

Charging and Remissions Policy

Adopted by Business Committee – 2nd October 2012
Reviewed and amended – March 2017

1. Rationale

This policy has been formulated in accordance with DfE and West Sussex County Council guidance on Charging for School Activities.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.
- 2.2. The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

3. Implementation

3.1. Prohibition of Charges

- 3.1.1. An admission application to any maintained school.
- 3.1.2. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) – for a definition of school hours, please see Appendix A;
- 3.1.3. 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 religious education;
- 3.1.4. 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;
- 3.1.5. Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school (see paragraph 3.5);
- 3.1.6. Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school*.
- 3.1.7. Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- 3.1.8. 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;
- 3.1.9. Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

3.1.10. Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for students to be educated;

3.1.11. Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement

*However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents.

3.2. Charges

The school can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them;
- optional extras (see below) and;
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below)

'Optional Extras'

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras' – these include:

3.2.1. The proportionate costs for an individual student for activities wholly or mainly outside school hours to meet the costs for:

- travel;
- board and lodgings;
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- non-teaching staff costs;
- teaching staff costs, including the cost of travel and board and lodging, where a teacher or instructor has been engaged specifically for the purpose of providing the activity
- entrance fees;
- insurance costs;

Participation in any optional extra will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. Any charges made may not exceed the cost of the provision of the optional extra.

3.2.2. Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument. There are County Music lessons which take place during the school day. Parents are contracted with the County Music Support Service and they pay for lessons on a termly basis, direct to County. Parents are able to apply for financial assistance when needed;

3.2.3. Re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school;

3.2.4. Costs of non-prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school;

- 3.2.5. Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited;
- 3.2.6. Breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by students;
- 3.2.7. Extra-curricular activities and school clubs;
- 3.2.8. The Governors have decided that parents should be required to supply or pay for ingredients and materials in cases where they have agreed in writing in advance that they wish to own the finished product. The full cost will normally be charged to each student, subject to the policy for remission.

3.3. Remissions

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit;
- Support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual gross income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190 (for the year 16/17).
- Working Tax Credit run-on;
- Universal Credit.

All parents will be made aware of this provision in relation to each activity involving board and lodging so that they may inform the school if they so wish of the circumstances. The cost will not be recovered by levying an additional charge from other students.

Any other remissions are a matter for the Authority or the Governing Body, whichever is levying the charge and will be considered on an individual basis.

3.4. Voluntary Contributions

- 3.4.1. Parents will be invited to make a voluntary contribution for school activities in or out of school time for which compulsory charges cannot be levied but which can only be provided if there is sufficient voluntary funding, whilst ensuring that no student is excluded from such activity by reason of inability or unwillingness to make a voluntary contribution.
- 3.4.2. The terms of any request made to parents will specify that the request for a voluntary contribution in no way represents a charge. In addition the following will be made clear to parents:
 - a) that the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay; and

b) that registered students at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

3.4.3. The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Headteacher.

Voluntary contributions may be used to fund:

- board and lodging
- travel
- materials and equipment
- staffing costs
- entrance fees
- insurance costs

3.4.4. It is also the policy of the Governing Body to:

- leave to the Head's discretion the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds;
- delegate to the Chair of Governors and the Head the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of this policy.

3.5. Prescribed Public Examinations

The Governing Body will meet the requirement to enter students for each prescribed public examination for which they have been prepared by the school except where, in the opinion of the Governing Body, there are educational reasons for not doing so, or where the student's parents request in writing that the student should not be entered. Parents will be informed in writing as soon as practicable after deciding for which examination a student should be entered so that parents have the opportunity to comment on the decisions. Only one public examination entry per level per school year will be paid for by the school excepting in circumstances where a Head of Faculty/Department recommends a re-sit. The Governors delegate these responsibilities to the Head.

The cost of all fees for prescribed examinations should be borne by funds, managed by the Governing Body except where:-

- (1) The Headteacher has determined that the student concerned shall not be entered for an examination for educational reasons;
- (2) The Headteacher agreed to enter a student for a prescribed examination for which he/she has not been prepared by the school;
- (3) A student, with his parents' agreement, is entered for a public examination other than one on the prescribed list.

If a student fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the Governors have paid, the fee shall be recovered from the parents by the Governors. So far as the Governors are concerned, a student shall be deemed to have failed to complete the examination if he/she fails to complete the course work requirements without good reasons and/or to take one or more oral, practical, or written examination without good reason.

The determination of what constitutes 'without good reason' shall be a matter for the Governors only in cases where the Governors are responsible for bearing the cost.

In cases of non-payment by parents of wasted public examination fees, the Governors reserve the right to use the facilities offered by the Small Claims Court.

The Governors will consider each case on its merits following the receipt of a recommendation from the Head, shall reach a decision and shall inform the parents in writing of the charge levied and of the reasons for it.

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. 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.

Non-Residential Activities

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.

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 pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential Visits

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 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.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9 p.m. on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9 p.m. on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.