

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR CHARGING & REMISSIONS

Policy area: Parents
Date last revised: January 2016

Date established: August 2014
Date of next revision: January 2017

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Board on a yearly basis, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. It is due for review in January 2017.

Signed: Sian Jeffreys
Head of School Headmistress

Date:

Policy statement

The school will charge wherever possible. The charge will never exceed the actual cost and may be subsidised from school funds. Thus, the school will charge for:

- Tuition in a musical instrument (unless part of a syllabus for a prescribed examination)
- Board and lodging for pupils on residential courses (but not travel or fees)
- 'Optional extras' wholly or mainly outside school hours (e.g. ski trips)
- Examination fees where the pupil has not been prepared by the school, re-sits where no additional preparation has been given and wasted examination fees - i.e. where a pupil fails to fulfill the examination requirements without good cause.
- Willful damage, loss or costs arising from pupils' misbehaviour.

Charging and Remission Policy

Introduction

Chetwynde School recognizes the valuable contribution that a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards the education of our young people and aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils and as additional optional enrichment activities.

Chetwynde School strives to ensure that all young people have an equal opportunity to benefit from such activities, both on and off site and within and outside of the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means. To ensure transparency in setting charges, and also to ensure all young people are able to access all of the provision we offer, this Policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions. It has been informed by adherence to the Law (Education Act 1996 – Sections 449-462) and by reference to the Funding Agreement of the school.

Policy Aims

- To make school activities accessible to students regardless of family income
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not imposing additional burdens on the school's budget

For the purposes of this Policy, 'Parent' is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student.

A session is equivalent to half a day i.e. either one morning session before lunch or one afternoon session after lunch. This Policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other Organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

Legislation

Education Act 1996 (Sections 449-462) and by reference to the Funding Agreement of the school.

During School Hours

No charge will be made for education provided during normal school hours. The definition of "education" includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity. It should be noted that schools can charge for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment where the child's parents wishes him/her to own them. Although the school cannot charge for school time activities, we may invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind). If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear at the outset, and if insufficient funds are raised then the school may cancel the activity.

The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

Where places are to be allocated, the school will make it clear what the policy will be for allocating such places.

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.

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 curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours. The Education Act 1996 describes activities which can be charged for as “optional extras” (please see below for further clarification on optional extras). It is up to the school providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge. The school can also charge for community facilities if applicable.

Please note for non-residential activities, 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.

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:
 - part of the national curriculum
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - 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 where the school has 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
- 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.

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

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge will not include the cost of an alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Practical subject charge

Voluntary contributions may be requested to cover the cost of materials and ingredients provided by the school for practical subjects where parents indicate that they wish to receive the finished articles.

Residential Activity

Non-Optional

For a residential activity essential to the education provided by the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the costs of travel.

However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances provided the charge does not exceed the actual cost, except for pupils eligible for free school meals (see guidance note). The Head of School will advise parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of relevant benefits.

Optional

For a residential activity which is deemed as non-essential to the education provided by the school, charges will be made for the education, board and lodgings, and the costs of travel.

Optional Extra visits

Visits that take place outside the school day, or as part of an extra-curricular activity, can be charged for and parents are expected to meet the full cost of the trip.

Guidance Note

The statutory minimum remission will be given. Thus, where pupils are entitled to free school meals they will be exempt from board and lodgings charges where a residential activity takes place largely during school hours or is essential to the education provided at the School.

Loss or Damage

Parents will be expected to meet the cost of repairing or replacing any school property damaged or destroyed by a student, or any fines to be paid by the school as a result of the actions of a student. A charge will also apply for loss or damage of school property (including books or equipment) placed under the care of a student.

Instrumental Tuition Fees

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition can be an exception to that rule. The contribution to instrumental tuition fees expected from parents can be obtained from the school office.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the teacher who provides the tuition.

Remission of Charges

Chetwynde School believes that all students should have the opportunity to gain fully from the experiences the school has to offer and recognizes the real and persistent difficulties faced by families on low incomes in meeting the cost of educational activities for their children.

Where parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, support under Part IV of the Immigration or Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (providing Working Tax Credit is not also received), Guaranteed State Pension, the school will observe its statutory duty to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity deemed to take place within school hours.

Parents who find themselves in financial difficulties and who have children in receipt of Free School Meals or Pupil Premium may apply to the school for financial support with optional activities. Remission of charges in part or full will be authorised by the Head of School in discussion with the Finance Department.

Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the term so that parents can plan ahead and for residential visits at least six months*
- *We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments*
- *When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip*
- *We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminated against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.*

Disability Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Disability Equality Scheme. Assessment will include consideration of issues identified by the involvement of disabled children, staff and parents and any information the school holds on disabled children, staff and parents.

Provision for Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and the Board of Governors and will be adjusted in accordance with any subsequent guidance issued by the Department for Education, the Education Funding Agency or, where applicable, the Local Authority.