

Lincolnshire Wolds Federation

Charging and Remissions Policy



Introduction

The law for charging for school activities is set out in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

School governing bodies cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school;
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment); the lunch hour is not considered to fall within school hours.
- Education provided 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;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

School governing bodies can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;
- Optional extras (identified below); and
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (identified below)

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as optional extras:

Education provided outside of school time (the lunch hour is not considered to fall within school hours) 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 at the school;
- 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;
- 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 proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Parental/carer agreement is a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges are to be made.

Day Trips

Legally, the cost of day trips in school time cannot be charged for, whether curriculum based or as end of term 'treats'. The guidance does state that the governing body or headteacher can ask for a genuine voluntary contribution but must indicate to parents/carers that the trip may be cancelled if insufficient voluntary contributions are received and/or where there is no way to make up the shortfall to cover the costs incurred by the school.

It is the policy of this school that we shall not discriminate against any pupil whose parent/carer chooses not to make this voluntary contribution.

Residential Trips & Visits

Legally, schools can charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, however this cost must not exceed the actual cost of the trip. When the trip takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school meal entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charges for the cost of board and lodging and meals:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Custom Rules.
- Guaranteed State Pension

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

It is permissible for the school to seek voluntary donations from charitable organisations in an attempt to cover costs and ensure the planned trip can proceed.

For school trips which take place outside school hours and are not related to a statutory curriculum purpose, we can charge for the entire amount, voluntary contributions do not apply, nor does the free school meal entitlement or other benefits criteria as shown above, as the trip is classed as an optional extra.

Transport

Schools cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises where the Local Authority has the statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or Local Authority has arranged for the pupils to be educated.

- Transport that enables a pupil 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.

Music Tuition

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows schools to charge for teaching either an individual pupil or groups to play a musical instrument or to sing only if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities). Children in the care of the Local Authority are entitled to free tuition. The Governors of St Lawrence School have therefore decided to impose a charge upon parents/carers for music tuition received at the school, in line with the guidance given.

Charging Parents for Breakages and Fines

The governing body is within its right to ask parents/carers to pay a voluntary contribution towards the cost of replacing a broken window or a defaced/damaged or lost textbook etc. where this is the direct result of a pupil's behaviour.

Meals for Residential Pupils

Guidance received indicates that it is for individual governing bodies to decide upon their own charging policy in respect of the board and lodging element within a boarding establishment/school.

The cost of the evening meal and breakfast are provided free of charge. Pupils whose parents are in receipt of the benefits listed in this policy will be entitled to apply for, and claim for, free school lunches and thereby obtain complete remission of these charges.

Staff Entitlement to a School Lunch

The Governing Body has decided that where a member of staff is asked to undertake a lunchtime duty in the dining hall, they will be entitled to receive a free school lunch whilst they are undertaking that duty. This will be subject to review in the Spring Term of 2015.

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can be legally made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances. This Charging and Remissions Policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reviewed.

Parents/Carers in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Custom Rules
- Guaranteed State Pension

There may be other extenuating circumstances in which waiver charges will be considered and any application for remission, along with supporting information, should be made to the head of school.

All requests for remission will be treated in confidence.

Additional Considerations

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure the offer of activities and educational visits do not place an unnecessary burden on family finances and to this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible, we will give as much notice as possible of forthcoming visits/activities so parents/carers can plan ahead.
- We have established a system in school for parents/carers to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip/activity arises at short notice, it will be possible to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip/activity.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection. If the number of students applying to participate in an activity is greater than the places available, the places will be allocated by ballot.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Resources Management Committee will monitor the impact of the policy by receiving a report from the school business manager on the activities that have resulted in charges being levied and for which a remission has been awarded (no names given) and the source of those subsidies. It will also seek to evaluate the impact of the schools' extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

Following a full impact assessment on this policy, (see attached), the attached procedures are to be followed to ensure criteria applied to any chargeable activity is both fair and workable for all pupils and staff and gives an equal and appropriate opportunity for participation to all.

This policy was approved by governors at their meeting dated 2 February 2012 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed Chairman of Governors

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN ARRANGING SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. Please read 'Charging and Remissions Policy for School Activities' carefully
2. Ensure the trip has been risk assessed and cost assessed to include all costs likely to be incurred.
3. Check relevancy to curriculum
4. Seek approval for the trip (firstly approach Leadership Team, who will then seek Governor approval if required)
5. Identify the criteria for pupil and staff inclusion and agree these with Head Teacher
6. Send letters home
7. If the number of students applying to participate in an activity is greater than the number of places, allocate the places by ballot and not on a 'first pay, first served' basis which discriminates against students from families on lower incomes.
8. Review any non-return of letters or refusals to attend
9. Follow up any refusals or non-returns to establish reasons behind decision e.g. financial, access to suitable transport etc.
10. If possible, identify how to encourage more take-up
11. Conduct a post-activity review