as such, will incur the cost above as described as voluntary contributions.

Any pupils whose behaviour in class and in school is a cause for concern will not be allowed to participate in the visit/journey. The school reserves the right to withdraw a student from the visit/journey, even though provisional acceptance has been granted and payments made. The very nature of the programme and visit/journey do require a high degree of personal self-responsibility and a genuine willingness to work co-operatively with the group. Deposits are non-refundable and it may not be possible to refund later contributions, even if all paid up prior to the visit/journey, if this undermines the financial viability of the visit.

3. Public Examinations

Pupils or departments will not be charged for changes of tier or withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The exam entry fees for the first sitting of all GCSE, A Level, Cambridge National or Cambridge Technical or other public examination undertaken as the end point of a course of study at the school are paid by the school.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments if the request is made after the date set by the awarding bodies.

Exam fee reimbursements are sought from pupils who:

- decide to sit or withdraw from an exam after the late entry or withdrawal deadline date set by the awarding bodies
- fail to sit an exam without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances

- do not meet the necessary course requirements (e.g. failing to submit required coursework) but parents still want the entry to be made

In all cases, re-sit fees are paid by the pupil unless medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances is supplied to the Exams Officer.

Failure to attend an examination or pay for a re-sit could mean that the qualification is not completed and a grade cannot be awarded in that subject or a grade will be issued based only on the completed units.

Where a student would like to sit an exam that is not part of the curriculum the entry fee for this must be paid for by the student. The Centre retains the right to not enter a student for an examination if the entry requirements cannot be met by the Centre. The Centre also retains the right to not enter a student if the date of the examination falls during a school holiday or on a Bank Holiday when the Centre is closed.

Pupils will be issued with a Re-sit Request form to allow them to pay for a re-sit in a particular subject. Any pupils returning their Re-sit form after the deadline date shown on it will be required to pay late entry fees that will double the cost of an entry.

Enquiries About Results (EAR) may be requested by departments or pupils if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

Pupils, or parents, can request that an EAR be carried out and they will be charged for this service before a request is made to the awarding body. The Exam Officer will make available to every pupil on results day an up-to-date table showing the fees and deadline dates for the EAR service as set by the awarding bodies.
Each pupil will also have a copy of an EAR request form or have access to a Google form on the school website to allow them to make their request.

If a result is queried by a Head of Department, the fee will be paid for by the requesting department.

If the school's marks for internal assessment have been accepted by an awarding body without change, then it is not possible to request a review of marking of this component.

In the event that the EAR results in a grade change, a refund of the fee will be made to the pupil if they have paid for the EAR.

4. Basic Equipment

We ask our parents and carers to continue to provide basic writing and maths equipment, including a calculator, as this will be useful for homework. These items can be purchased through the school.

5. Materials for Art, Science, Technology and Food Technology

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, science and Technology, a charge will be levied for the cost of the materials used. In respect of food technology, a charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients used.

6. 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 will be the cost of replacement or repair, or a contribution to the full cost, which will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party (for example, damage to a neighbouring property by a pupil), where the cost has been met by the school; the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or a contribution to the full cost, which will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

7. Activities Outside of School Hours

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

If a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not part of the school's normal specification beyond lesson hours (periods 1 to 6), then a charge will be levied on parents/carers.

8. Work Experience

Parents/carers are expected to pay for fares and food where pupils are on work experience to other organisations. Any variations to this will be at the discretion of the headteacher.

9. Remissions' Policy

If the school feels that there are particular activities or circumstances where it is unreasonable to levy charges to parents/carers, then the Headteacher or the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Governing Body as appropriate, reserves the right to use its own discretion.

Children whose parents or carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, be able to apply to the school for discounts from the cost of school visits:

- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Universal Credit, provided the household's annual net earned income does not exceed £7,400 (as assessed by earnings from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs at the time of application)

Usual free school lunch entitlement verification procedures should be applied when considering remission of these charges. An application form can be located on the school website under `Parents/Carers'.

10. School Debtors:

Reminders are sent at appropriate intervals, which differ according to circumstances. If payment is still not forthcoming, a letter is written by the appropriate budget holder within the school and, if necessary, followed up by further correspondence by the School Business & Finance Manager. If, after an appropriate period, payment is still not forthcoming, the Local Authority is asked to raise an appropriate invoice. If payment is still not made, consideration is given to referring matters to the Local Authority's solicitors.

11. Hiring of the School Site:

The school has a full annual programme of lettings activities for which outside hirers are appropriately charged for our services.

12. Miscellaneous:

i) Some student sundries are available for purchasing through the finance office such as ties, badges, calculators and maths sets. These items can also be purchased using our on-line payment systems via *Scopay.com*

ii) The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

13. Collection of Payments:

The school finance office is responsible for the collection of all payments from students, parents, staff, etc. The teaching staff are not required to do so as part of their roles here.

Reviewer: School Business & Finance Manager

Approval: Approved by F&GP Committee on 6th October 2026

Next Review Date: Autumn 2027