

Introduction

This policy is compliant with sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996 which set out the law on charging for School visits.

The School will ensure that it informs parents on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of School visits.

Education

Charges cannot and will not be made for:

- an admission application to the School,
- education provided during School hours (School hours are defined as 50%, or more, of the time spent on the activity), including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment,
- education provided outside School hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the School, or part of religious education,
- vocal tuition for pupils, or for those learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the School, or part of religious education,
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the School.
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

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:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the School
 - c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the School
- transport that is not required to take the pupil(s) 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,

- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

The cost of optional extras may include:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra,
- the cost of buildings and accommodation,
- non-teaching staff,
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra,
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, 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 will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the 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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

The Head of School / Headteacher will recommend any remissions to the Optional Extras policy based on any exceptional case.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents in respect of off-site visits. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. It will also be made 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. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it may be cancelled. The Trust aims to provide at least 2 weeks' notice of this cancellation following a financial review of the trip / residential at that point. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The School will make it clear to parents at the outset the policy for allocating places on School visits.

Residential Visits

The School will not charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during School hours (if the number of sessions taken up by the visit is equal or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit it is deemed to be during School hours),
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside School hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the School, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from School accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

The School will charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge will 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 (UC),
- 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
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- income related employment and support allowance.

Music Tuition

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing, providing that the tuition is provided at the request of the parent. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities). A charge will also not be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

The Trust will be responsible for the cost of:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the School premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport,
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated,
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the School; and,
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.