



## CHARGING POLICY

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED:	SPRING 2019
THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED:	SPRING 2021
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish the policy and process for a fair and consistent system of charging for school-related activities. It will be reviewed by the Trust Board on behalf of the Local Governing Bodies in accordance with the agreed schedule and in the event of any changes in the relevant statutory provisions or guidance.

## Activities for which charging is not permitted

A school may not charge for the following types of activity:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum or part of the specification for prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

## Activities for which charging is permitted

A school may levy a charge for the following types of activity:

- The full cost of board and lodging on a residential visit (subject to any statutory and discretionary remissions, see below). However, this must not exceed the actual cost;
- The full cost of activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours but which are 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.
- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- The full costs of entering a student for a public examination not prescribed in regulations and for preparing students for such an examination outside school hours.
- The full costs of entering a student for a public examination where the student has not been prepared by the school for the examination.
- The full costs of entering the student in an exam for which the school has prepared the student if the student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirement for that syllabus. It shall be for the school to determine what a good reason is.
- Where a pupil, at the request of parents, re-sits an examination.
- Where parents request for examination papers to be remarked, where this is permitted.

## Music Tuition

Tuition to support music **can be charged** where the provision of tuition in singing or playing a musical instrument during school hours (whether provided individually or to a group of two or more pupils) is made at the request of the pupil's parent. For music tuition provided outside of school hours, see above.

Music tuition **cannot be charged** for when:

1. Tuition is provided in following a duty imposed by section 88 of the Education Act 2002 (implementation of National Curriculum for England), or
2. Education is provided to a class of pupils in Key Stage 2, which follows the DfE's policy "Instrumental and Vocal Tuition at KS2" (to enable pupils to decide if they wish to receive further music tuition);
3. See also in respect of Looked After Children

## Other activities where charges may be levied

In practical subjects, parents may be asked for the full or partial cost of materials or ingredients, where they have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

Schools may charge parents for additional revision materials, sourced by the school on behalf of parents and pupils but sold at cost only and where such a purchase is not deemed to be compulsory or in any way detrimental to those not purchasing such materials.

For residential trips, board and lodging may not exceed the actual cost. For pupils taking part in an exchange, schools may charge for any significant administrative costs related to such activity as ensuring compliance with safeguarding requirements.

## Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested for activities offered during normal school hours. All activities offered during school hours will be made available to all students, regardless of the ability or willingness of their parent or carer to make contributions.

Where contributions are sought from parents, the following statement must be used in communications about the activity:

*"There will be some trips or activities which the school cannot charge for but which the school considers would be beneficial to the students. In this case the school may ask for voluntary contributions. No student will be excluded from the activity or treated differently because they do not make a contribution. If voluntary contributions are not sufficient then it may be that the planned activity or trip cannot go ahead."*

If the school requests voluntary contributions for purposes other than for specific trips or activities, the statement should read:

*"Contributions are voluntary and no student will be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to this or any other request."*

Schools may also ask for voluntary contributions for the following types of activity:

- Parents may be asked to provide voluntary contributions towards the costs of consumable materials that are used by their child during a course of study.
- Contributions can be requested towards the cost of transport for sport fixtures.

## Remission of Charges

### Parents on Benefits

- When the school informs parents about a forthcoming visit that involves staying overnight the school can charge for board and lodging. This is with the exception of pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>. Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. The head teacher must inform all parents of the right to claim free board and lodging if they are receiving these benefits.

### General Remission

- The cost of individual instrumental music tuition will also be remitted in all cases where the individual tuition is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. There may be occasions where two or three students receive additional music lessons together at a reduced cost.

### Looked After Children

- No charge may be made for individual music tuition provided in school hours in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

Requests for financial assistance from the parents/carers of children in receipt of free School meals or have the status of a student premium child should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Parents are encouraged to claim free School meal entitlement if claiming income support or income based job seekers allowance.

Where a residential trip includes education for which charging is prohibited and the pupil's parent is in receipt of certain benefits, they will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging

## Refunds

The finance team regularly review trip balances to ensure timely identification of any likely surpluses and deficits. In the event that a trip has a final balance which equates to a surplus in excess of £10 or 10% of the sum paid per student, the excess will be refunded.

Surpluses below this are retained for the purposes of creating a hardship fund for school students and for supporting other student-focussed school activities.