

CHARGING POLICY

PURPOSE

The school wishes to provide for all students the best possible educational available within the funds allocated by the Education Funding Agency. The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and the school fully endorses this principle and is committed to uphold the legal requirements.

It is recognised, however, that many educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependent on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for students. The school's concern is to keep financial contributions to a reasonable minimum and to ensure as far as possible, that all students are able to take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

GUIDELINES

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances - provided that each school had identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced or waived for certain students. The Governing Board of Stroud High School has decided that until further notice its policy will be as follows:

- 1. Day Curriculum Visits:** For visits occurring during school time required for curriculum reasons including any visit required because of recognised public examinations, the National Curriculum or the law on Religious Education (so called "Curriculum visits") the school may invite a voluntary contribution from parents to meet costs, but the visit may be cancelled if funds are not sufficient.
- 2. Day Optional Visits:** For visits which are not specifically required to meet curriculum reasons and visits which take place outside school time (so called "Optional visits") parents will be charged for all allowable costs*. Charges may be waived or reduced for students whose parents make application to the Headteacher.
- 3. Residential Curriculum Visits:** For visits during school time, required for curriculum reasons including any visit required because of recognised public examinations, the National Curriculum or the law on Religious Education (so called "Curriculum visits") the school may invite voluntary contributions from parents to meet costs other than students' board and lodgings, but the visit may be cancelled if the funds are not sufficient. Parents will normally be charged at the discretion of the Headteacher for the full cost of students' board and lodgings. Charges may be waived or reduced for students whose parents make application to the Headteacher and/or qualify under the criteria for Free School Meals entitlement.
- 4. Residential Optional visits outside school time:** For optional visits, outside school time, parents will normally be charged, at the discretion of the Headteacher, for the full cost of the visit, including all allowable costs* and board and lodgings.

*** Allowable costs include:**

- a. The student's travel and subsistence costs
- b. Materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- c. Teaching and support staff if employed to accompany the visit
- d. Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.

5. Instrumental music on an individual or small group basis: Tuition provided as part of the curriculum during school hours is free of charge to parents. Additional music tuition on an individual or small group basis is available through the school. The fees for this additional tuition are charged at a rate set by the Governors, and reviewed within the term of this policy. Payment for lessons is on a ten lesson basis, required in advance, with a minimum of five lessons notice of cancellation. Payment by monthly standing order is the preferred method.

6. Classroom Materials: Generally no charge will be made for materials or equipment. Where parents would like to possess the finished product, the school reserves the right to charge the cost or require the supply of the necessary materials. However, for certain practical activities (D&T, Food Technology etc), parents may be invited to provide materials or ingredients on a voluntary basis but the lack of voluntary contributions may cause the activity to be varied.

7. Examination Fees: The school will pay the entry fee for all prescribed examinations except:

- Where the Governors consider that there are educational reasons why the pupil should not be entered or where the parents have so requested in writing.
- Where the school has not prepared the student for the particular Examination
- For all resits

If a student (with parental agreement) is entered for a non-prescribed examination, then parents may be charged for the entry fee together with any associated charges.

The school reserves the right to recover from parents the costs of examination entry fee(s) should the student fail to complete the required coursework or sit the final examination(s), or in the event of students being absent from examinations without just cause.

The school will consider waiving the requirement to pay any examination entry fees where there is clear evidence of severe family hardship.

Prescribed examinations: These are the examinations recognised by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families. At Stroud High School the prescribed examinations are:

- General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)
- General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (AS/A2 Levels)

8. Damage and 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 to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. This also applies to third party property where the repair or replacement cost has been recharged to the school. In such cases the full cost will be passed onto the individuals involved.

9. Stroud High School Student Support Fund: The School has funds available for discretionary support for students in financial hardship. All applications for support from the hardship fund must be made to the Headteacher. The Headteacher and Business Manager will consider requests and decide on each application on a case by case basis at their discretion. Appeals may be made to the Chair of Governors.

10. Staff private photocopying and phone calls: All staff private photocopying and phone calls must be immediately reported to the Business Manager and payment made at cost.