



# **POLICY ON CHARGES AND REMISSIONS FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Reviewed by Governing Body - May 2005

In general, the provision of education is free but as permitted by the Education Act 1996 TBGS policy provides for charges in the areas listed below. A summary of the Governing Body's charging and remission policy will be included in the school prospectus. Parents should be given notice of any proposed change to the policy.

If a charge is made for each pupil, it will not exceed the actual cost. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising.

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the optional extra. This contract does not need to be a formal document.

## **1. PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS**

No charges will be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in regulations. The governing body must enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for unless they think there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil, or if the pupil's parents ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered. The LEA may not override the governing body's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LEA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Charges will not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination except where a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

## **2. MATERIALS, BOOKS, INSTRUMENTS OR OTHER EQUIPMENT**

A governing body may set a charge for materials used in school where a parent indicates in advance that they or the pupil wishes to own the finished article which incorporates the materials. Any charge will not exceed the cost of the materials.

Alternatively, the parent may be required to provide the materials in question.

## **3. EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

When 50% or more of an activity (including travelling time) takes place during school hours no charge may be made.

## **4. RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES**

For a residential activity taking place mainly during school time, or which meets 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. This does not stop a voluntary contribution being sought. However, a charge (not exceeding the actual cost) will be made



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for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are receiving Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Tax Credit (where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income [as assessed by the Inland Revenue] does not exceed £13,910, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or guarantee element of State pension credit.

Children who receive Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals. The eligibility criteria are aligned with free school lunch eligibility. Further details on Remissions are at Section 10 below.

## **5. SCHOOL MINIBUSES**

Schools may charge pupils, staff or parents for transport in their minibuses only if they hold a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. The permit exempts the school from Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator and driver licensing requirements. The school may however request a voluntary contribution towards the cost of travel in a school minibus.

## **6. EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS**

A charge will be made for education provided outside school hours which is an optional extra provided it is with the prior agreement of parents. The charge in respect of a pupil will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity divided equally by the number of pupils participating (it will not include a share of the cost of any remissions). Costs will where appropriate include an element for travel, board and lodging, materials books, instruments and other equipment, support staff costs and teaching staff costs (where a teacher/instructor has been engaged specifically to provide the activity) entry fees, insurance and other costs.

Payment for trips and activities must be made in advance of any trip. The more costly trips (over £100) can be paid for in instalments as directed by the trip organiser. Where a Trip is organized by a Travel Company and they require a non-refundable deposit from the school then the initial deposit by parents must equal this sum and will also be non-refundable unless the school is able to obtain a refund.

## **7. ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE SCHOOL OR LEA**

A non-school organisation which arranges an activity to take place during school hours may charge parents who want their child to join the activity. Parents wishing their child to participate in the activity must obtain the school's permission.

## **8. DAMAGE TO PROPERTY**

The governing body may reserve the right to ask the parents of pupils whose inappropriate behaviour causes damage to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property.

## **9. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Although the school cannot charge for school-time activities, we may still ask parents and others for voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that:

- the contributions are voluntary



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- the children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently
- where an activity cannot take place without some help from parents, and there are insufficient voluntary contributions, the activity may be cancelled.

### **10. REMISSIONS**

Financial support for parents who are having difficulty in finding the money to enable their children to attend trips and various extra-curricular activities are subject to legislation which provides for the trip which takes place during school time.

The Governors are obliged to remit the travelling part of the trip. The parents are normally expected to pay the residential element (presumably on the theory that the child would be a financial burden on the parent even if he were living at home).

The policy which the Governors operate is one where for those parents on Income Support or Family Credit will be supported, certainly so far as travelling is concerned, and sometimes for the entire trip. Similarly consideration will be given to remitting all or part of the cost of any extra curricular activity.

Any parent/guardian wishing to apply for Remission of Part or All fees for Trips or Extra Curricular activities are to apply using the attached pro-forma as applicable.

A Remissions Panel consisting of the Chair of the Personnel Committee, The Chair of the Finance Committee and one other Governor will then review the application along with the Headmaster.

The pro-forma to parents will have a clear application section which would invite the parents to indicate first their income and outgoings with information in the letter that any false statement would require repayment of the remission with interest.

The application pro-forma will invite the parent to indicate how much they will be able to pay towards the trip before it takes place and how much they are willing to raise after the trip has taken place to pay back to the school. This amount needs to be written down and signed by the parent.

The Governors reserve the right to refuse to pay and also reserve the right to make a token gesture without prejudice should there be a deserving case but not one which they would wish to have used as an example in the future. What is more, in trying to reach a decision the governors may suggest that they make a home visit on behalf of the school to discuss with parents their financial difficulties and to show interest in those parents who are struggling to manage the education of their children.