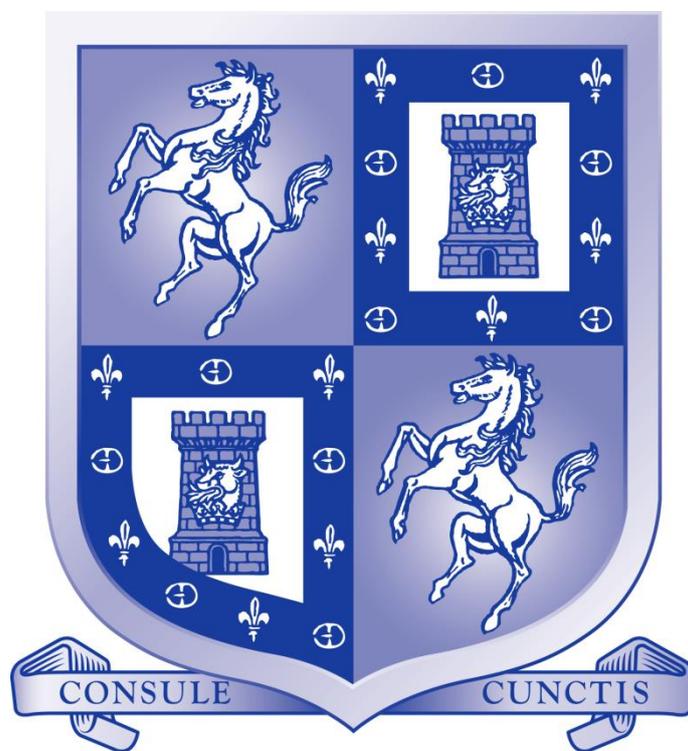


# Gravesend Grammar School



## Parents' Handbook



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## School Contact Information:

Address: Gravesend Grammar School  
Church Walk  
Gravesend  
Kent  
DA12 2PR

Telephone: 01474 331893

## Key Contacts:

	<b>Email</b>	<b>Role</b>
Mr G Rapley	rapleyg@gravesendgrammar.eu	Head of School (KS3)
Mr E Rees	reese@gravesendgrammar.eu	Assistant Head of School (KS3)
Mr I Cook	cooki@gravesendgrammar.eu	Admissions Manager
Mrs C Warner	warnerc@gravesendgrammar.eu	SENCo

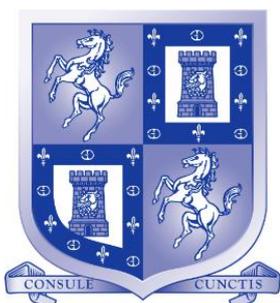
## Form Tutor Contacts:

	<b>Email</b>	<b>Role</b>
Mr C Cutting	cuttingc@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (Cliff House)
Mrs N Rathore	rathoren@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (Downs House)
Miss J Learmonth	learmonthj@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (Fleet House)
Miss A Maxwell	maxwella@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (Hill House)
Mr R Woods	woods@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (School House)
Mr I Cook	cooki@gravesendgrammar.eu	Form Tutor (Town House)

Specific subject teacher contact details can be found on the main school website via the 'menu' and then 'contact us' section, or <http://gravesendgrammar.eu/staff-contacts/>

The Form Tutor is the main point of contact between school, student and parents. If you, as a parent, have an issue or need to make information available to the school then you should contact the form tutor via telephone or email in the first instance.

The Assistant Head of School will be able to support the Form Tutor should the need arise. The Head of School takes the strategic overview of the entire key stage.



## School Ethos: *Consule Cunctis*- Give thought to everyone

On a day to day basis this means; allowing teachers to teach, others to work and showing respect and courtesy for all members of the school community

The School Ethos is one of  
*'Opportunity and Challenge in a Caring Environment'*

## Key Stage 3

Key Stage 3 is the 'launch pad' from which students begin their journey through 7 years of education at Gravesend Grammar School. Throughout year 7 and 8 students will be encouraged to develop the wide array of skills that they will need in order to be successful in the future. These may be the academic skills for exam success or the wider 'soft' skills essential in today's society.

