

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

OCTOBER 2017

The law on charging in connection with education in maintained schools is set out in the Education Acts. Individual governing bodies are required to determine and keep under review a policy in respect of charging and remission arrangements. No charge may be made by the governing body unless it has drawn up a statement of its policy.

The Education Reform Act 1988 established the basic principle that the education by any maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge.

Charging

Exceptions to the above approved by the governing body are as follows:

1. Musical Instrument Tuition within School Hours

Individual and group tuition in playing a musical instrument will be charged for provided that it is not part of the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil.

Charges will be made for sheet music, certain musical instruments or their hire. Charges will be in accordance with the scale as approved from time to time by the Local Education Authority

2. 'Finished Products'

A charge may be levied to cover the cost of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology, where parents have indicated in advance they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

3. Board and Lodging

Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home, the school will make a charge for board and lodging, whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours. The charge will not exceed the cost of the board and lodging provided for each pupil involved. Families who are registered for Free School Meals are exempted from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential trips.

Where a trip is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and is not required for the purposes of a prescribed public examination, charges not exceeding the cost may also be levied for travel.

4. Public Examinations

The following charges will be passed onto parents:

(i) the charge made by an examining board where a parent asks for an examination result to be re-scrutinised;

(ii) the cost of entering the pupil for an examination where the governing body agrees to enter a pupil for a prescribed public examination for which he or she has not been prepared by the school;

(iii) the examination fee where a pupil, with parental agreement, is entered for a public examination which is not prescribed by the Secretary of State and which is not on the Authority's approved list for payment of fees.

Where a pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the governing body has paid, or is liable to pay a fee, then the fee will be recovered from the parents.

5. Nursery Fees

The school may offer spare nursery places to children in the term of their third birthday, subject to availability. This will be on a fee paying basis.

6.1. Optional Extras (i.e. outside school hours)

A charge will be levied for an activity, defined under legislation as an "optional extra", which is provided wholly or mainly outside school hours. Such charges will not exceed the cost of providing the activity, divided equally between the pupils participating.

Prior written agreement must be obtained from the parents or carers of pupils involved in an optional activity for which a charge is to be made.

6.2. Education Partly During School Hours

Charges will be made for visits that occupy more than 50% of the time out of normal school hours. This includes travelling time.

Where more than 50% of the visit takes place during school hours, no charge will be made. If residential accommodation is involved, a charge will be made for that accommodation.

6.3. Application of 50% Rule

Where the 50% rule is applied to residential visits, calculations are based on "sessions".. Sessions are defined as from 00.00 to 12.00 and 12.00 to 24.00. If the number of sessions outside school hours exceeds the number of sessions inside school hours, charges can be made.

e.g. A visit taking place from a Friday (if it is a full school day) through to Sunday evening, would involve two sessions in school hours and four out of school hours. Charges can therefore be made.

7. Voluntary Contributions

The School wishes to continue with the important work and experience derived from inviting experts and performers into school and participating in off-site visits. In order to overcome the financial difficulties that exist voluntary contributions may be requested for such activities. The

school will suggest to parents an appropriate amount for a voluntary contribution but cannot insist on payment.

No pupil will be prevented from taking part in the visit if a contribution is not forthcoming, or has been insufficient to cover the individual cost for that pupil.

Where insufficient money has been contributed collectively to cover the cost, the school may cancel the visit and return all the contributions made.

Where contributions are made in excess of the requested sums, a clear determination must be made to all parents about the disposal of surplus money.

Charges for optional extras for which voluntary contributions will be sought can include:

- (i) the pupil's travel costs;
- (ii) the pupil's board and lodging costs;
- (iii) materials, books, instruments and other equipment;
- (iv) non-teaching staff costs;
- (v) entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres etc.;
- (vi) insurance costs;
- (vii) the cost of engaging a teacher, specifically for the activity;
- (viii) professional fees and travel expenses for visitors e.g. musicians, theatre companies, swimming coaches;
- (ix) hire of facilities e.g. swimming pool

8. General Notes

8.1. Damage and Replacement:

Within the school's disciplinary code compulsory charges may be made by the school for replacement of broken windows or fittings, defaced or damaged text books or any other damage or loss occurring as a result of pupils' bad behaviour. The school is empowered to recover this loss and resultant costs as a civil debt.

8.2. Unpaid Charges:

Those unpaid charges which are legally recoverable will be recouped, together with resultant costs as a civil debt.