



Charges and Remission Policy

Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences, can make towards a student's 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 students of the school and additional optional activities, for which a charge will be levied, whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

There are two types of financial contributions, which have different limitations, for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

Voluntary Contributions:

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution that may be asked for or any restriction on the way in which it is used. Voluntary contributions therefore can be used to subsidise parents of pupils who are unwilling or unable to pay the charges made and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers or adults. Letters requesting a voluntary contribution for an activity must indicate that there is no obligation to contribute and that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. If the school is to provide a rich and complete curriculum, educational visits within school hours are not only desirable but essential. It would not be possible to finance all such visits out of school funds. Therefore, when an educational visit is planned, a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the visit will be requested. Whilst this contribution would be purely voluntary, if insufficient monies were received then the visit would be jeopardised and may not take place.

Permitted Charges:

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit (subject to the provisions of the school's remissions policy).

1 Materials

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of Art & Design, Design Technology, Engineering or Science, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. In the case of Food Technology, pupils usually provide their own ingredients, but if the pupil forgets, the school provides the ingredients and levies a charge.

2 Textbooks

Appropriate textbooks are made available free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision material and books are available, for which a charge may be made.

3 Instrumental Music Tuition

The school levies charges in respect of individual music tuition, and group music tuition if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil. Students who study Music at GCSE and A level will receive discounted instrumental music lessons for one instrument only. Students who are looked after by the local authority cannot be charged.

4 Examination Entries

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has prepared the student for the examination and

- it considers that for educational reasons the student should not be entered and the student's parent/guardian wishes the student to be entered (or the student him/herself when over 18 years old)
- the student's attendance drops to less than 85% without exceptional reason

In these circumstances, if the pupil subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost.

A charge will be levied when a student re-sits an examination, unless the student is being prepared for the re-sit at the school.

A charge will be levied where a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

If a student is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not taught by the centre a charge will be levied for examination costs and related fees.

The charge levied above will be the cost of the examination entry, centre administration and invigilation.

5 Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including but not limited to premises, furniture, equipment, books, materials, ID badges, ID badge holders and lanyards) or belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. Lost or defaced books will also fall within this category.

6 Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra" e.g. Ski Trip. A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity, but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. Voluntary contributions do not apply, nor does the Free School Meals or other benefits criteria, as the trip is classed as an optional extra. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment.

For residential trips which are essential to the National Curriculum, statutory RE or in preparation for prescribed examinations, a charge will be levied for accommodation and meals. If a student is entitled to Free School Meals then they are legally exempt from the accommodation and meals part of the cost.

When is an activity held in school hours?

A day visit is in school hours if:

50% or more of the total time (including travelling) occurs in school hours. As mentioned above school hours do not include the normal midday break.

A residential visit is in school hours if:

The number of school sessions missed is 50% or more than the number of half days spent on the visit (including travel). A school session equates to a registration session (i.e. 2 per day). A half-day is a 12 hour period ending at midday or midnight.

7 Combined Cadet Force and Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE)

Subscriptions will be charged for joining the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and for joining the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. For CCF there is a joining fee and thereafter there is an annual charge. For DofE an enrolment fee is payable to the School for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Additional charges apply for expeditions for all awards.

8 Lockers

Lockers are available for purchase at a cost. At the end of the student's school career the lockers are scrapped. If the keys supplied with the locker are lost then a charge is made for the school to replace the barrel.

9 Sixth Form

There is a resources fee to the Sixth Form which includes a tie or 3 badges, provides extra resources for facilities for the Study Centre as required and additional resources.

10 Printing

In addition to the school allocation for printing, students are able to purchase additional print credits using the Wisepay system.

11 Other charges

The Headteacher or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report or if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

Remissions

Usual Free School Meals entitlement verification procedures should be applied when considering the remission of charges. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher or Governing Body and will depend on the activity in question.

Charges

All items that can be purchased through the School and their current costs are shown in Wisepay, our online payment system. The school operates a cashless system for all payments therefore all payment of charges should be made via Wisepay.

Calculating of Charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside the school day, they will be based on the estimated costs to be incurred. As much notice as possible will be given to parents of the activity and the charge. Best value will be sought in planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

In the unlikely event of a surplus, the school endeavours to return unspent funds for a specific activity to parents if these exceed £8 per pupil. If surplus funds arise from year group activities these will be used to reduce the cost of future activities for that year group.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.