

Introduction

This policy has been formulated in accordance with the Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. It also compliments the information given in section 7.5 of the Governors Handbook.

The purpose of this document is to help the Head teacher and Governing Body set out their policy on charging and remission for school activities and school visits.

Key Points

School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes, and in receipt of state benefits which would entitle their child to receive free school meals, of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Aim

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.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Head teacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Head teacher and Governing Body.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. The governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges. If a particular activity is limited to a specific number of pupils, the inclusion of pupils must not make reference to the ability or willingness to pay on behalf of the parent.

Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the School recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- ☐ An admission application;
- ☐ Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- ☐ 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;
- ☐ Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;

- ☒ Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; examination resit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- ☒ Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- ☒ 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- ☒ Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- ☒ Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- ☒ Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- ☒ Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- ☒ Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for:

- ☒ Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- ☒ Optional extras which include
 - ☒ Education provided outside of school time that is 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;
 - ☒ Examination entry fees if the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school;
 - ☒ Transport (other than above)
 - ☒ Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
 - ☒ Transport (other than above);
 - ☒ 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 (with the exception of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority – no charge may be made). Charges will not exceed the cost of provision;
 - ☒ Early Years provision for a pupil who is below compulsory school age; and is not otherwise funded by the local authority in accordance with regulations made under section 47 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998(4) (determination of school's budget share).
- ☒ Community facilities which include Breakfast Club and After School Club.
- ☒ Breakages

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.

Any sum payable under section 453(2), 455 or 458 by the parent of a registered pupil at a maintained school shall be recoverable summarily as a civil debt.

Residential Visits

A charge will be made for the cost of board and lodging not exceeding the actual cost of provision. Charges will not be made for activities undertaken during the residential.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

Pupils whose parents receive the following benefits may be entitled to some or all of the cost of certain activities being met:

- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed state pension

Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed for individual activities.

Breakages

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books or equipment on loan to pupils the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

Before and After School Club

The school offers a Before and After School Club which is charged on a flexible basis to suit our parents changing work patterns. Information about the charges can be obtained from Mrs Jean Kelso, the B & A Care Manager.