

Queens Park Academy



CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

June 2018

Next Review: September 2018

1. CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

1.1 The charging and remissions policy adopted by the Board of Governors ensures that statutory requirements are met and is intended to reflect the general principles of the Education Act which identifies activities for which:

- a) Charges will not be made
- b) Charges will be made
- c) Charges may be waived

2. Voluntary contributions

2.1 The Trust will seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the Trust or support a Trust activity whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential and including inviting parents to pay for materials or ingredients where they wish to own the finished product. However all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have contributed. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary. There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise pupils from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers.

2.2 The Law says that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because the parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

3. Education Provided Within School Hours

3.1 Education provided by the Trust for its registered pupils will be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, school hours being those hours when a school is actually in session and not including the break in the middle of the day. This means that neither the pupil nor his or her parents or guardian will be required to pay for education provided during school hours. If parents are asked to purchase revision materials or other equipment, these sales will have no VAT recharged to pupils and will be sold at cost. All sales from school shops will have no VAT recharged to pupils and sold at cost. Where hardship cases exist, costs will be met by the Trust.

4. Education Provided Out of School Hours

4.1 Where education is provided out of school hours, charging is permitted, except where the education is provided:

- a) To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed Public examination; or
- b) Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum; or c) For residential trips.

5. Music Tuition

5.1 The main exception to the principle of free education, which the law allows is that a charge may be made in respect of individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement must be obtained before a pupil is given that tuition. In some cases, the school can meet the cost of individual music tuition, in part or in full where hardship exists. Application for support will be made on a discretionary basis, supported by documentary evidence.

6. Activities run by a Third Party

6.1 The Act permits an organisation other than the governing body to levy a charge directly on parents for activities organised in school hours by a non-school organisation. The school will not be involved in collection charges on behalf of the third party organisation.

6.2 Where pupils are granted leave of absence to attend these activities it would be for parents and any staff members similarly released to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements made by the third party to secure the safety and welfare of the children.

7. Charging Policy

7.1 If a charge is made for each pupils it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds are needed for additional costs, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising. In some cases, the school can meet the cost of the charge, in part or in full where hardship exists. Application for support will be made on a discretionary basis, supported by relevant documentary evidence (see criteria in financial support).

7.2 The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity and resources to run the activity.

8. 'Optional extra' Activities

8.1 'Optional extra' activities are those which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.

8.2 Participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. Any charge made in respect of individual pupils may include an appropriate element

for the following: a pupil's travel costs; a pupil's board and lodging; materials, books, instruments and other equipment; non-teaching staff costs; entrance fees to museums, theatres etc; insurance costs.

8.3 It should be noted that any charge for an 'optional extra' activity, as distinct from a request for a voluntary contribution, should not exceed the actual costs of providing that activity, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. It may 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.

8.4 The costs of teaching staff involved in optional extra activities may only be passed on through charges if:-

- They are engaged specifically by the governors for the purpose of providing the activity;
- They are employed by the governors to provide instrumental music tuition; or
- They are teachers already employed by the governors, who have been engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra.

9. VAT and School Journeys

9.1 To enable the Trust to reclaim VAT on school journeys the visit should be part of the curriculum and the school should have purchased all elements, apart from accommodation directly.

10. School Minibuses or transport provided by the LA

10.1 Any transport provided in school hours by the Trust to carry particular pupils between parts of the Trust's premises or between the school and any other place where education is to be provided the Trust will provide free of charge. However, if a pupil makes use of transport not provided by the Trust to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, and then parents may be asked to meet the cost of such travel. An example of these would be travel direct from home to work experience and vice versa. Hardship cases will be considered on merit.

11. Charging in Kind

11.1 The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc, needed for practical subjects such as craft or food technology, must be budgeted for and borne by the Trust. Parents who are willing to contribute in kind can however be encouraged to do so, on a voluntary basis.

11.2 The school may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product, if there is one. Schools should obtain written confirmation from parents what they wish to supply or pay for materials on this basis.

11.3 Pupils must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents. The Board of Directors will make their policy on this clear.

11.4 It should be recognised that much of the practical work in craft or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a 'finished product' however this is an essential part of the learning process.

12. Breakages and Vandalism

12.1 There is nothing to prevent the Trust from asking parents to pay for the cost of replacing a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost textbook where this is the result of a pupil's behaviour. In the event of non-payment, court action may be taken if it is economically viable.

Reviewed and Authorised:

Signed:

Date:

Date of next review: September 2018