

School Activities – Charging and Remission Policy

Introduction

All activities, visits, journeys and trips must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of KCC's (Kent County Council) regulations and guidelines.

Rationale

The law regarding what may, and may not, be charged in respect of activities provided by the Federation within and outside the school day has always been difficult to interpret and apply fairly to all pupils. The Department for Education (DfE) has set out the law on charges for school activities in sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

In accordance with the requirement of the Education Act 1996 governors are required to state their policy with regard to charges and their policy in respect of any circumstances in which they will remit (in whole, or in part) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging and remissions policy.

The most recent guidance published by the DfE in its document 'Charging for School Activities' May 2018 has been used to produce this policy.

Aims

The aims of the charging and remission policy are to:

- Maintain the right to free school education.
- Enable all pupils to take full advantage of the activities provided by the Federation.

Objectives

The objectives of the charging and remission policy are:

- To ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parent's/carer's ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied.
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parent/carer experiencing hardship.
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Federation in support of any activity organised by the Federation either during or outside school hours.
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging and remission policy are clearly and appropriately allocated.
- To ensure that the operation of the charging and remissions policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.

Policy statement for activities during school hours

It is the policy of the Governing Board:

- To levy a charge for ingredients or materials in practical subjects if the parent/carer indicates at the beginning of each school year that they wish to keep the finished product.
- To levy a charge for the provision of music tuition to pupils, either individually or in groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The exception is where it is provided to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination; or specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.

- To levy a charge for the board and lodging element of a residential activity. Governors will remit such charges to a parent/carer in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 in respect of any period wholly or partly comprised in the time spent on the trip where the education provided on the trip is education in respect of which no charge may be made.

Policy statement for activities outside school hours

It is the policy of the Governing Board:

- To levy a charge for all activities provided outside school hours including breakfast club and after school clubs with the following exceptions:
 - No charge will be made if the activity is an essential part of the basic curriculum.
 - The board and lodging element of a residential activity will be remitted to parent/carer in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.
- That education outside school hours, other than education which is an essential part of the curriculum, is defined in the Education Act as an 'optional extra' and participation will be on the basis of parental/carer choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. The agreement of the parent/carer is therefore an essential prerequisite for the provision of optional extras for which charges are made.

For all activities

It is the policy of the Governing Board:

- To request voluntary contributions from all parents/carers for school activities in or out of school time which can only be provided if there is sufficient voluntary funding.

Remission

It is the policy of the Governing Board:

- To remit charges for board and lodging to parent/carer in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.
- To delegate to the Chair of the Governing Board and the Executive Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of the policy.

Note: The Governing Board may remit in full or in part the charge for music tuition in respect of parent/carer experiencing hardship.

Resources

The Governing Board will agree a fund within the budget to support this policy.

Responsibilities

Authority for the day-to-day management of the fund will be devolved to the Executive Headteacher who will determine the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds.

Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this policy. Plans, at the draft stage, should be submitted to the senior management team for consideration and approval.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The Executive Headteacher has the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.

The Executive Headteacher will monitor the implementation of the policy and provide the Governing Board with a financial report as part of the normal termly reconciliation of the schools' budgets.

During school hours

Parent/carer may make a voluntary contribution to:

- Individual music tuition except where it is provided to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for prescribed public examination; or specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.
- The board and lodging element of all residential trips and visits except in the case of pupils whose parent/carer is in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.
- The cost of transport direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by, the local authority or school.
- The cost of ingredients or materials if the parent/carer has indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

Outside school hours

Charges may be made for 'optional extras' defined as falling wholly or mainly outside of school hours (if less than 50% of the time of the activity occurs during school hours it is deemed to take place outside of school hours) provided that the activities are **not**:

- To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination.
- Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.
- Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education.

Participation in the optional extra activity is on the basis of parental/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

Note: The terms above do not prohibit charging for board and lodging except where parent/carer is in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.

The charges may include an element for:

- A pupil's travel costs.
- A pupil's board and lodging costs, except where the parent/carer is in receipt of universal credit, income support, income based job seekers allowance, income related employment & support allowance, guaranteed element of pension credit, child tax credit, working tax credit, or support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999.
- Materials, books, instruments and other equipment.
- Non-teaching staff costs.
- Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.
- Insurance costs.
- The engagement of teaching staff specifically for providing the activity and supplying such staff with travel, board and lodging, providing that if they are employed by the local authority or governors, they are employed on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra. The contract may take the form of a letter inviting the teacher to provide certain services for a specific activity taking place at a specified time, in return for payment of expenses and, where appropriate, a fee.

Charges for individual pupils may **not**:

- Exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity divided by the number of pupils willing to participate.
- Include an element of subsidy for pupils whose parent/carer wishes them to participate but are unwilling or unable to apply.
- Include the cost of alternative provision for more pupils who do not wish to participate, where a small part of the activity takes place in school hours.

Voluntary contributions

The Federation may seek voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities from parents/carers to include the costs for accompanying teachers for any school activity but:

- Such contributions are genuinely voluntary and there is no obligation on a parent/carer to make any contribution.
- Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have made a contribution.
- Parents/carers will be informed of the level of contribution and whether the activity could take place if parents/carers were reluctant to support it.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contributions sought.