

CHARGING FOR EDUCATION POLICY

Preamble

The School will endeavour to make a broad programme of trips and activities accessible to as many students as possible. To enable this, it has established and maintains a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the school budget.

The general principle that no charge can be made for education in school hours (excluding the midday break) in maintained schools was set out in the **Education Reform Act 1988**. Guidance can be found in **Circular 2/89, Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities**.

Policy

No charge will be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if the education is:

- within school hours
- for the National Curriculum programme out of school hours
- for statutory religious education
- for a prescribed public examination prepared for by the school

Examinations

When a pupil is sitting an external examination for the first time, no charges are applicable, except, when the pupil without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. Fails to submit coursework).

Pupils/students are able to re-sit modules in order to improve their grades but it should be noted that unless the course/year is being repeated as a whole then the pupils and their parents are responsible for paying the exam entry fee which covers exam board charges for re-sits. A candidate will not be entered for a re-sit exam unless the school has received the entry fee.

Admission

No charge will be made in connection with admission to a maintained school.

Finished Products

Where parents have expressed a wish in advance to have a finished product made at school (e.g. in craft, art or food and nutrition lessons) a charge can be made at cost price. The parents must know the charge for the product in advance.

Board and Lodging

A charge will be made for board and lodging on residential educational visits/activities, but parents who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances are entitled to a remission of the charges as follows:

- Parents receiving support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 will be entitled to free educational visits for their children.
- Parents in receipt of 'working tax credit' and 'child tax credit' will only be entitled to free visits if the 'child tax credit' is based on a prescribed annual income, which will change from time to time. The current limit (2003) is £13,230.

(Residential Trips (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003 and Remission of Charges Relating to Residential Trips (Wales) Regulations 2003)

- Requests for help from parents on income support or family credit will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of the school's budget. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters. Any insurance cost will be included in charges for trips or activities.

Transport

Transport to and from home to any activity not provided by, but permitted by, the school or LEA, can be charged for (e.g. work experience).

Voluntary Contributions

Charges will not be made for any activities that form part of a prescribed examination syllabus or are in fulfillment of National Curriculum requirements if these activities take place largely or wholly within the school day. However, voluntary contributions may be invited for trips that take place mainly within school hours. No child may be excluded because of inability to pay.

The school is entitled to cancel the trip if the level of contributions does not meet its budgetary requirements.

Permitted Charges

The following are permitted charges:

- charges for board and lodging on trips
- costs of lost and destroyed school property and breakages
- any costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of musical instruments whether in or out of school hours (UNLESS it is provided as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum).
- the cost of optional extras provided outside school hours (or mainly outside school hours), but the charge must not exceed the cost of the provision, and parents must agree to their child receiving the optional extra.
- The cost of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, and the cost for preparing the pupil for such an examination out of school hours

- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school.

In all cases where a permitted charge is likely to be made the parents must be told the amount in advance using the standard trip proforma prepared by the school.

Activities Partly during School Hours

In order to determine whether an activity that is undertaken partly during school hours and partly out of school hours the 50% rule is applied.

- Non-Residential Activities: if 50% or more is spent on an activity in school time (including travelling time, but excluding midday breaks) the whole activity is deemed to be inside school time, and cannot be charged for.
- Residential Activities: the number of half-days is counted (a half-day being any 12 hour period ending noon or midnight). If the number of days and half-days spent on the activity is greater than the number of school sessions (morning and afternoon sessions) that a pupil would spend on a normal school day, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours, and vice-versa. Travelling time is included in the time spent on the activity.

When a departure or return time splits a half-day then all the half-day counts if more than 50% of the half-day is used for the activity.

Third parties

Where the school uses a third party to provide some educational activities (especially educational visits), the monies will be paid directly to the organisation via School Administration.

In such cases if the activity is in school time will grant leave of absence to the pupils taking part, as the activity would no longer technically be part of the school's official programme.