

Howard of Effingham School

Policy on Charging and Remissions for School activities

The school recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences make towards the life of the school.

The school aims to promote such activities both as part of the broad and balanced school curriculum and as a range of enrichment activities. Further to this, all school activities will be open to any person from the relevant cohort of students.

In order to make visits possible and maintain the variety and frequency of activities, it will be necessary to seek support by making charges or asking for voluntary contributions from parents and guardians. This policy provides guidelines for the process.

This policy has been written in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Date created: May 1997

Governors Committee Responsible: Finance and Facilities

Implemented: Feb 2006

Senior Manager Contact: Julie Menhennett

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Introduction

The school recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards a student's education.

The school aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced school curriculum and as a range of additional optional activities. Further to this, all school activities will be open to any person from the relevant cohort of students and all reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

No charge is made for admitting students to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. There is therefore no compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for activities during school hours. However, it is permitted for the school to seek support in maintaining the variety and frequency of activities by making a charge or asking for voluntary contributions from parents or carers.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- equipment, materials or ingredients for subjects e.g. Design Technology;
- school funds generally.

Any contribution will be genuinely voluntary and any student whose parents are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against in any way. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make a particular activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity would have to be cancelled.

Residential Trips

The school will make charges for the cost of travel board and lodging during residential school trips but this cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision. Any negotiated reductions in charges will be passed on to students.

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge will be made for instrumental music tuition for students, unless the tuition forms part of the specification for a prescribed public examination (e.g. GCSE) that the school is preparing the student to sit, or is part of the National Curriculum in which case a charge is not permissible. This refers to any tuition which takes place during the school day when normal lessons are taking place. It does not include tuition before or after school, during school lunch hours, or during weekends and holidays.

Public Examinations

No charges will be made for entering candidates for public examinations that are the final assessment of a course being studied in the school. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the candidate was not prepared for a particular examination through following a course at the school;
- the school arranges for a candidate to take an examination which is not in the normal examination set list;
- a candidate fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee (recovery of wasted fees);
- a candidate wishes to re-sit an examination module for which a result has been awarded.

Charges will not be made for any cost associated with preparing a student for an examination. However, charges may be levied for tuition and other costs if students are prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not normally part of the school provision.

Remissions

The school may remit, in full or in part, the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity, such parents will be invited in confidence, to apply for remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher.

Where a trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours and is an essential part of the programme of study, children whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- 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; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

If 50 per cent or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include breaks in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50 per cent of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Additional considerations

The school has a responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end the school follows these guidelines:

- where possible the school will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- the school will establish a system for parents to pay by instalments
- when an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it should be possible for parents to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- the school acknowledges that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against students from families on lower incomes and will avoid that method of selection.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Finance Committee will monitor the impact of this policy annually. This monitoring will also contribute to any evaluation of the impact of the school's extended services on those students most in need of support.

Provisions concerning charging for school activities can be found in sections 402, 450 to 458 and 460 of the **Education Act 1996** and in **The Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999** (SI 1999 No. 2255).