



Charging and Remissions Policy

Aims

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for school activities, external lettings and extended school provision, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents. Guidance is based on the Education Act 1996: Sections 449-462. Although the government recently re-issued this guidance, there has been no change in the law - the current law on charging has been in place since this act. In summary: schools are not allowed to charge parents for educational activities during school hours, nor for transport for an educational visit, but they can charge for board and lodging for residential visits except to parents in receipt of certain benefits which are defined in the guidance. They can, however, ask for voluntary contributions.

Introduction

All education during school hours is free. School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school- paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are: education provided outside of school time that is not:

- part of the national curriculum;
- part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Lettings

Governors retain the right to review charges on an annual basis for those lettings which take place on school premises outside normal school hours. All such activities will be guided by the requirements of the PFI contract and normal audit procedures laid down by the LA. The Governors reserve the right to examine on an individual basis request for a school letting, with fees being reviewed on an annual basis. Charges may also be made for any breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils, and damage/vandalism/loss to and of school property.

School Meals

The Governing Body will determine and publish annually the price to be charged for school meals.

Voluntary Contributions

As a school we meet part of the cost of educational visits from our own resources, including from the Pupil Premium. We may meet the remaining cost by requesting voluntary contributions from parents. When parents are unable or unwilling to pay, school may find funding from other sources including external fundraising.

- When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. I
- If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. 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 provides this information on request.

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

- Visits to museums
- Visits to theatres
- Sporting activities which require transport expenses
- Outdoor adventure activities E.g. Derwent Hill)
- Musical events

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre- requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

All contributions will be used to offset the cost of the activity or event

Residential Visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education or travel expenses. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27October 2008;

However, residential trips to Derwent Hill are deemed an optional extra. An expression of interest will always be gained with details of payment scheme established prior to a booking being confirmed. A flexible plan will be in place for families to spread the cost of payments. School may also provide financial assistance towards the cost of specific kit.

Implementation of the policy our school will be managed with the support and guidance of the Local Authority and we will review it on a yearly basis.

November 2017

Next review: November 2018