

HASSENBROOK SCHOOL Specialist Technology College



POLICY FOR CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

Contents Page

Introduction Page 1

Education Page 1

Optional Extras Page 2

Voluntary Contributions Page 3

Residential Visits Page 3

Music Tuition Page 4

Transport Page 4

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

Education

The school governing body **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any maintained school
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum¹, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school²

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them
- optional extras (see below)
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 4)

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfill requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills)

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided 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
 - 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 that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit

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

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The school will make it clear to parents at the outset what the policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

The school will inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 4 of this guide of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, we will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/09)
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

Guidance on school policies for Learning Outside the Classroom, including charging is available here³.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing.

Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s) or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Transport

The school **cannot** 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 or local education authority 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
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit

³ <http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtC%20policy.pdf>