It is hoped that every student at KS3 will be successful in achieving their personal goals and targets in all aspects of school life. In order to do this and to embed the fundamentals needed as they progress through the school, students are asked to do 3 things:

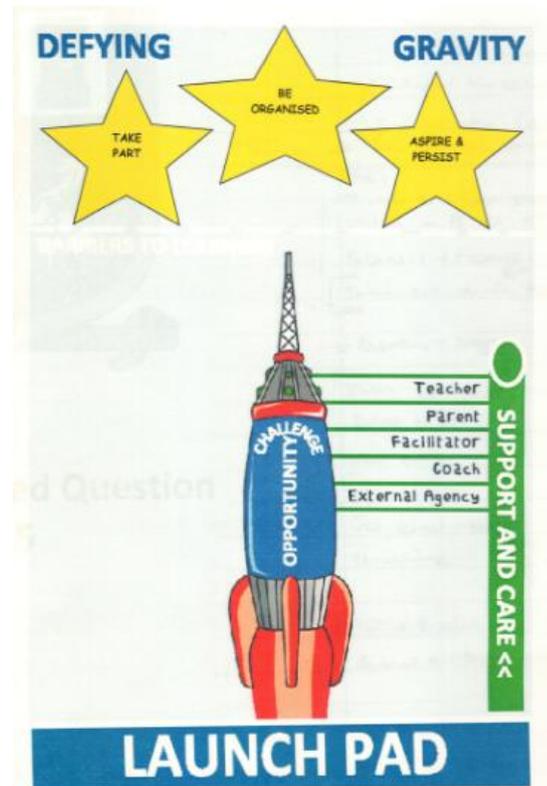
1. *Be organised* – Turn up to school / lessons punctually, with all of the equipment needed to be able to learn effectively and having met any relevant deadlines.
2. *Take Part* – To engage in learning by being interested, questioning and offering positive contributions to lessons. Also by stretching and challenging themselves to extend their understanding or take on difficult tasks. Finally by trying something new – maybe in an extra curricular context which makes them a more rounded person who stands out from the crowd.
3. *Aspire and Persist* – To direct their ambitions towards achieving something worthwhile and stick with it in spite of difficulty. Ultimately aim to be the best they can be in everything that they do.

### ***Some advice for parents:***

As parents you are as important as teaching staff in monitoring learning, motivating your son, instilling a sense of discipline and being organised.

The expectation of parents therefore is that you will:

- Discuss learning, homework and attainment / effort with your son.
- Motivate and encourage him to take part in *all* aspects of school life, including extra curricular activities, whole school events and those areas that he finds more challenging so that he may persist.
- Assist with his organisation so that he may be equipped to learn – but don't do it for him!
- Support your son – transition can be stressful and he will face many challenges as he moves through school.
- Support the school to develop a sense of discipline both in an academic and behavioural sense.



## ***Travel to and from School***

***Walking*** - Where possible we encourage students to walk to school. They must remember that they represent the school and their dress and behaviour should reflect this. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers Head Teachers to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of students when they are off the school site and empowers members of staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour.

***Cycling*** – Students may cycle to school, but bicycles must not be ridden on the school premises at any time. Bicycles must be stored with a lock in the bicycle accommodation provided. When cycling students should wear a cycle helmet and high visibility clothing. Their bicycle should be safe for use on the road including having cycle lights fitted if required.

***Public Buses*** – Transport via public bus services is co-ordinated via the local authority via the ‘Young Person’s Travel’ scheme. Generally any enquiries relating to public bus travel and the Young Person’s Travel Pass will be dealt with by the West Kent Area Education Office.

***Cars*** – If students are to be dropped off at school by car please avoid the temptation to drive right to the front entrance. The congestion at the bottom of Church Walk can be horrendous and you would benefit from dropping off away from the school site and allowing your son to walk the short distance into school.

## ***The School Day***

Students are permitted into the school buildings from 8.15am and must be present in their first lesson at 8.30am. Registration is taken electronically in every lesson.

	<b>Monday - Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Lesson 1	08.30 – 09.30	8.30 - 9.30
Lesson 2	09.35 – 10.35	9.35 - 10.35
Break time	10.35 – 10.55	10.35 - 11.05
Lesson 3	10.55 – 11.55	11.05 - 12.05
Lesson 4	12.00 – 13.00	12.10 - 13.10
KS3 Lunch	13.00 – 13.45	End of School Day
KS3 Tutor Period / Assembly	13.45 - 14.15	
Lesson 5	14.15 – 15.15	

## ***Lunch Arrangements***

***School Canteen*** – The canteen offers a variety of balanced meal options. Food may be purchased in cash or by using the prepay system (via Parent Pay or standing order) and associated cashless card. Using the prepay system affords a small reduction in the cost of the meal on a daily basis.

