



Policy No: 08

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

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Policy on Charging and Remissions

The legal framework within which school activities may be subject to charging is contained within the Education Act 1996, s200 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations, the Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999, DES Circular 2/89 Charges for School Activities and the Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) Regulations. This policy sets the school's approach to charging for activities undertaken by students within the context of this legal framework.

The Rochester Learning Partnership and Trust incorporates The Thomas Aveling School and Warren Wood CP School and operates an extensive programme of trips, visits, instrumental tuition and activities both in- and out-of-school-hours. As a maintained secondary school, no charge is made for admission to the school, but charges will normally be levied for specific purposes on the following basis:

School Fund

No general charge or contribution is requested towards the school's funds.

Lockers

All students are given the opportunity, voluntarily, to request the use of a locker to store personal items. A charge is made for this to include a returnable deposit for the key and a non-returnable element for the locker rental. A reduced rental charge is available for those paying, in advance, to hire a locker for periods of longer than one year.

Breakages and Replacements

The cost of breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by students will be charged to parents.

Visits and Activities in School Hours

With the exception of instrumental tuition, no compulsory charge may be made for visits or activities which take place during school hours. However, the school will request voluntary contributions up to the full cost per student of any visits and activities which require the payment of entry charges and/or travel costs where the visit or activity takes place wholly or mainly during school hours.



If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no compulsory charge will be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours.) For example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination falls mainly within school hours, the trip will count as happening in school time.

No student will be excluded from this type of visit/activity through inability to pay, but where there are insufficient voluntary contributions to enable the visit/activity to take place, it will be cancelled.

From time to time the school may arrange a range of simultaneous optional activities on a broadly similar theme, some of which may require a financial contribution from the student. In these cases, there will always be options available at no cost to the students participating.

An excursion which requires students to leave school earlier than usual in the afternoon, but involves them in an activity which does not end until late in the evening would be less than 50% in school time and therefore would be considered to have taken place outside school hours. In such cases, a compulsory charge can be levied.

Visits and Activities outside School Hours

Where a visit or activity occurs outside normal school hours, eg. during weekends, school holidays or in the evening, and is neither an essential part of the participating student's examination course, nor a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education, the full cost per student will normally be charged.

Musical Instrument Tuition

This is a specific exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges will be made for teaching students, either individually or in small groups, to play a musical instrument. These tuition fees will be subject to a 25% subsidy by the school in normal circumstances, though higher levels of remission may be allowed, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Activities not run by the School

When a non-school organisation arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would



if they wanted to take their children out of school for a family holiday. The head and governing body must decide whether this is in the student's best interest. They must also bear in mind the requirements of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations that a pupil should not be allowed more than two weeks' absence in any year unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Residential Activities

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts 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 9 pm 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 9 pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, including three school sessions, and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances. Where the child is eligible for free school meals or the parents are receiving Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income does not exceed £13,480), these charges can be subject to remission, on application to the Governing Body. In respect to the figure for annual income quoted above, account will be taken of any revision to the amount officially notified to the Governing Body.

Public Examinations

No charges will normally be made for entering students for public examinations for which the school has prepared the student, unless the Headteacher thinks there are educational reasons for not entering the student.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

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

It is not the school's normal practice to re-enter students for examinations they have already taken. However, where a parent specifically requests that this be done, against the

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Headteacher's advice, the Governing Body will require the parent to meet the cost of the re-examination.

School Minibus

Only the school's students, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school's minibus.

The school will not raise funds through making a profit by charging for travel in the minibus.

Charges will recover the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value, but the service will not make a profit, either directly through the fares charged or indirectly as part of a profit making activity.

General Statement on Remission

In all cases where a charge is applied, the Headteacher may, upon written request from a parent and at his discretion, remit a part or all of the charge where he considers such action to be in the best interest of either the individual or all the students participating in the activity.