



## **Chosen Hill School**

# **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

**Governor Group Assigned:           RESOURCES**

**Type of Policy:                            STATUTORY**

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# FINANCE POLICY

## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

### 1. PURPOSE

The Education Act 1996 requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure that a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimize the financial barriers which may otherwise prevent some students from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered.

### 2. WHAT WAS CONSULTED?

The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors, the Governors' Handbook September 2014* and reflects the most recent DfE guidance 'Charging for School Activities' May 2018..

### 3. CHARGES

The Headteacher will ensure that the following applies:

There will be no charge for:

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the parent;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school;
- An examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

The school may charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to have them;
- Optional Activities (see detail section);
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances;
- Use of community facilities

#### 3.1 Optional Activities

Charges may be made for the following activities and for the provision of materials, books, instruments or equipment related to them:

Education provided wholly or mainly 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; or
- 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 (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the 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).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- 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; and
  - the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

### **3.2 Voluntary Contributions**

Under current legislation, the school can ask for voluntary contributions for any school activities. Where an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents and carers by letter as soon as the activity is offered to students.

Whilst there will be no obligation for a parent to make a contribution, it will also be made clear by letter the conditions under which the activity will be judged to be not financially viable and therefore will be cancelled for all students. If a parent is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, their child will be given an equal chance to take part in the activity if the activity remains financially viable despite reduced voluntary contributions.

### **3.3 Residential Trips**

- If a residential trip is an essential element of the curriculum or exam syllabus, for example Biology and Geography fieldtrips, there will be a charge for board and lodging only.
- If a residential trip is not an essential part of the curriculum or exam syllabus there may be a charge for transport and other associated costs in addition to board and lodging. The charge will be requested as a voluntary contribution and no student will be prevented from participating because their parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution. However, the activity would only go ahead if it were financially viable for the school. In these circumstances the school makes a limited amount of funding available which can be used to support parents/carers who are in receipt of qualifying state benefits (as defined in section 5 below) by a percentage contribution to the cost of the trip. This funding can be accessed on request to the Headteacher or Business Manager. If not already in place, the school will request that an application for free school meals is completed to support this.

### **3.4 Music Tuition:**

The charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. Charges are made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided whether individually or to groups of any size, where the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent or carer.

### **3.5 Transport**

The school will not charge for:

- 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 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 (see Residential Visits and Voluntary Contributions).

### **3.6 Education partly during school hours**

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

A charge will be made for the activity outside school hours if it is:

- not part of the national curriculum;
- not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
- and not part of religious education.

If 50% 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 the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% 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 pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

For residential visits, if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit, is equal to or greater than 50% of the total number of half-days spent on the visit, then it is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

### **3.8 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 students participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. The method of calculating charges is reviewed annually by an external auditor.
- When all income and expenditure for a trip, event or activity has been accounted for, a Statement of Account will be created to establish whether any underspend has occurred which may result in a refund being made. Any decision to make a refund will be taken by the Business Manager after ensuring that all costs, including administration costs, have been fully taken into account.

### **3.9 Cancellations, Withdrawals and Exclusions**

- Payments made to the School for a trip, event or specific materials, are non-refundable from the time the School enters into a financial commitment. There may be occasions when a payment is refundable whilst the viability of the trip, event or activity is being determined. Any letter will clearly state the terms of payments requested.
- The school reserves the right to withdraw any student from a planned trip/activity if the student repeatedly displays poor standards of behavior in school and it is considered that this behavior would pose a risk to health and safety of themselves, other students or adults on the trip during the excursion. In such circumstances, the school will not refund any payments already made and a parent/carer may also be required to pay any outstanding funds due to external suppliers.
- Where a trip is not paid in full one week prior to the activity and there is no payment plan in place, the school reserves the right to withdraw any student from the trip without refunding any payments already made and parents/carers will be expected to pay any funds due.

## **4. LOSS OF, OR DAMAGE TO, BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT**

A charge may be requested from parents/carers in certain circumstances relating to the loss of, or damage to, any of the following:

- Books/resources
- Equipment
- Buildings
- Personal belongings

Note – This covers any damage or loss which may occur:

- Anywhere on the school site
- On school transport to and from school, or a school-related activity
- At an alternative place of education provision e.g. College or APS,
- At another venue whilst the student is on a school trip
- On a Work Experience placement

## **5. REMISSIONS**

If the parents/carers of a student are in receipt of qualifying state benefits 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.

Qualifying state benefits are currently defined as:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – (provided you have annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits.

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2022.

If not already in place the school will request that an application for free school meals is completed to support this.

## **6. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.