



The Abbey School

A Business and Enterprise Academy

Charging and Remissions Policy for School Activities and Visits

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General Guidance

Schools cannot charge parents and pupils for any activity unless a charging policy has been adopted. Moreover, when made, charges per pupil cannot exceed the actual costs incurred, which mean that pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to cover the costs of those who cannot afford to.

The school must not charge for any activities which take place when the school is actually in session, excluding the break in the middle of the day. The exception is musical instrument tuition for individual pupils or pupils in groups of up to four, as long as such teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

If the school wishes to run an activity during the school day for which it would need contributions from parents or others, it can invite voluntary contributions. However, no child should be excluded from such activities because their parents cannot or will not contribute.

The school can charge for optional, extra activities provided mainly or wholly outside school hours as long as such activities are not an essential part of the National Curriculum or religious education. Activities which are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination must be provided free.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Consultation

The policy has been informed by 'A Guide to the Law for School Governors' and will be agreed by the school's Governing Body before being implemented.

Relationship to Other School Policies

The policy complements the school's equal opportunities policy, the teaching and learning policy and the curriculum policy.

During the School Day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

It excludes

1. Charges made for teaching individual pupils or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument.
2. Charges for ingredients or materials in practical subjects where parents/carers indicate in advance they would like to keep the finished product.
3. Voluntary charges for non-uniform and charity fund-raising events.

There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination unless:

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at this school
- The examination is not on the set list but we arrange for the pupils to take it
- A pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any examination where the governing body or the Academy originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because their parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if insufficient voluntary contributions are collected.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents, who may, if they wish, ask the Headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Optional Activities Outside of the School Day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example specialist sports coaching. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

Education Partly During the School Day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Residential Visits

Charges will be made for travel, board and lodging for residential trips, with the exception of the remissions set out below.

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the number of school sessions missed by the pupils total half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. In such cases parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

Remissions

Where the parents/carers of a student are in receipt of the following, the Governing Body will offer to remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity which: is deemed to take place in school hours; forms part of the syllabus for the National Curriculum or is a requirement of a prescribed examination.

- Universal Credit (as appropriate)
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed the threshold published by the DfES
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance

School Mini-bus

Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school mini-bus. Charges can only be levied if the school has a permit issued by the LA under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. No permit is required if no charge is made to the user. Charges made for travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the school.

Calculating Charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents who would qualify for support are those who qualify for appropriate benefits or other criteria, e.g. those in receipt of Universal Credit (as appropriate), Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit, the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of this policy will be devolved to the Headteacher who will determine the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds.

Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans, at the draft stage, should be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team and the educational visits coordinator for consideration and approval.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher has the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy. The Governing Body will review the impact of this policy and review its contents each two years.

Approved by the Governing Body on:

Signed.....

Date.....

Next due for review on.....