



C22: CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Last reviewed: March 2016

Next Review: February 2019

Approved by Full Governing Body

Date: 7th February 2018

1. RATIONALE

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996¹ sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This policy has been produced to support charging by the school, in accordance with afore mentioned Act and reflects the current law and associated guidance.

2. GUIDELINES

The school's policy is to charge for the following areas of activity as permitted under the Education Act 1996:-

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- Optional extras (see section 3);
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 4)

3. Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- 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 fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- 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);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- The cost of buildings and accommodation;
- Non-teaching staff;

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>



- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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.

4. Voluntary Contributions

The school governing body is permitted to ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. There is no obligation to make a voluntary contribution, however the Governing Body / Headteacher will make it clear to parents from the outset if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source then the trip may be cancelled.

5. Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or 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.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

Students receiving voice or instrument tuition during school hours will be charged termly for the lessons they receive. The charges will vary according to the length of the lesson and whether or not it is an individual or shared lesson, but parity will be maintained with the charges made for similar lessons by the Hertfordshire Music Service.

Students who are taught by peripatetic teachers hired directly by the school (as opposed to those hired through Hertfordshire Music Service) and whose parents are in receipt of relevant benefits with an annual income of less than £30k, will be entitled to 50% remission



of music tuition fees on one instrument. Where parents are also in receipt of free school meals, 100% of music tuition charges will be remitted. (NB. A similar arrangement, administered by Hertfordshire Music Service, is in place for all students taught by their teachers, either directly or through HHS.)

All hardship and minority subsidies will be funded from the School's delegated budget, and will need to be agreed with the Headteacher and School Business Manager.

Charges for voice and instrument tuition will be submitted to the Full Governing Body for agreement, on an annual basis

6. Residential Trips

Schools **can** charge for

- Board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;²
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance

7. REFUNDS

- (a) The deposit for any activity is non-refundable unless covered by an insurance policy, e.g. medical reasons. (Disinclination to travel is not covered by insurance.) Refund of any further monies paid will depend on the school's ability to cancel the place without incurring costs or offer the place to another child. If the child is withdrawn at a late stage, the parents will be required to pay the full cancellation costs even though the child does not go.
- (b) The school reserves the right to refuse, or remove a student from a proposed trip at any point should their behaviour warrant it. In this instance, there would be a loss of the deposit paid by the parent, and any cancellation costs incurred by the school (which may be the full costs) may be charged to the parent.
- (c) The cost of trips/activities is an 'accurate estimate'; any small surplus of money will be donated to the school fund. A surplus of more than 5% will be refunded, provided this is over £5 per person. Any financial losses will be borne by the school.

² The government plans to prescribe the circumstances when Universal Credit is fully rolled out