

Charging & Remissions Policy

The Board of Directors recognise that as a result of the 1996 Education Act there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity and that charging is prohibited except in certain circumstances at the discretion of the Governing Body.

The policy reflects DFE legislation and is subject to amendment in line with national guidance.

CHARGING POLICY

1. School Admissions
The law prohibits any kind of charge relating to a pupil's admission to school and prohibits consideration of parents' ability to contribute in any way to the school.
2. Educational Activities taking place during school hours
 - 2.1 'School hours' are defined as being those hours during which the school is in session, but excluding the mid-day break.
 - 2.2 No charges will be made for any activity or materials which are essential to fulfil the statutory curriculum.
 - 2.3 Voluntary contributions may be asked for to enable extra activities, which are deemed educationally desirable, to take place. It may also be stated that such an activity will not be able to take place unless enough contributions are received to finance that activity. The contributions requested will reflect the cost of that activity less any subsidy from funds available to the school.
 - 2.4 Materials required which would result in a finished product, may be charged for as long as parents have been asked in advance if they wish to own that finished product.
 - 2.5 Parents will be expected to provide items of clothing such as aprons and football boots. The school will continue to provide essential protective equipment such as safety goggles.
3. Educational Activities taking place outside school hours
 - 3.1 Charges for such activities may be made except where the activities are required either:
 - (a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination;
Or
 - (b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education in which case no charge may be made with the exception of board and lodging charges for a residential visit (see sections 4.1 to 4.3)
 - 3.2 Where charges are made the cost may not exceed the actual cost to the pupil and cannot subsidise any other pupils participating. The cost of those pupils remitted from charging will be met by funds available to the school.
 - 3.3 The costs incurred by teachers providing the activity may be included in the costs to pupils as long as such teachers are engaged on a separate contract by the governors for that activity. (Example of such contract attached.)

- 3.4 A pupil's participation in such an activity will be a matter for parental choice and on the basis of a willingness to meet any charges applicable. Thus such an agreement is a pre-requisite to a pupil's inclusion.
- 3.5 Such charges will take into full account any subsidy provided by other bodies and reduced accordingly.
- 3.6 It will not be possible to ask parents of participating pupils to subsidise other pupils taking part in the visit.

Definitions by the Act

- 4.1 Day visits and non-residential activities are deemed to take place during school hours if 50% or more of the time spent on the activity, including any connected travel, occurs during school hours. (See Section 2.1)

The Charging Policy for such an activity will therefore follow 2.1 – 2.5.

- 4.2 A Residential activity is defined as being one which involves pupils spending one or more nights away from home. Such an activity is deemed to take place during school hours if the number of school sessions taken up by the activity is 50% or more of the number of half days (12 hours) involved (in this connection a 'half day' is defined as any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight on any day). The charging policy for such an activity will therefore follow 2.1 – 2.5 except that

- (a) the full actual costs per pupil for board and lodging may be charged to the parent and
- (b) such a cost must be fully remitted if the pupil is in receipt of Free School Meals and must be met by funds available to the school.

- 4.3 A residential activity is deemed to take place outside of school hours if the number of school sessions taken up by the activity is less than 50% of the number of half days (12 hours) involved. An appropriate charge may be made to the parents unless the activity is required either:

- (a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or
- (b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education

In which case only board and lodging costs can be charged and these must be wholly remitted if the child is in receipt of Free School Meals.

5. Activities arranged by a third party

It would not be appropriate in any way to arrange or help to arrange an activity for which the Academy has no legal liability. Nor is it anticipated that teachers would be granted leave of absence to participate in such an activity.

