

**PIPER HILL LEARNING TRUST**



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# CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

## **Charging and Remission Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

This charging policy has been compiled in line with DFES requirements and in accordance with S457 of the Education Act, 1996.

This policy will set out:

- a) when a charge can be made for an activity
- b) when a voluntary contribution can be asked for
- c) when no charge will be made

The policy will also cover:

- a) when the school fund can be used to cover the cost of an activity
- b) when the school budget can be used to cover the cost of an activity
- c) when staff can be asked to contribute towards the cost of an activity

### **2. When no charge will be made**

The basic premise is that schools cannot charge for education.

- School cannot charge for education during school hours (including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment). This also includes education whilst on a residential visit.
- School cannot charge for education outside school hours if it is part of the curriculum, (for example, to see a show that is being studied in class).
- School cannot charge for exam entries where the pupil has been prepared for it in school.
- School cannot charge for individual music tuition if it is part of the curriculum.

### **3. When a charge can be made**

- School may charge for the cost of materials where items produced are sent home with the prior agreement of the parents. For example, charges may be made for materials for art, craft, design, or food technology when the results are sent home.
- School may charge for **'optional extras'**

An 'optional extra' is defined as education provided **outside of school time that is not part of the curriculum**, (for example, an evening trip to a Christmas pantomime, or an evening meal out).

This can include board and lodging on a residential visit. (However, children in receipt of free school meals cannot be asked to pay for board and lodging).

If the activity is partly during school time, and partly outside of school time, it is considered to be during school time if more than half of it falls during school time.

When calculating the cost of the 'optional extras' an amount may be included in relation to any materials provided and in relation to non-teaching staff, but not to teaching staff (unless employed specifically for the optional extra).

The charge to pupils should not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity and should not include a subsidy for other pupils.

Because these activities are optional, they depend on parental choice and willingness to meet the charges.

- A charge may be levied in respect of deliberate damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment or materials). The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. This includes property belonging to a third party where the cost has been recharged to the school.

#### **4. When a voluntary contribution can be asked for**

- There is nothing in legislation that prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities.
- It must be made clear to the parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. Parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying.
- Pupils will not be treated differently because their parents are unable or unwilling to pay. They should still be given the chance to take part.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are made, the activity must be cancelled. This should also be made clear to the parents at the outset. If this is the case, any money contributed should be returned.

#### **5. Residential Visits**

- Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitles families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria.
- For children not eligible for free school meals, a charge can be made for board and lodging on a residential, but not for the education during school hours. Therefore, a voluntary contribution would need to be requested for part of the cost.
- A full charge can be made only where the residential is over a weekend or school holiday and is not part of the curriculum.

## **6. Letters to parents**

- All letters to parents regarding costs and voluntary contributions should be approved by the Headteacher and the School Business Manager prior to being sent home.

## **7. Lettings**

- The schools within the Trust will make their facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee where appropriate.

## **8. Other charges**

The Headteacher, Finance, Staffing and Estates Committee or Trust Board may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

The Headteacher, Finance and Staffing Committee or Trust Board may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **9. Remissions Policy**

If the parent/guardian of a pupil is in receipt of income support, income based jobseekers' allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child tax credit, then charges in respect of board and lodging will be remitted in full.

The Headteacher, Finance, Staffing and Estates Committee or Trust Board may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Headteacher, Finance and Staffing Committee or Trust Board may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances and sufficient alternative funds are available.