



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY FOR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Date of this review: Summer 2016

Date of next review: Summer 2019

The governing body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education. The governing body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996. This requires the governing body to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included in the school prospectus. The school will also comply with the Buckinghamshire County Council Scheme for Financing Schools, Finance Section F7 Charges for Educational Activities.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents may be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

Voluntary Contributions:

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it is likely to be cancelled and this will be made this clear to parents.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used. Thus voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise pupils of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.

Permitted Charges:

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with an activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit (subject to the provisions of the LA and school's remissions policy).

1. Materials & Textbooks

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art or DT, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used.

2. Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, instrument lessons are an exception to this rule as they do not form part of the National Curriculum. Charges will be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of an appropriate size to play a musical instrument.

3. 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”. A charge will be made for the full cost of the activity but will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise children whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

When is an activity held in school hours?

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

4. Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials). The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the headteacher may decide.

5. Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the resources committee and approved by the governing body.

6. Other charges

The headteacher, resources committee or governing body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services eg for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

Remissions

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a pupil who is eligible for free school meals will receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Government guidance providing details of the benefits which exempt parents from being charged can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

Where charges are to be made optional extras, parents may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge.

Additional information about charging for school activities (Document 3.2C) can be found at:

<https://oeapng.info/>