6. Entry for Public Examinations

- 6.1 No charge will be made for a candidate's first entry to any prescribed public examination for which the candidate has been prepared at the school, whether during or outside school hours. Resit examinations will be charged unless the candidate is in receipt of free school meals or has suffered illness or a 'life event' that caused the candidate to perform worse in the examination than would normally have been expected.
- 6.2 Candidates will be entered for each examination in a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil has been prepared for entry by the school except where;
- (a) in the opinion of the Board of Directors there are educational reasons for not doing so; or
 - (b) where parents request in writing that the candidate should not be entered.
- 6.3 Parents will be informed in writing as soon as it has been decided for which examinations candidates should be entered.
- 6.4 Where the preparation provided by the school would enable a candidate to take two or more prescribed public examinations in the same syllabus the requirement to enter a pupil applies to a single examination entry only. However, no charge will be made to the parents for a "double" entry if the school has prepared the candidate for the examination.
- 6.5 Where it is agreed to enter a candidate for a prescribed examination for which the candidate has not been prepared by the school, the full cost of the entry may be charged to the candidate or parents.
- 6.6 Where a candidate has, with parental agreement, been entered for a non-prescribed public examination a charge may be made for
- (a) entry fee
 - (b) actual cost of any preparation provided by the school outside school hours.
 - (c) costs relating to the school's teaching staff if the staff have been specifically engaged under a contract for services for the purpose of providing the optional extra.
- 6.8 Examination entry fees may be recovered from parents if a candidate fails without good reason to complete the requirements for any public examination for which fees have been paid by the Education Committee or school or are liable to pay. Requirements may include coursework or the sitting of final examinations.

7. Music Provision

- 7.1 Charges will not be made for class music tuition during school hours.
- 7.2 Music tuition, whether group or individual, will also be free, whether it is provided during or outside school hours, if it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum.
- 7.3 No charge will be made for group music activities e.g. school orchestras, which take place during school hours.
- 7.4 A charge may be made for individual music tuition that is not part of the specification of a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum, provided parental agreement is obtained before a pupil is given the tuition. The charge can include:

- (a) the cost of the teacher
- (b) the cost of sheet music and
- (c) the hire and insurance of a musical instrument.

- 7.5 The school charging and remissions criteria will apply. Serious consideration will also be given to written requests from parents suffering financial hardship with each case being judged independently and given at the school's own discretion.
- 7.6 Parents are asked to make a full year's commitment to tuition. Parents will be invoiced termly.
- 7.7 Parents are asked to give at least one half-term's notice of cancellation of music tuition in writing to the Head of Music. However they will still be liable for a full year's costs of a replacement student cannot be found. Should a pupil decide not to attend tuition at any time during a half-term period, no reimbursement of fees will be given.
- 7.8 Tuition may, at the Music Department's discretion, be cancelled if more than one term's invoices are outstanding. However, parents will still be liable for settling any outstanding amounts.
- 7.9 School reserves the right to terminate tuition if it does not consider groups to be viable, or if progress/commitment is unsatisfactory. This will always be done after consultation with the instrumental teachers and parents.
- 7.10 School insurance will cover loaned instruments in school and on the journey to and from school. Parents' own insurance must cover the cost of replacement/repair, should damage occur outside these times. Advice will be given by the instrumental and music teacher. Insurance should be taken out for pupils' own instruments.

8. Voluntary Contributions

- 8.1 Any such contributions must be genuinely voluntary and it will be made clear to parents if contributions are requested that;
- (a) there is no obligation to contribute; and
 - (b) pupils will be treated the same whether or not their parents have contributed.
- 8.2 If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents in an initial letter indicating;
- (a) the nature of the proposed activity and its education value;
 - (b) the contribution per pupil which would be required if the activity were to take place; and
 - (c) the activity would not take place if insufficient contributions were forthcoming.
- 8.3 The "Governors Curriculum Fund" supported by voluntary contributions will be used to support families experiencing financial hardship.

9. Breakages and Fines

- 9.1 Parents may be asked to pay for the cost of any damage resulting from a pupil's misbehaviour.

- 9.2 Parents may be asked to pay for the replacement of any lost or damaged materials in the care of the pupil.

Remission Policy

1. All charges or contributions will be fully remitted exclusively where the criteria in Appendix 1 apply.
2. In every communication relating to charging or voluntary contributions, the parents of all the participating pupils will be advised of their entitlement to the remission of costs as in (1) above and be given the opportunity to claim remission.