***Packed Lunch*** – If students prefer to bring a packed lunch to school they may eat this in their form room.

Weather permitting students are free to play on the field at break and lunchtime. Alternatively they may choose to access the library or one of the extra curricular clubs and activities.

## ***Free School Meals***

Free school meals is an underused resource and has absolutely no stigma attached to it. The cashless payment system used in school means that no student making use of a free school meals entitlement is identifiable.

You can see on the Kent County Council website whether your son is eligible for free school meals. It could save you around £40 per month. Free school meals forms are available from the main school office or online at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

## ***School Fund***

Like many other schools, we ask parents to contribute annually to School Fund, which is a registered charity. The cost per student is £20 for this academic year or £35 (total) for two or more siblings in the school. School fund is used to provide a variety of student activities throughout the year and to finance many school clubs and societies.

## ***School Lockers***

Each student is issued with a locker which is based in or around their form room. Students will require a small combination padlock with which to secure their lockers.

## ***Equipment***

**Uniform** – black shoes, black socks, black trousers, black blazer with the school badge on the breast pocket, white or blue shirt, house tie. a black or navy ‘V’ neck jumper may be worn under the blazer in the winter.

**Hair** – clean, tidy, its natural colour and of conventional style. Generally no longer than collar length or shorter than a grade 3 if using clippers.

**NB: Students who contravene dress or hair code may be sent home to rectify the situation, after parents are notified** (see student discipline policy).

**Jewellery** – Wristwatch only (no jewellery of any other kind should be worn).

**Games activities** – rugby boots, long black socks, black shorts, house reversible rugby jersey, shin pads and gum shield (mouth guard).

**PE activities** – clean trainers, short white socks, white shorts, house polo shirt.

**Stationery** – blue or black pen, pencil, ruler, rubber. Some subjects may require specialist equipment e.g. calculators, art packs etc. Details of these will be issued separately.

## ***Lost Equipment***

- All items of equipment should be clearly named.
- Ask your son to go back and look in all of the places he went on the day the equipment was lost.
- Your son should go to the main reception where he will find his name on a board outside the site manager’s office if his equipment has been handed in there.
- He may also try the PE office, for sports equipment, or the student support office to see if it has been handed in there.
- At Gravesend Grammar School we consider it to be the responsibility of the student to look after their equipment and therefore it is their responsibility to try and find items which they have lost.

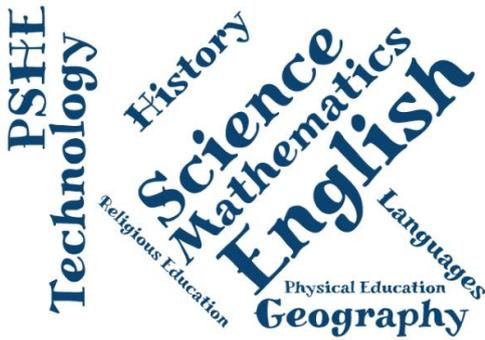
## ***Dealing with Issues (other than lost property)***

If your son has any issues at school there are a number of people you can contact. For general problems the Form Tutor should be the main point of contact. If the issue relates to a specific subject or lesson it may be preferable to approach that teacher directly (all contact details are on the school website). If the matter is urgent then it is possible to contact Mrs Purdy in the student support office.

As with all schools we do experience some bullying at Gravesend Grammar School, although we do believe it is less than other institutions. Any suspected bullying should be reported immediately by the student to any member of staff. As a parent, if you become aware of potential bullying please contact the Form Tutor.

Bullying will be dealt with as a priority with the victim being supported and the perpetrators being dealt with appropriately.

## ***The Curriculum***



The curriculum at Key stage 3 is designed around a core of Maths, English and Science. This is supported by Geography, History, a Modern Foreign Language, Physical Education, Religious Education, Creative Exploration and Engineering.

Creative Exploration is a combination of Art, Music and Drama. It enables students to experience live performance and exhibit work on a regular basis.

The curriculum is enriched throughout the year through a range of extended and independent opportunities. These may range from year group visits to projects and workshops delivered by outside groups.

## ***Assessment and Reporting***

Assessment at Gravesend Grammar School works on a 9 – 1 grade scale. Level 9 is the top grade awarded at GCSE. It is expected that, in most subjects, students will enter year 7 at level 1 and will make progress towards level 9 in their 5 years in the school before GCSE.

