



READING SCHOOL

POLICY ON CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Governing Body recognises that as a result of the 1996 Education Act there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity and that charging is prohibited except in certain circumstances at the discretion of the L.A. or Governing body.

The governing body also recognises that the curriculum as it exists at present cannot continue without asking for voluntary contributions from parents in certain circumstances.

Activities including off site visits:

1. No charges will be made for any activity or materials, books, instruments or other equipment which are essential to fulfil the statutory curriculum
2. Voluntary contributions may be asked for to enable extra activities, which are deemed educationally desirable, to take place. These may include a nominal contribution to enable school staff to be first aid trained. It may also be stated that such an activity will not be able to take place unless enough contributions are received to finance that activity. The contributions requested will reflect the cost of that activity (including any consequential costs such as supply cover, transport, refreshments) less any subsidy from funds available to the school.
3. Materials required which would result in a finished product, may be charged for as long as parents have been asked in advance if they wish to own that finished product.
4. Parents will be expected to provide items of clothing such as lab coats and sports kit.
5. Outside of school hours charges for activities may be made except where the activities are required either:
 - (a) as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination;or
 - (b) to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or religious education in which case no charge may be made with the exception of board and lodging charges for a residential visit (see sections 3.1 to 3.3)
6. Where charges are made the cost may not exceed the actual cost to the pupil and cannot subsidise any other pupils participating. The cost of those pupils remitted from charging will be met by funds available to the school.
7. The costs incurred by teachers providing the activity may be included in the costs to pupils.
8. A pupil's participation in such an activity will be a matter for parental choice and on the basis of a willingness to meet any charges applicable. Thus such an agreement is a pre-requisite to a pupil's inclusion.

9. If the charges levied do not cover the cost of the activity the resulting loss will be charged to the organising department.
10. Residential activity is defined as being one which involves pupils spending one or more nights away from home.

Where such activity is deemed essential to fulfil the National Curriculum (see 1 above) or as part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination

- (a) the full actual costs per pupil for board and lodging may be charged to the parent and
- (b) such a cost must be fully remitted if the pupil is in receipt of Free School Meals, and must be met by funds available to the school.

Where such an activity is not deemed essential to fulfil the National Curriculum an appropriate charge for the full cost of the activity may be made to parents.

Entry for Examinations

11. No charge will be made for a pupil's first entry to any prescribed public examination for which the pupil has been prepared at the school, whether during or outside school hours. Re-sit examinations will be charged unless the pupil is in receipt of Free School Meals or has suffered illness or a 'life event' that caused the pupil to perform worse in the examination than would normally have been expected.
12. Parents and/or pupils requiring scripts or remarks will be charged in accordance with the fees charged by the exam boards plus an administration fee to cover the School's expenses in administering the process. Where grades increase and the exam boards refund fees, these will be passed back to the parents
13. Parents and pupils will not be required to provide or pay for any materials (excluding clothing) necessary for the purposes of examination entry.
14. No charge will be made for transport provided to enable a pupil to take such an examination.
15. Pupils will be entered for each examination in a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil has been prepared for entry by the school except where;
 - (a) in the opinion of the Headmaster there are educational reasons for not doing so;or
 - (b) where the pupil's parents request in writing that the pupil should not be entered.
16. Where it is agreed to enter a pupil for a prescribed examination for which the pupil has not been prepared by the school, the full cost of the entry may be charged to the pupil or parents.
17. Where a pupil has, with parental agreement, been entered for a non-prescribed public examination a charge may be made for:-
 - (a) entry fee
 - (b) actual cost of any preparation provided by the school outside school hours.
 - (c) costs relating to the school's teaching staff if the staff have been specifically engaged under a contract for services for the purpose of providing the optional extra.
18. Examination entry fees may be recovered from parents if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements for any public examination for which fees have been paid by the school. Requirements may include coursework or the sitting of final examinations.
19. No charge will be made in connection with the sitting of the entrance examination.

20. Parents requesting a remark of the entrance examination will be charged £200. Should the outcome of any remark improve a child's place on the Admissions list the fee will be refunded. Children scoring below the pass mark are not deemed to be on the Admissions list.

Music Provision

21. Charges will not be made for class music tuition during school hours.
22. Music tuition, whether group or individual, will also be free, whether it is provided during or outside school hours, if it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum.
23. No charge will be made for group activities e.g. school orchestras, which take place during school hours.
24. A charge is made for individual and small group music tuition not forming part of the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or required by the national curriculum. Please see the 'Instrumental Tuition Terms & Conditions' document
25. Serious consideration will be given to requests for tuition from parents suffering financial hardship or whose child is in receipt of Free School Meals, with each case being judged independently and given at the school's own discretion.
26. School reserves the right to terminate tuition if it does not consider groups to be viable, or if progress/commitment is unsatisfactory. This will always be done after consultation with the instrumental teachers and parents.

Voluntary Contributions

27. Any such contributions must be genuinely voluntary and it will be made clear to parents if contributions are requested that;
- (a) there is no obligation to contribute
 - (b) pupils will be treated the same whether or not their parents have contributed
 - (c) there is support for low income families, in which case the child is in receipt of Free School Meals, and this is the criterion used to assess whether support is needed.
28. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents in an initial letter indicating:
- (a) the nature of the proposed activity and its education value;
 - (b) the contribution per pupil which would be required if the activity were to take place;
- and
- (c) the activity would not take place if insufficient contribution were forthcoming.
29. If the costs of the activity are not covered by voluntary contributions and the activity goes ahead, any resulting loss will be charged to the relevant department.

Breakages

30. Parents may be asked to pay for the cost of any damage resulting from a pupil's misbehaviour.
31. Parents may be asked to pay for the replacement of any lost or damaged material in the care of the pupil.

Compiled by: PR
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Finance Committee)
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Appendix : Defining visits for charging purposes

Visit organisers should be aware that any financial losses – whether relating to chargeable visits or those funded by voluntary contributions – will be charged to the organising department. When a potential for loss is identified the organiser should discuss this with the Business Manager at the earliest opportunity to enable the loss to the school to be mitigated.

