



## Charges and Remissions Policy

### **AIM**

This document aims to provide governors, staff, parents/carers and students with a clear policy on charging and remissions for activities connected with the school which complies with current legislation and national guidance.

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This document sets out the school's policy on charges and remissions in accordance with the terms of the Education Act 1996 and guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families, Selection and Achieving Fair Access Team.

### 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Governing Body is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the principle for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

### 2. Exemptions from Charging Policy

- 2.1 The school may not charge for:
- 2.1.1 education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment retained by the school);
  - 2.1.2 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;

- 2.1.3 tuition for students learning to play musical instruments 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, or part of religious education;
- 2.1.4 entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school (except in circumstances described in 3.1.1 below)
- 2.1.5 examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

### 3. Charges

3.1 The school may make a charge to parents for the following:

- 3.1.1 the cost of examination entry for each subject entered if the student fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements in accordance with the School Examinations Policy;
- 3.1.2 board and lodging for a student on a residential trip;
- 3.1.3 music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);
- 3.1.4 materials or ingredients (including food) used in design technology lessons where students will take the finished product home. Where a student embarks on a large and expensive item, parents will be invited to purchase the materials in order that the article may be made. Such an indication of intent will be identified by letter to parents with a return signature;
- 3.1.5 damage to, or loss of, school property or equipment where this is the result of the student's negligence or wilful behaviour;
- 3.1.6 activities outside school hours that are 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 (known as 'optional extras') to meet the costs for:
  - i. travel
  - ii. materials and equipment
  - iii. non-teaching staff costs
  - iv. teaching staff engaged purely to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers
  - v. entrance fees
  - vi. insurance costs

Any charge made in respect of individual students may not

exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers 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 students 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 trip. 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.

- 3.1.7 examination entry fee(s), if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- 3.1.8 transport that is not required to take the student to school, or to other premises where the local education authority/governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education;
- 3.1.9 any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the student's parent wishes him/her to own them (it is expected that parents will wish to continue to provide such equipment as pens, pencils, rulers and other equipment, but where difficulties arise the school is obliged to provide them);

#### **4. Voluntary Contributions**

- 4.1 Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or any school activities. The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:
  - i. any activity which takes place during school hours;
  - ii. school equipment;
  - iii. school funds generally.
- 4.2 The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.
- 4.3 The school will make clear to parents/carers when an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions. The Governing Body or

Headteacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his/her parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip, then it must be cancelled.

## **5. Residential Trips**

5.1 The school cannot charge for:

5.1.1 education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;

5.1.2 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 religious education;

5.1.3 supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip.

5.2 The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

5.3 Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours children whose parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of the support payments listed in paragraph 8 will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. This will be made clear when the school informs parents/carers about a forthcoming trip. Parents/carers may be asked for a voluntary contribution towards transport costs.

5.4 A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is necessary as part of the national curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the student to sit, or the syllabus for religious education.

## **6. Music Tuition**

6.1 Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. Specialist music tuition will be provided by the Local Authority Music Services in accordance with the Local Authority Scheme.

## **7. Transport**

7.1 The school cannot charge for:

7.1.1 transporting registered students to or from the school premises,

where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

7.1.2 transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for students to be educated;

7.1.3 transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school;

7.1.4 transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

7.2 The school may charge for:

7.2.1 any other transport. This is a permitted optional extra.

## **8. Remissions Policy**

8.1 The Governing Body wishes all students to enjoy the wide range of activities available at the school and may apply remission of any of the above charges at their discretion and in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

8.2 At the discretion of the Governing Body, full remission of any of the above charges may be granted to students whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments:

- a) Income Support (IS);
- b) Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- c) support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- d) 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 £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/09);
- e) the guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

8.3 The Governing Body of the school is able to decide upon individual cases, including those not covered by this Policy, when and if they arise, depending upon merit.

## **9. Education partly during school hours**

9.1 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. However, 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.

## 9.2 Non residential activities

9.2.1 If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

9.2.2 Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

## 9.3 Residential visits

9.3.1 If the number of school sessions taken up by the trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (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 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

## REFERENCES

Department for Children, Schools and Families, Selection and Achieving Fair Access Team guidance 2007, accessed from [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk).

Schools Finance Manual, NYCC, 2006