Charging and Remissions

Policy

Charging and Remissions

Headteacher

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Policy Review Dates

Review Date	Changes made	By whom	Date shared with staff
September 2017	New Policy	N/A	
January 2021	Minor corrections to wording.	DMC	January 2021
January 2023	No changes	DMC	January 2023
January 2024	No changes	DMC	January 2024
January 2025	No changes	CST	January 2025
November 2026	Full review and replacement based on latest requirements and LA advice.	BPA	November 2026

Date ratified by Governors	Review Date
November 2026	November 2027

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This policy takes guidance from the DfE Policy – 'Charging for School Activities' and Local Authority guidance on school lettings. Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the school's responsible person and governors and will be adjusted in line with new Government or Local Authority recommendations. It sets out the school's position on charges, remissions and lettings.

If a school chooses to apply a charge for a particular activity, then it should make information available to parents as to how the charge has been calculated as well as details of support for those on low incomes or in receipt of specific benefits.

ACTIVITIES SCHOOLS <u>CANNOT</u> CHARGE FOR

The following list of activities cannot be charged for by school governing bodies and local authorities:

a) an admission application to any state funded school (paragraph 1.9(n) of the School Admission Code 2014 rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process);

b) education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment; sports activities such as swimming lessons and professional coaching; author visits);

c) 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;

d) instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;

e) entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and

f) examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

ACTIVITIES SCHOOLS <u>CAN</u> CHARGE FOR

Schools and local authorities can charge for the following:

a) Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them, i.e. a charge can be made to cover the cost of materials or ingredients required for design or food technology subjects where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product;

b) Optional extras (see section below);

c) Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section below);

d) Certain early years provision; and

e) Community facilities.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

No charge will be made for the first entry in each public examination subject supported by the school.

The School reserves the right to make full charge on parents in the following circumstances:

- for any entries where the school has not prepared their child for examination in the year for which entry is made;
- for an entry if their child has failed to complete the coursework requirements of a subject;
- if their child fails to attend for part or all the examination without reasonable cause as defined by the examination board;
- for the cost of materials where their child has undertaken a free choice project and where the product will be taken into the ownership of the child or parents after completion of the course. In such circumstances, the liability for payment will be made clear to parents in advance of the start of the project.

STUDENT EQUIPMENT

Where a child is issued equipment during the school day that forms part of their equipment lists the school reserves the right to charge the cost price for that equipment. This charge will be placed on ParentPay and the charge be paid at the earliest convenience by the parent.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

A school can request voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activity.

The Head Teacher or Governing Body should, from the outset, make clear to parents:

- If an activity is reliant upon voluntary contributions and cannot be funded from any other sources;
- That there is no obligation to contribute as it is voluntary, not compulsory;
- That the activity will be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received to fund it; and
- The school's policy for allocating places on school visits.

A child should not be excluded from an activity if his/her parents are unwilling or unable to pay and indeed their child should still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Parents

must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is a voluntary not compulsory contribution, and schools should not send colour coded reminder letters or direct debit / standing order mandates when requesting contributions.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Charges can be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment where an optional extra is being provided. Participation in optional extra activity is a matter of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Optional extra charges may be made in the following circumstances:

- Education that is not part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for, or part of religious education is provided outside of school time;

- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;

- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;

- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit; and

- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions.

In the case of such activities, there is no obligation on the school to include in the activity any student who does not meet the required charge in full.

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 (including supply teachers); and

- The cost, or a 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.

The charge per pupil should not:

- exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided equally by the number of pupils participating;

- include any form of subsidy for other pupils wishing to participate whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge

- include the cost of any alternative provision for other pupils not wishing to participate in the optional extra where a small proportion of the optional extra takes place during school hours; or

- include the costs of supply teachers contracted to cover for teachers who are away from school accompanying pupils on a visit as they are seen to be providing education during school time, not an optional extra.

MUSIC TUITION

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff that provides the tuition.

Charges may not be made where the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

Charges may not be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(I) of the Children Act 1989).

TRANSPORT

Schools cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated;

- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he/she has been prepared for that examination at the school; and

- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Schools cannot charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours (provided by school);

- Education provided on any visit 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and

- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

- Schools can charge for board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

ELIGIBILITY FOR REMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Section 200 of the Education Act 2002 outlines the eligibility to entitlement for board and lodging costs for residential visits. When a school informs parents about a forthcoming trip, they should make it clear that parents who can prove that they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging: The current criteria is the same as for Free School Meals; an up to date list can be found on the NYC website: https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/free-school-meals

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, may also be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.
A charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-Residential Activity

If at least 50% of the non-residential activity occurs during school hours then it is deemed to take place during school hours. Travelling time is included in the calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside of school hours.

Example: An excursion to a theatre production involves the pupils leaving school an hour before the end of the school day but the activity does not finish until late in the evening. This will be an activity deemed to have occurred outside of school hours.

Residential Visits

In the case of a residential visit, if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours – even if some activities take place late in the evening. Whatever the start and finish 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.

Example 1: Pupils are away from noon Wednesday to 9pm Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions. The 5 school sessions are more than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit therefore the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Pupils are away from noon Thursday to 9pm Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions. The 3 school sessions are less than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit therefore the visit is deemed to take place outside school hours.

DAMAGE TO OR LOSS OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

The school reserves the right to make full or part charge on parents for the costs of damage or loss of school property due to deliberate actions or neglect. The Headteacher will determine the level of charge.

SUBSIDIES AND SUPPORT

The decision as to the proportion of the global cost of an activity, which will be met from the school's budget or from School Fund, will be made by the Headteacher.

In the case of the use of agreed funds from the school's budget or from School Fund, the Headteacher will operate within the agreed budget.

Cases of genuine financial hardship or need should not prevent students taking part in an activity. To this end, parents should be advised formally of the sources of support available and how to gain access to them before the start of each school year.

The staff of the school should use their knowledge of their students to alert the relevant Head of Department of potential financial difficulties, which may handicap potential participants' so that informal and confidential contacts with home can be made. In this way, the school will seek to support financially disadvantaged students.

FUND-RAISING

The School will seek to support and acknowledge any fund-raising activities organised by community / external bodies.

Whilst the School will seek and encourage sponsorship, the nature and conditions of the sponsorship and of the sponsoring body will be considered by the Headteacher and Governors before entering any formal commitment.

LETTINGS

A charge will be made for lettings of school premises. Please refer to school letting charges schedule and terms and conditions for details.