Each term parents will be sent a grade card via email which indicates the student's 'current working level' (attainment) and the effort that the student is applying to each subject area. The grade card will also have a target grade for each subject, which will indicate the expected level of performance in that subject by the end of the key stage (end of year 8).

Parents are sent formal written reports and will also be invited to a parent's consultation evening where you can meet with a selection of your son's teachers to discuss progress and attainment.

## ***Homework***

In relative terms, compared to primary school, your son may find that homework is more than he is used to. We set a maximum of 1 ½ hours of homework each night. This usually involves up to three separate 30 minute pieces of work from different subjects.

There is a homework timetable with homework set for different subjects on different days. The homework should be recorded in the student's homework diary. This diary should be signed by parents each week as recognition of monitoring homework.

The purpose of homework may be to consolidate learning from classroom lessons, to extend understanding by stretching and challenging students or to prepare students for the next phase of learning.

## ***Absence During Term Time***

Regular attendance in school is a basic essential for educational success. It is the responsibility of all parents to make every possible effort to ensure full attendance of their children when school is in session. Absence resulting from genuine illness will be authorised as will unavoidable medical appointments.

**All medical appointments should be taken outside of school hours wherever possible.**

Should, on a rare occasion, appointments during school hours be unavoidable, the student must be collected from reception and signed out. The student should be signed in again at reception upon their return. Students will not be allowed to leave school without being collected by a parent or another designated adult and signed out.

**There is no entitlement to take holidays during term time.**

Term dates will be available well in advance on the school website. As an academy, we do not have to follow KCC dates and ours may differ from those published on the KCC site (and by other organisations) as well as other schools locally. Permission for holidays cannot be granted and further sanctions may be imposed if holidays are taken during school sessions.

***Exceptional Circumstances*** – All requests for absence due to exceptional circumstances should be addressed directly to the Head Teacher in writing and will be considered on an individual basis.

## ***Absence Due to Illness***

If your son is ill and unable to attend school you must phone (01474 331893) and report this using the absence message option. Alternatively you can log on to [www.gravesendgrammar.eu](http://www.gravesendgrammar.eu) and use the 'absence' link to report absence on the first day of illness. Reporting absence should be done before 8.30am on the day your son is off.

When students return to school they must be accompanied by a letter from you explaining their absence which is signed and dated. This allows us to authorise the absence as genuine illness. Please note that an email is not sufficient.

If your son has an infectious disease or long term conditions which may have implications for his study or the health of other students please contact his Form Tutor.



## ***Extra Curricular Activities***

There are a tremendous array of sporting activities which happen at breaktimes, after school or on a Saturday morning. These include Sports, Music and Drama as well as a range of alternatives such as: young writers, debating society, architecture club, board games club etc.

### **Sport**

Every evening after school there will be the opportunity to participate in some kind of sporting activity. The range of sports on offer is varied. In the winter Rugby is the major team game, with fixtures taking place on a Saturday morning against school teams from all over the south east. In the Summer Cricket replaces Rugby as the major team game. During a typical week students may be able to participate in Rugby, Hockey, Badminton, Basketball and Athletic / Fitness clubs. Participation can be either socially or as a competitive part of school teams.

### **Drama**

There are numerous opportunities to take part in Drama. There are Key Stage 3 specific productions as well as large whole school shows that lower school pupils are encouraged to be part of. Drama involvement does not just have to be as an actor on stage. The tech team, which set the sound, lighting and stage sets for the productions, offer the chance to be involved behind the scenes and learn technical skills.

### **Music**

Music in the school has grown considerably in recent years. We have a 'school of rock and pop' where students can become involved in bands, writing and recording their own material as well as covering popular pieces. Students have several opportunities to perform live at one of our 'Big Gigs' and contribute to a school album. Concert bands can accommodate any instrument and Samba and Indian drumming groups require no previous musical experience.

## ***School Trips***

When there is a school trip or visit a letter will be sent out by the organiser with details, a reply slip and any financial implications. A risk assessment will be available for all trips on request to the organiser. Financial contributions should be made on-line via 'parent pay' alternatively they can be made by cheque or cash to the school finance office. Financial contributions are voluntary, however, where these contributions do not cover the cost of the trip then it may be unfeasible to run.

