

WOODNOOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

GUIDANCE - SCHOOL CHARGING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

- Each Governing Body must establish and keep under review a charging and remissions policy which complies with statutory requirements and has regard to the Authority's policy statements on charging.
- No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.
- A draft charging policy for schools is attached at Appendix A which schools can adapt to their own circumstances within any statutory requirements.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.
- Academies (including free schools, studio schools and UTCs) are required through their funding agreement to comply with the law on charging for school activities.
- There are also charging regulations for music tuition during the school day. (The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007) which came into force from 1 September 2007. Specific guidance on these charging regulations are provided at Appendix C.

KEY POINTS

- School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of defined benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What activities cannot be charged for?

Schools cannot charge for the following activities:

- education provided wholly or mostly during school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments, other equipment and also transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity;
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination which the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental and vocal music tuition for pupils learning individually or in groups , unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent / carer.
- 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 at the school (note: 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)

What activities can be charged for?

The school may recover the full costs of the following activities but charges may not exceed actual cost:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see above);
- certain early years provision (see the Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012);
- community facilities. (see S27 Education Act 2002)

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities, often referred to as 'optional extras'. This includes:

- 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; or
 - 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 transport that is 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 (subject to remission arrangements);
 - extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast clubs, after school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

Can we ask for voluntary contributions from parents to activities where we have no power to charge?

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, any requests for voluntary contributions are subject to the following conditions:

- any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently;
- where there are insufficient contributions to make the activity viable then the activity will be cancelled. This should be made clear to parents from the outset

All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary and that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

Can we charge for educational 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; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on an educational visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

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

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents receiving specified benefits, usually equating to pupils being eligible for free school meals (due to the receipt of specified benefits and not through the introduction of universal infant FSM) will not be charged for board and lodging. Eligible benefits are subject to change and can be found on the DfE website.

In addition Lancashire has a charging and remissions policy which includes remission of some fees when using the County Council's own Outdoor Pursuits Centres. (see annex B)

FURTHER GUIDANCE

Further guidance including additional FAQs can be found at :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

