

Charging for School Activities Policy

General Principles

- I The Governing Body acknowledges the right of every student to receive free school education and understands that activities taking place wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be made available to all students regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- II The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the widest possible range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's education.
- III The Governing Body aims to promote such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional enrichment / extension activities.
- IV The Governing Body is also aware of the budget constraints which means that all such activities are managed in a manner which does not jeopardise the provision of the best possible education to all pupils.
- V The Governing Body's policy is in full accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988.

Specific Issues

- a) No charges can be made for any books, materials, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if that activity is:
 - Within school hours (as defined by the 50% rule below)
 - Essential for a National Curriculum programme or prescribed public examination
 - For statutory religious education.
- b) No charges can be made for entry to a public examination on the DfES prescribed list, except where the pupil without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. fails to submit coursework, attend an oral component etc).
However, full costs will be charged for all re-sits, unless there are exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher.
- c) No charge will be made connected with admission to the school.
- d) Voluntary Contributions can be invited for any educational activity both inside and outside school time. No pupil will be excluded from the activity for not having paid the contribution. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received the proposed activity may have to be cancelled. Parents will be advised of this possibility when notified of the activity.

- e) "Finished Products" – where parents have expressed a wish in advance to have a finished product made at school a charge can be made at cost price.
- f) "Permitted Charges"
- the cost of board and lodging on residential visits;
 - the cost of lost and destroyed school property and the consequences of wilful or reckless damage to school property;
 - the cost of optional activities provided outside school hours (or mainly outside school hours), for example a ski club or visits to a sporting/cultural event;
 - additional costs incurred by the school for resources to support the trip/activity; flat rate of 3% of total cost of trip to be added to each trip to cover additional costs;
 - the cost of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, or the cost of re-sits, where no further preparation has been provided by the school;
 - the cost of music tuition (bursaries towards costs are available in some circumstances from the school).

g) Activities Partly During School Hours

The Education Reform Act (1988) established the 50% rule. If 50% or more of the time spent on an activity (including travelling time) is deemed to be inside school time (excluding midday breaks) then the whole activity will not be charged for.

For residential activities the calculation is based on half-days.

h) Basic School Equipment

Parents are requested to provide pupils with essential pens, pencils etc. as set out in the prospectus.

i) Remissions

In circumstances of family hardship then the school will review individual circumstances in confidence. Unless parents volunteer additional information regarding statutory benefits, the normal practice will be to refer to the Free School Meals register as this provides an objective and non-intrusive method of assessing individual cases.

j) Refunds

All letters to parents involving 'costs' will set out clearly the basis of non-refundable deposits and refunds. The finance office will produce all such letters.

k) Behaviour

Parents will be clearly informed that a child will be refused participation in an educational visit/activity, if staff have reason to judge their behaviour poses an unacceptable risk to themselves or others. In these cases a refund is not automatic.