## ***Other Events***

Details of additional events will be available via the school newsletter and website ([www.gravesendgrammar.eu](http://www.gravesendgrammar.eu)). All letters with additional information are sent home via email. Please check emails regularly for correspondence from school.

It is important to keep us informed of changes to your email address so that we can keep you up to date with information.

## ***Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices***

The school recognises that mobile phones and other web enabled devices can be useful educational tools. Guidance regarding the use of such devices is as follows:

- no use of mobile phones in lessons, corridors or other public spaces unless authorised by a member of staff;
- listening to music on devices at break and lunchtime is permitted only with the use of headphones;
- any disturbance of lessons by mobile phones may result in the confiscation of the phone. Students are therefore expected to have them switched off during lessons;
- students are responsible for the device and its security and use during the school day and must not use it, or allow it to be used to access or send inappropriate content;
- all students need to be mindful of their mobile phone use and ensure that they do not, at any time, cause a nuisance to other members of the school community;
- students are reminded that using mobile devices when travelling to and from school can be a safety hazard, especially with regard to road traffic and also make students vulnerable to theft.

## ***ICT & On-line Safety***

The School is keen to encourage the responsible use of ICT for educational purposes. We have first class facilities for the benefit of learners and we need them to follow procedures and protocols as outlined. These will be made available to students and parents at a very early stage in year 7.

As an educational institution Gravesend Grammar School, along with parental support, seeks to develop students' understanding of the etiquette of a world in cyber-space, the risks that they are exposed to, the implications of their digital footprint and how to report problems and seek help in dealing with undesirable incidents.

As a parent please be aware of your child's online activity and monitor closely the content of what they are involved in. The School take the areas outlined below extremely seriously and all incidents are dealt with in an appropriate manner in order to protect all students and other ICT users.

***Cyber bullying*** – The use of technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet (text, email, MSN, BBM etc.) to deliberately target and cause anxiety to another individual.

***File sharing*** – Especially images (although not exclusively), where an image intended to be private is shared publicly, causing distress and possible bullying incidents. File sharing may also include the downloading of music and video files in a way that infringes copyright law.

***Inappropriate material*** – The downloading, viewing or sharing of inappropriate content, with particular reference to age restricted materials or content. Also covering any content which causes offence to an individual or group based on gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or other differentiating factor.

***Social networking*** – The use of sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp. Of special concern is the amount of personal information available in the public domain and the suitability of material uploaded on personal pages, which can then become public.

## **School Policies**

The following are brief summaries of some of the key policies of Gravesend Grammar School. For full policy documents or to obtain other relevant policy information please go to [www.gravesendgrammar.eu](http://www.gravesendgrammar.eu) or contact the main school office.

### **Student discipline policy**

Gravesend Grammar School is a community which values all individuals. Positive relationships between all members (staff and students) are based on genuine mutual respect. High expectations of behaviour are implicit to school values and culture.

Behaviour is best modified by reward or motivation. As such punishments to correct poor behaviour will be applied at the minimum level necessary. Sanctions should be graded, increasing in severity for more serious issues. Should detentions become necessary parents will normally receive written notification.

For more serious offences exclusion (either internal, external or permanent) may be used. Decisions about external or permanent exclusion will be made by the Head Teacher.

Bullying, discrimination, racism and homophobia will not be tolerated and will be taken seriously in every instance. Reports of such offences will be investigated, appropriate action taken and a central record kept.

### **SEN policy**

Gravesend Grammar School is experienced in adapting to the needs of students with specific learning difficulties and physical impairments. This work is led by the SENCo and is supported by a team of learning facilitators.

The school aims to identify those children with SEN at the earliest opportunity, often before they have joined the school in year 7. If agreed by parents, students are then placed at an appropriate level on the SEN register and initial support plans are developed.

The SENCo will work to ensure that SEN students are integrated and experience the same educational opportunities in so far as the integration meets the needs of the SEN student, the needs of other students and allows for efficient use of resources.

### **Sex and Relationships Education Policy**

Sex and Relationships Education is delivered through the Science and PSHE curriculums. It forms a part of a wider health education. Factual content appears in both KS3 and KS4, mainly in Science. Moral, contextual and relationships education is reinforced through the PSHE programme and may also appear in other areas of the curriculum as well.

Parents may choose to withdraw their son from the topics of Sex and Relationships education that are not compulsory under the national curriculum. If parents do indicate their objections on grounds of conscience then boys will be withdrawn and alternative work provided.

