

ENGAYNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy on Charging and Remissions

Introduction

This policy follows guidance in the Governors Handbook and takes account of current legislation on charging for school activities.

The Governing Body may not levy any charges to pupils or their parents unless it has drawn up a statement of policy on charging.

In order to ensure that the basis on which charges are made and the eligibility criteria for support are clear to parents, the policy will be available from the school and a summary will be included in the prospectus published by the school.

General

If a charge is made for each pupil this should not exceed the actual cost of the activity. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions, or general fundraising.

For extra curricular activities and optional extras, the permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school and other adults directed by the school who supervise the activity only if those teachers and adults have been given a separate contract to provide the optional extra. A contract need not be a formal document. It could be simply a letter to a teacher asking him/her to provide a service on a particular occasion.

Should the school inadvertently make a profit on an activity which exceeds £5 per participating pupil a refund will be made to parents/carers who have contributed.

Education during school hours

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. 'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Information about school hours will be included in the prospectus published by the school.

Musical Instrument Tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours in relation to musical instrument tuition.

All music tuition is now operated independently by Havering Music School.

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school time activities subject to the musical instrument tuition exception, they can invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions. All such requests will make it clear to parents that the contributions are to be made on a voluntary basis and that the children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall then it will be cancelled.

The school will normally seek voluntary contributions for day time educational visits.

Charging for Finished Products

A charge may be levied to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product, thereby owning it.

Other charges

- I. The school will ask parents for a contribution towards breakages, book losses etc.

Education outside school hours

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or syllabus for an approved examination or religious education. Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside of school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours then that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made.

Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours. As an example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip which involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place outside school time. Charges would then be allowed.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Educational Act 1996 describes activities which can be charged for as 'optional extras'. Outside agencies using school premises for other activities will be charged for their use.

Residential Activities

a) Largely in school time

For residential activities taking place largely during school time or which meet the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances except for pupils whose parents are receiving Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Disability Element of Tax Credit or income-based Job Seekers allowance.

A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amount to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24 hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and at midnight. On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday would last for nine half-days, including five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, including three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50% or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the school should treat the whole of that half-day as spent on the trip.

Legislation does not permit schools to charge for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip. (Subject to Government change).

b) Largely out of school time

Charges will be made for the costs of such visits if they are largely out of school time and are not required by the National Curriculum, the syllabus for a public examination or for statutory religious education purposes.

Residential visits taking place in school holidays will be 'optional extras' and charges will be made.

Remissions

The Governors take the view that, as far as possible, no pupil should be denied an educational opportunity as a result of his/her family's financial situation. It is acknowledged, therefore, that it may be necessary to provide support in some cases. The Governing Body will give consideration for support to pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Working

Tax Credit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit or an income-based Job Seeker's allowance.

Governors have some discretion to waive charges as they think fit. When formulating the budget for the school, the Governing Body will consider, subject to other financial pressures, creating a small fund to be used to support cases of genuine hardship.

Other

The Head Teacher will administer the policy on behalf of the Governors and report back to them from time to time.

The school policy will be re-examined at intervals and modified in the light of experience and changing legislation as and when necessary.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Revised by Mr D Rickett June 2024