



Policy Statement on Charging and Remissions

This Policy will have consideration for, and be in compliance with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996 (Sections 449-462)
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2014) Charging for School Activities
- DfE (2015) Governors' Handbook
- Plantsbrook Learning Trust Funding Agreement

This document sets out the policies of the Board of Trustees of Plantsbrook Learning Trust in relation to charges and remissions for activities organised by schools within the Trust.

The Board of Trustees of Plantsbrook Learning Trust recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

The Board of Trustees aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of schools within the Trust and as additional optional activities.

The Board of Trustees recognises and supports the objectives of the charging provisions in the Education Reform Act namely:

To maintain the right to free school education

To establish that activities offered mainly or wholly within normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost

To emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any

form of education or related activity, but to give the LA and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours

To confirm the right of LAs and schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of schools within the Trust, or in support of any activity organised by schools within the Trust, whether during or outside school hours.

N.B. "School hours" are the hours that a school is actually in session and does not include the lunch break. Effectively, therefore, Plantsbrook School hours are the period from 8.40 a.m. to 3.15 p.m. (excluding lunch) and Town Junior School hours are the period from 8.50 am to 3.25 pm (excluding lunch).

An activity which takes place partly in and partly outside school hours is regarded as taking place in school hours if 50% of it does take place in school hours. In the case of an activity which involves residential accommodation, it is regarded as taking place in school hours if the number of sessions missed by the pupils is 50% or more of the number of half days involved.

In some cases it may not be easy to define the position of the activity with regard to school hours. In all cases where there is doubt, the discretion for charging will be with the Headteacher of the school and Board of Trustees.

CHARGES

1. For all activities that are deemed to be essential to pupils' learning i.e. the activity forms part of the syllabus of an examination prescribed by the Secretary of State, or is a requirement in connection with the National Curriculum, will be provided by school at no cost.
2. For all activities that are deemed to enhance learning, but that are not essential, the costs must be met in full by parents.
3. For all activities that are deemed to be enrichment activities, the costs must be met in full by parents.
4. In the case of examination entries, fees will be paid for pupils prepared by the school for examinations prescribed by the Secretary of State, whether these constitute a 'retake' or not. Remarks will be paid for

by the school in most cases. However, where a resit or a remark is not judged to be the best course of action by the school, pupils will be required to meet the costs in full. For examinations for which the school has not prepared the candidate, or which are not recognised by the Secretary of State, candidates will be required to meet the costs.

5. No charges will be made for materials to be used in the course of lessons or for the cost of transport in connection with an activity that takes place during school hours.
6. Schools within the Trust may require parents to meet the cost attached to the replacement of broken windows, broken or damaged fixtures, fittings and equipment, damaged, defaced or lost text and exercise books where these are the result of a pupil's behaviour.
7. Schools within the Trust will provide a copy of a pupil's school record upon written request from the parent/guardian. Copies of such documentation will be provided within 15 school days of such written request. A charge will be made for photocopying prior to despatch of documents.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

For all activities where charges may not be made, voluntary contributions will be invited from parents. Pupils will not be prevented from taking part in the activity if parents do not make a voluntary contribution. For such activities there is no obligation to contribute, but if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Trust reserves the right to cancel the activity if insufficient contributions are received.

The activities include contributions in either kind or cash towards materials for certain subject areas such as Technology.

REMISSIONS

If the activity is part of a prescribed examination syllabus or a requirement in connection with the National Curriculum, financial assistance will be considered. Parents in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an gross annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £16,190, Working Tax Credit run-on paid for 4 weeks after Working Tax credit qualification ceases, Income related Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit will receive automatic remission of such costs. If appropriate, schools within the Trust will seek to fund such activities, if at all possible, from the School Fund, Pupil Premium or other appropriate funds.

All other charges which schools within the Trust or Trustees are empowered to make may be remitted, in accordance with the policies of the LA, in whole or in part at the discretion of the Headteacher and the Board of Trustees.

RECOVERY

If a pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the Board of Trustees, School or LA has paid, or is liable to pay an entry fee, then that fee will be recoverable from the parent. Failure to complete the examination requirements will include failure to complete the coursework requirements and/or failure to sit the final examination(s). It may also include failure to complete satisfactory attendance during the two years preceding the examination. The decisions as to what constitutes a 'good reason' will rest with the Board of Trustees or the LA.

LETTINGS AND HIRE OF ROOMS

On occasion, facilities in schools within the Trust may be hired out for a cost. A schedule of these costs may be obtained from the Trust finance Office on request. Trustees would expect those groups hiring rooms to look after the facilities and to ensure they are left in a good condition. Trustees would, therefore, take action against any group misusing them. Certain groups may be refused the use of our rooms, e.g. political groups whose views might contravene our equal opportunities policy. The discretion for this rests with the Headteacher. There is a right of appeal to the Board of Trustees.

TRUSTEES' REPRESENTATIVES

The Trustees retain responsibility for this policy and will require the Headteachers of schools within the Trust to report to them, as they consider appropriate, on its operation. This policy statement will be reviewed as appropriate and amended as necessary. Any such amendments will be reported to parents at the beginning of each academic year.

Copies of this document will be issued to all parents of new pupils and copies will also be available for consultation in schools within the Trust.