## Religious Education and Collective Worship

Religious Education (Politics, Participation and Philosophy at KS4) forms part of the standard curriculum offer for pupils up to age 16. Sixth form students discuss important issues as part of PSHE and, for some, general studies lessons. Regular assemblies are held for all year groups.

Boys have the right of withdrawal from Religious Education and collective worship, although this happens very rarely. Where boys are withdrawn an alternative curriculum programme is organised.

## On-line Safety policy

Gravesend Grammar School is keen to promote the responsible use of ICT. Students are required to abide by an Acceptable Use Agreement as outlined below. Boys are asked to acknowledge this agreement when they join the school. Breaches of the Acceptable Use Agreement are dealt with under the student discipline policy and, where appropriate, the school's safeguarding policy.

- I will only use school systems including, network (inc.WiFi), internet, email and devices for educational purposes.
- I will only logon to the school network using my own username and password and never reveal these to anyone.
- I will only open, copy, delete or otherwise alter my own files not those belonging to others.
- I will not disclose personal information about myself or others online.
- Any messages I send will be polite and sensible, using language appropriate to the recipient and context of the message.
- I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything unpleasant or nasty or that may cause offence. I will report it immediately if I come across any such material.
- I will not try to upload / download or access materials which are illegal (including age restricted games / content) or may cause offence.
- I will ensure that my online activity will not cause the school, the staff or pupils distress or bring them into disrepute.
- I will not try to use any programmes, websites or software that might allow me to bypass filtering and security systems.
- I will not attempt to install or store programmes on school devices, nor will I alter device settings unless instructed to do so by a member of staff
- I will respect privacy and ownership of others work online and not partake in activities which may breach copyright or plagiarises the work of others.
- I will only use my own devices, including mobile phones, in school at the times and in the ways set out in the e-Safety policy. When using my own device the agreements in this document apply in the same way they do to any other school device.
- I will not intentionally disable or damage school equipment or the equipment belonging to others.
- I understand that the school will monitor my use of school systems, devices and digital communications
- I understand that the school has the right to take action against me if I am involved in incidents of inappropriate behaviour, that are covered by this agreement and the associated e-Safety policy, when I am out of school and where they involve my membership of the school community. (e.g. cyberbullying, distribution of images etc.)
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Acceptable Use Agreement I will be subject to disciplinary action. These may include; loss of access, detentions, exclusions, contact with parents and, in the event of illegal activities, involvement of the police.

## **Charging & Remission Policy**

***Policy on Charging for Essential Curriculum Activities*** - There is no charge for admission to the School nor for essential materials, books, instruments or other equipment. *The School may charge for text books or equivalent which students choose to annotate and therefore render unsuitable for further use by others.*

The School will not charge for activities and visits taking place within the school day nor for activities and visits prescribed by syllabus regulation (excluding the cost of board and lodging for such residential visits), although these may be cancelled if sufficient voluntary contributions are not forthcoming.

***Voluntary Contributions*** - The school may ask parents to contribute on a voluntary basis for the cost of materials, books, instruments and other equipment, and visits and activities within the school day on the condition that no student whose parents do not make a contribution will be treated differently on this account. However, the activity for which voluntary contributions are used may be cancelled if sufficient funds are not forthcoming.

***Optional Extras*** - Educational visits, the majority of time for which falls outside the school day (and which does not fall into a "no charge" category) may be charged for. Parents must agree in advance to their son participating and will be required to meet any charge in advance. The cost of such visits will not exceed the cost of the provision for each student.

Where materials, books, instruments and other equipment are deemed desirable but not essential for curriculum purposes, a charge may be made. The School will also charge for the cost of individual tuition in playing musical instruments within and outside school time.

***Education Partly During School Hours*** - An activity or visit is deemed to take place outside the school day if 50% or more is spent on the activity outside school hours, including travelling time, but excluding midday break, when a charge will be made under the "optional extras provision" above.

***Remissions Policy*** - The School will remit fees for activities and visits which are of curriculum value as recommended by the Head Teacher, to those parents who are in receipt of income support or family credit, or in other special circumstances approved by The Governing Body or its Chairman between meetings.

The Governing Body will remit fully board and lodging charges for students whose parents receive income support or family credit if they take part in a residential visit deemed to be during the school day or are required to take part in one for prescribed examination syllabus or national curriculum purposes.