



Charging & Remissions Policy

Approved By:	The Trust Board
Date Approved:	10 December 2019
Adopted by Trust Board on:	10 December 2019
Review Frequency:	Annually

As required under Section 449-462 of the Education Reform Act (1996) a policy has been drawn up in respect of charges that can be made for school activities.

Items for which pupils may be charged	Policy
Individual instrumental musical tuition where this is over and above the requirements of the National Curriculum and/or an approved examination syllabus.	A special scale of charges has been introduced which will be reviewed annually.
Transport to Work Experience	Parents will normally pay directly. If you experience difficulty with this, please approach the Headteacher in the first instance.
"Optional Extras", i.e. activities outside school time not related to statutory duties.	Charges will be levied, but please note that each school will be pleased to consider requests for assistance where a pupil is prevented from taking part in an "optional activity" for financial reasons. In such cases, parents should make a direct approach to the Headteacher, in the first instance.
Board and lodgings on residential visits.	Parents will be charged, except in cases of statutory remission where families meet the criteria set out for Free School Meals.
Re-scrutiny of exam results.	Parents to pay all charges unless in special circumstances such as when governors wish to have the papers of a number of students re-scrutinised.
Exam entry: i) for prescribed exams for which pupils have not been prepared by school; ii) for exams, including modules, which are retaken to improve performance; iii) entry for an exam which was not on the prescribed list e.g. music exams; iv) where preparation takes place outside school hours.	The full charge will be made.
Recovery of wasted exam fees.	Parents will be charged.
Breakages/Losses, e.g. cost of replacing a broken window or lost text book where this is the result of a pupil's behaviour.	Parents may be charged the full cost of replacement.
ParentPay Transactions Charges.	Transaction charges as determined by ParentPay will be included within the cost of all trips and activities to reflect the transaction fees incurred through income received.

In respect of other curriculum based trips organised by schools, during normal teaching time, it may be necessary to invite voluntary contributions from parents to offset costs. There is, of course, no obligation for parents to contribute and pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have agreed to the request. Such contributions, however, will ensure that the school can continue to provide a full range of activities for the benefit of all pupils.

FURTHER GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

A Trust policy has been drawn up and approved by Trustees to give consistency to our approach for "Charging for School Activities". Please study it carefully. The legislation is more fully outlined in DfE [Charging for School Activities](#) document but the following notes may be useful:

1. No compulsory charge may be made for any activity which occurs for more than 50% of the time within normal school hours (excluding lunch time) nor for any essential materials or equipment used during school hours.
2. Parents may be asked to make voluntary payments for visits or materials, particularly in the latter case, if they wish to own the finished product (e.g. Tech/Art). No pupil, however, can be excluded from an activity on the grounds that their parents will not pay.
3. In the case of residential visits, parents may be asked to pay for the residential costs and to make voluntary contributions to cover travel and tuition costs.
4. To help planning of trips and activities, which are wholly or mainly in school time, or which are seen as an integral part of the curriculum, it would not be infringing the Act if you said:
 "Under the requirements of the Education Reform Act, we can only raise the cost of this *visit/activity* ** by voluntary contribution. Parents will appreciate that without sufficient support, the *visit/activity* cannot go ahead. If your child qualifies for Pupil Premium funding, please contact the school to discuss available support."

Page 6, Voluntary Contributions, makes the position clear:

"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 the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is important to note that no child should 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 it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be. When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory".

5. Charges may be levied, for "Optional Extras" but these are defined being wholly or mainly outside normal teaching time and must not involve activities which are necessary to fulfil extra syllabi and/or National Curriculum requirements. It may be possible to provide help in cases where participation is prevented by financial hardship, requests should be directed to the Headteacher in the first instance. Guidance can be provided by the Central Finance Team.

Colleagues faced with difficulties over "charges" should not hesitate to consult the nominated member of SLT at their school or the Central Finance Team. In particular, please ensure that the member of SLT has had sight of any letters intended for parents.

Detailed guidance about practical and safety arrangements for organising a school trip or activity can be found at each school. The process for managing trip and activity finance has been prepared by the Central Finance Team.