HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Person Responsible:	GB Committee
Date Adopted:	July 2025
Date of last review:	Autumn 2025
Date of next review:	Autumn 2026

1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Hoe Valley School (HVS) recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and experiences can make towards a student's education. HVS aims to provide a wide range of activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for our students and as part of our enrichment programme.

We believe that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' or carers' financial means.

This policy defines the school's approach to charging and remissions for school activities and describes how we intend to ensure that all our students benefit from school activities, whilst minimising any financial barriers which may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

This policy is written in accordance with the requirements of the School's Funding Agreement and the requirements of the school to comply with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

2. CHARGES

The Head Teacher and Governors will ensure that the following policy applies:

General

- If parents are asked for money, it will always be made clear whether it is a charge or a voluntary contribution

- When any trip or activity is arranged and regardless of whether a Charge (Section 2) or Voluntary Contribution (Section 3) is levied, parents will be notified when a place is available. For any activity where a voluntary contribution is made, such basis will never be related to the ability to make a contribution.

2.1 Activities for which no charges will be made

2.1.1 Educational activities

- provided during school hours* (excluding during the lunch-time break) including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours* if it is
    - part of the National Curriculum
    - part of HVS's basic curriculum for religious education
    - part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at HVS

- instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments, if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip

** See Section 2.3 for definition of 'School Hours'*

2.1.2 Examinations

Examination entry fees, if the registered student has been prepared for the examination at HVS.

2.1.3 Other

- an admission application to HVS
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip that forms part of the school curriculum

2.2 Activities for which charges may be made

In all cases in 2.2.1 to 2.2.9 as outlined below, where a charge is made:

- HVS will inform the parents/carers of the amount in advance
- Charges will be collected in advance
- Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred
- Where any activity is dependent on a minimum number of students to make the activity viable, this will be communicated in advance

2.2.1 Non - educational or School activities outside school hours*

Other than those listed in 2.1.1 above and only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours*

2.2.2 Residential activities

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school hours*. Students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits may be offered financial support through pupil premium or hardship school budgets.

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school hours* (other than for those activities listed in 3.1.1 above)

** See Section 2.3 for definition of 'School Hours'*

2.2.3 Examinations

Examination entry fees, including any re-sits, if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination at HVS. HVS students will be charged for resits. These include GCSE exams for Home Languages. The school, will, however consider paying the cost of these for Pupil Premium students.

2.2.4 Sports and other enrichment clubs

HVS offers additional sporting and other activities after school as part of our enrichment programme. Where the activity takes place outside the school premises and/or is run and organised by qualified instructors who are not members of the school staff a charge may be levied directly by the provider of club. The school will consider meeting the costs incurred by students who are eligible for pupil premium funding.

2.2.6 Transport

Transport provided in conjunction with any non-educational activity outside school hours.

2.2.7 Music tuition

Music tuition and the attendant costs of hiring of musical instruments for individual or groups of students where such tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent. These individual or group lessons

are typically taught by peripatetic music teachers. Either the organisation providing the lesson or HVS makes a charge for these lessons, but parents of students who attract pupil premium funding are offered a reduced payment. HVS gives parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

2.2.8 School Canteen

HVS offers all students the opportunity to purchase hot and cold food and drinks from the school canteen before School, during morning break, at lunchtime and after school before clubs commence.

The canteen is operated by the School's in House Provision.

The canteen operates on a cashless basis, and all parents are given a cashless catering account operated by ParentPay. Parents wishing for their child(ren) to use the canteen need to ensure that sufficient funds are topped up to the child's cashless catering account to enable purchases to be made.

The school will not allow any debt to incur on a cashless catering account and if there are no funds on the cashless catering account, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure their child is provided with a packed lunch.

Parents are able to set a daily limit of expenditure for their child(ren) by contacting the school finance office. The default limit is £5 per day, providing there are sufficient funds on the account.

For students in receipt of Free School Meals, the School will add a daily allowance to the child's cashless catering account. This amount will always cover the cost of a 2 course hot meal of the day, or an alternative such as a sandwich or jacket potato. Any amount not used is not carried forward to the next day and parents are able to add further funds to their child's account should they wish.

The daily allowance for the 2025/2026 academic year is £2.65.

HVS will not pass on any charges to parents in respect of non-food costs incurred by the school relating to lunch provision except for instances of damage.

