

Thomas Knyvett College

Policy on Charging and Remissions for School Activities

The School recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences make towards the life of the school.

The School aims to promote such activities both as part of the broad and balanced school curriculum and as a range of enrichment activities. Further to this, all school activities will be open to any person from the relevant cohort of students.

In order to make visits possible and maintain the variety and frequency of activities, it will be necessary to seek support by making charges or asking for contributions from parents and guardians. This policy provides guidelines for the process.

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Governors Committee Responsible: Resources

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Senior Manager Contact: Janise Marillat

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Introduction

The School recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards a student's education.

The School aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced school curriculum and as a range of additional optional activities. Further to this, all school activities will be open to any person from the relevant cohort of students.

No charge is made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. There is therefore no compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for activities during school hours. However, it is permitted for the school to seek support in maintaining the variety and frequency of activities by making a charge or asking for contributions from parents or carers.

The school can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him / her to own them;
- Optional extras;
- music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances;
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities.

Voluntary Contributions

The School may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place during school hours;
- Equipment, materials or ingredients for subjects eg Design Technology;
- School funds generally;
- Charges may include amounts to cover equipment, non teaching staff or teaching staff.

Any contribution will be genuinely voluntary and any student whose parents are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against in any way. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make a particular activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it would have to be cancelled.

Residential Trips

We will make charges for the cost of travel, board and lodging during residential school trips but this cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision. Any negotiated reductions in charges will be passed on to students.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours and is an essential part of the programme of study, children whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and where the family's income does not exceed £16,190 (2013/14);
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit ;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27/10/08

A similar entitlement will apply where the trip takes place outside of school hours but is necessary as part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the pupil to sit, or is part of the agreed syllabus for religious education.

Transport

Schools cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for the child to be educated;
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school and;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge will be made for instrumental music tuition for students, unless the tuition forms part of the specification for a prescribed public examination (eg GCSE) that the school is preparing the student to sit, or is part of the National Curriculum in which case a charge is not permissible.

Public Examinations

No charges will be made for entering candidates for public examinations that are the final assessment of a course being studied in the school. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- The candidate was not prepared for a particular examination through following a course at the school;
- The school arranges for a candidate to take an examination which is not in the normal examination set list;
- A candidate fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee (recovery of wasted fees);

Charges will not be made for any cost associated with preparing a student for an examination. However, charges may be levied for tuition and other costs if students are prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not normally part of the school provision.

REMISSIONS

Where the parents of a student are in receipt of any of the above benefits, the School will offer to remit in full the cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which is deemed to take place in school hours or where it forms part of the syllabus for the National Curriculum.

The School may remit, in full or in part, the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity, such parents will be invited in confidence, to apply for remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Head of School.

Additional considerations

We have a responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we should add the following guidelines:

- Where possible the school will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- The school will establish a system for parents to pay by instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it should be possible for parents to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- The school will acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we should avoid that method of selection.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Resources Committee will monitor the impact of this policy every two years. This monitoring could also contribute to any evaluation of the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of support.

Provisions concerning charging for school activities can be found in sections 402, 450 to 458 and 460 of the Education Act 1996 and in The Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No. 2255).