Cysgod y Coed

Charging and Remission Policy

Document Control	
Document author	Jake Parkinson
Statutory status	Statutory
Website status	On website
Approved by	Management Committee
Date approved	September 2026
Approval cycle	Annually
Next review date	September 2027

Document history			
Version	**Date**	**Reviewer**	**Note of revisions**
2	Sep 2026	JP	Changed name of service Additional sentence in final section ‘assisting those with limited income’

Associated documents
This policy replaces both the Complaints Policy

All our policies are constructed using the Monmouthshire values:

Teamwork Openness Fairness Flexibility Kindness

All our policies are co-constructed and informed by professional learning, pupil voice, parent carer voice, staff voice and subject to challenge and support by our Management Committee.

This policy makes clear how people should treat others and what may happen where things go wrong.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out what charges can and cannot be made for activities for Cysgod y Coed. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with Sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996 which sets out the law regarding what charges can and cannot be made for activities in schools maintained by Local Authorities.

We believe in providing a programme of enrichment activities to enhance and support the learning of all our pupils, adding to their enjoyment and understanding of topics and learning experiences. Many of the enhanced activities unfortunately have an associated cost, and due to budgetary constraints, the service is unable to provide them free of charge. However, we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from these enhanced learning experiences independent of their parents' or carers financial means.

This policy gives clarity over:

- The items which are provided free
- The items that will be funded by a voluntary contribution (an optional payment required from parents/carers)
- When there will be a charge (a payment required from parents/carers)
- How costs are calculated
- How we try and make paying for items manageable for parents/carers
- How we will assist those with a limited income

Education

All education during the school day[1] is free.

This includes:

- examination fees (whereby the pupil has prepared for the examinations in school)
- examination re-sits (whereby a pupil has prepared in school)
- subject textbooks
- learning resources such as exercise books and subject specific [such as, science laboratory] equipment
- We use Grant Funding to provide a range of enrichment activities for pupils free of charge, further information on which can be found on our website

Optional Extras

A charge will be made for items relating to activities that take place mainly out of school time or are not an essential part of the curriculum.

Optional extras that are of high value will firstly be advertised for expressions of interest, with a date by which a deposit should be paid. In organising the optional extra, a non-refundable deposit[2] will be required from all parents/carers to secure bookings by the date given by the school. Parents whose children are eligible for Free School Meals could be entitled to some subsidy of the cost remainder of the cost.

Educational Visits

We do not charge for any activity undertaken as an essential part of the Curriculum.

Should there be a residential trip that is an essential part of the curriculum, the service is able to charge for the element of board and lodging, unless the parent/carer is in receipt of certain benefits. This can be discussed further with the Head of the Pupil Referral Service

The service however, is able to request voluntary contributions from parents/carers. We do however, as far as possible, use service funding and grants to cover as many costs as possible. There is no legal obligation to make a voluntary contribution. Pupils will not be excluded through parent/carers inability or unwillingness to pay. Pupils whose parent/carers cannot contribute will not be treated any differently. If the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions (and it is unable to fund the activity), the activity may need to be cancelled.

Other Charges

[1] The school day is defined by the start time and finishing times published by the service.

[2] Non-refundable unless the school or relevant outside agency decide to cancel the event.

Loss and Damage of Property:

Parent/carers of a pupil who loses or wilfully damages any item of Cysgod y Coed property, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement. Any matter involving damage or loss of Cysgod y Coed property will be investigated and discussed with parents. A valuation for the cost of replacement or repair will be given and agreement sought about the timescale for the repair/replacement.

How costs are calculated

When calculating the costs, the service can include the cost of the activity, transport, overnight costs, materials or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra, costs of non-teaching staff, costs of supply engaged to enable the service to provide the optional extra and any administrative fees (for example Parent Pay charges). A breakdown of these costs will be explained to parents/carers.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra, divided by the number of pupils participating. The cost of the activity will not include any element of subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity and whose parents are unable to pay the full charge.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and parents/carers.

Parent Pay Charges

The school reserves the right to pass on the transaction charges for the use of Parent Pay to parents as part of voluntary contributions and charging. These costs are 1.28% of the payment amount. The Management Committee has agreed not to pass on costs from ParentPay to parents for the costs of booking school meals. The school uses ParentPay as the cashless system and charges cannot be avoided as all payments should be made using it. Any parents who wish to not pay online can request a payment card and make payments using their local PayPoint (at shops and Post Offices).

Refunds

In the event an activity makes an unexpected surplus, the service will consider making a refund if the surplus is either (a) 5% or more of the total cost per person (b) £5 or more per person. Parents/carers will be offered the refund and must contact the Finance Office to claim the refund, which shall be made through ParentPay. Any refunds not claimed will be put towards the service's fund. If a parent/carers requests a refund for a contribution they have already made, it may be done so in full or in part, at the discretion of the Head of the Cysgod y Coed, dependent upon the circumstances.

How we try and make paying for items manageable

The service raises money through events and this helps to subsidise activities. The service uses Grant Funding in a transparent manner, focussed on pupil wellbeing, and information around Grant Funding plans is on our website. We report annually through the Head's report to Management Committee as to how the school's budget is spent.

The service recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we try to adhere to the following:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of activities (and their approximate costs) at the beginning of each term and residential trips at the beginning of the academic year
- We will allow parents/carers to pay in instalments
- When the opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, it will be possible to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip

- We will not offer “first pay, first allocated” opportunities as this discriminates against pupils from families who are struggling financially and instead offer expressions of interest registration with payment of a deposit at a later (specified) date.

Assisting those with a limited income (remissions)

As a general rule, the service uses grant funding to support trips and activities, making sure they are free of charge and all pupils can attend. In the rare cases in which a charge is made for a trip or activity, pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals, in most circumstances, will be able to participate in activities at reduced rates. An allocation of 2% of the age weighted pupil funding for each eligible pupil is available to help towards the costs of optional extras.

Parents/carers should discuss the matter with the Head of Cysgod y Coed in the first instance. In some cases, the service may apply to other bodies and agencies to subsidise or remit the charges for enrichment activities.

This policy was approved by the Management Committee

Signed: … …. Chair of the Management Committee

Date: ……14th October 2026…

Signed: ……J. Parkinson…… Head of Cysgod y Coed

Date: ……14th October 2026……