

Charging and Remissions Policy

Purpose

We believe that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Roles and responsibilities of headteacher, other staff, governors

The headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

1. No charges will be made for

- 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 student is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school*
- examination re-sit(s)* if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

* If a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge will be made.

2. Activities for which charges may be made

Charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per student) of provision

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

b) Residential activities

- Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. A residential trip is deemed to have taken place during school hours if the number of school sessions on the trip is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent

on the trip (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

- Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

c) Music tuition

A charge will be made for instrumental or vocal tuition unless.

- (a) it is in a class or group of four or more
- (b) it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. (Charges will be made if a student fails to turn up to the lessons on a regular basis)

d) Examinations

Fees are charged for:

- (a) re-marking at the request of parents
- (b) an examination for which the student has not been prepared by the school;
- (c) a re-sit where no additional preparation has been provided by the school;
- (d) a student who fails, without good reason (in the judgement of the Governing Body), to attend or fails to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus including non-attendance.

e) Finished Products

Where a parent has indicated in advance a wish to own a finished product made at school, the parent may be required to supply the ingredients or materials or be charged the cost thereof.

f) Transport

Parents may be required to meet the cost of transport from home to an activity sanctioned but not provided by the school.

g) Activities arranged by third parties in school hours

A "Third Party" is somebody other than the school. A Third Party who arranges an activity during school hours may make a charge for their services to the parents of the students who are released to participate.

h) Damage to property

A charge may be made to parents for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student.

i) Optional extras outside school hours

Some charges may be made for education provided as:

- (a) an option- participation must be on the basis of parents' choice and willingness to meet the charges made:
- (b) an addition- Education provided to fulfil any requirements in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or Religious Education cannot be an extra and the only charge which can be made is for board and lodging. See 3 above.
- (c) wholly or mainly outside school hours-see section 2b for definition

These charges may include:

- (i) student's travel costs
- (ii) student's board and lodging costs
- (iii) materials, books, instruments and other materials
- (iv) non-teaching staff costs
- (v) entrance fees (museums etc.)
- (vi) insurance costs and

- (vii) costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for this activity, including their travel, board and lodging. (But not the cost of teaching staff already employed by the school unless employed to provide individual musical tuition engaged on a separate contract to provide the optional extra).

3. Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents in support of any school activity, in or out of school time, residential or not.

These contributions must be genuinely voluntary.

It is a statutory requirement that the terms of any request make it clear

- (a) that there is no obligation to contribute.
- (b) that students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed.

It will be made clear to parents if the activity cannot take place without 100% or nearly 100% support.

There is no limit to the amount of the contribution or to the use which can be made of it, provided that parents are aware of that use when they contribute.

4. Refunds will be made in the following incidences:-

- a) Over payment of more than 5% of the cost of the trip up to a maximum of £35 per student.
- b) Students who withdraw from an activity due to medical reasons with supporting evidence

Refunds will not be made where a deposit is required to secure a service or the overpayment amount is less than £5.00

5. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reviewed.

Parents in receipt of

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed State Pension
- Income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

There may be other extenuating circumstances in which waiver of charges will be considered.

Application for remission along with supporting information should be made to the Administration Manager at the school, and will be treated in confidence.

6. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- we have established a system for parents to pay by instalments
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against students from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection. If the number of students applying to participate in an activity is greater than the places available, the places will be allocated by ballot.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The resources committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of the policy via the ongoing reporting of the overall school budget'

Tring School
Governing Body
June 2009
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The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors* and the DCSF guidance "*Planning and Funding Extended Schools*" and "*Charging for School Activities*" (January 2009) and is based on the HCC model policy.