2.2.9 Materials, Books, Ingredients or Equipment

Required to produce a finished product made in School (e.g. in art, design or food technology) where the parents have agreed in advance that the finished article should be owned by the student or parent/carer.

2.2.10 School Productions

HVS students will put on plays, performances and shows under the direction of HVS staff. A charge for admission to a performance will be made. Such charges will be levied to cover the expected costs of the production, and any surplus funds will be reinvested in similar future events.

2.2.11 School Uniform

HVS has an approved School Uniform supplier from whom certain mandatory items of School uniform must be purchased. A list of such items is available from the School Office and communicated annually to all parents.

2.3 *School hours

For the purposes of 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 above, School hours are defined as the standard school hours of 8.30am – 3.30pm or as detailed on the school website, excluding the lunch break. Where an activity takes place partly inside and partly outside School hours, the activity is defined as taking place outside School hours when:

- 50% or more of the total time for the trip or activity, including travel, occurs outside school hours.
- For residential visits where 50% or more of the half-day sessions spent on the visit occur outside school hours. A half-day session means any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight, regardless of the starting or ending times of the activity or the school day.
- For example, if students were taking part in an activity from 1pm on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday, this would constitute 7 half days including 3 school half-days (Thurs pm, Fri am and Fri pm). As 4 of the 7 half-days are outside school time, the activity would be deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

2.4 Other Charges

To actively engage in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g. pens, pencils, ruler, calculator. A comprehensive list of such items will be communicated to parents and students via the family handbook which is available on the school website.

Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents to provide these items, HVS actively encourages parents and students to purchase them. Some optional items of equipment may on occasion be offered for sale by the school.

2.5 Lettings

The school may offer its facilities for hire or use by the local community, commercial enterprises, public organisations or charitable groups. Any such lettings will be agreed by the Head Teacher and any funds received used solely for the benefit of the school. The charges are reviewed and agreed annually by the Head Teacher.

The approval of organisations who wish to let some or all of the premises will be at the Head Teacher's discretion. Governors should receive a report of which organisations the School is letting to on a regular basis, no less frequently than annually.

2.6 Damage to School Property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to School property, or loss of school property on loan to students, the Head Teacher may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

The charge levied will be equal to the cost of the replacement or repair necessary.

2.7 Chromebook Damage

All students are allocated a Chromebook which can be taken off site. They are fully responsible for the device during the school day and if damage occurs an invoice is sent to parents to pay for repair. It is expected that students take their Chromebook home to do independent learning and prep. All students and parents sign a Chromebook agreement and an acceptable use agreement.

3. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the students, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost.

In all cases where a voluntary contribution is sought:

- HVS will inform the parents/carers of the amount of the contribution in advance.
- the contributions will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred.
- contributions will be collected in advance.
- where any trip or activity is dependent on a minimum level of voluntary contributions received, this will be communicated in advance.

If a trip goes ahead, it may include students whose parents have not paid any contribution. We will not treat these students differently to any others and no student will be excluded from a trip or activity if their parent/carer chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school will provide this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities (which is not exhaustive), organised by the school, which may require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras' and are not part of the National Curriculum:

- visits to museums, art galleries or local curriculum centres
- sporting activities which require transport expenses
- outdoor adventure activities
- visits to or by a theatre company
- visitors to the school
- school trips
- musical events

4. SUPPORT FUND & REMISSIONS

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Board of Governors has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made as outlined in Section 2.3.2 may be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances within the limits of any support fund that may be available.

The criteria for consideration for remission are given below, and complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

- If the child is eligible for pupil premium funding
- In cases of financial hardship.

HVS will also consider sympathetically requests for assistance in the phasing of payments or contributions, providing that all such phased payments or contributions have been agreed in advance and made by the time the activity or trip takes place.

5. REFUNDS

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of a trip or activity due to circumstances beyond the students' control
- HVS deciding that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made.

- In other circumstances at the discretion of the Head Teacher. This will not normally include circumstances where a student does not attend a trip, activity or club, or wishes to cease their participation in such activity but has already paid for further sessions of that activity.

6. PAYMENT METHODS

- HVS is a cash-free School, and all payments of charges and voluntary contributions should be made using the school's chosen on-line payment provider ParentPay unless explicitly stated otherwise.
- Upon enrolment to HVS, the primary carer of each student will be given the details of how to create an on-line account for their child and how to operate it in order to pay monies to HVS. Should the parents/carers of a student not have access to any means of on-line banking, they should inform the school's finance department who will discuss the options available.