

OVERTON GRANGE SCHOOL POLICY

GOVERNORS' CHARGING AND REMISSIONS

Govs Comm. RESOURCES

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The School Governors' policy on charges conforms to the requirements of Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

Education

The School Governing Body 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);
- 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 by the school, for re-sit(s) at the school. (Examination entry fee(s) will be chargeable if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.)

Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- optional extras (see below); and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 5).

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Other Charges

The school reserves the right to charge for costs (full or partial at the school's discretion) of breakages caused by students. A charge is unlikely to be made for accidental breakage, unless the student was not heeding previously stated safety procedures. The recovery of the full cost of deliberate breakage or vandalism will be sought by the school.

The school will charge an administrative fee for certification of passports, driving licences, confirmation of examination results, photocopying etc.

The school will charge an administrative fee (£10) for the cost in terms of time, equipment and materials for the copy of a student file or related items. In exceptional circumstances this fee may be waived.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents the school's governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child would be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The School will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy is for allocating places on school visits.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will not be made to feel pressurised into paying, and will be reminded payment is voluntary and not compulsory.

Residential Visits

The School 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
- 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 a residential visit.

The School **can** charge for:

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

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming trip, they will make it clear that parents who can prove that they are in receipt of government support payments, will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the full remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made 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).

Transport

The School cannot charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body has arranged for 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.

Charging and Remissions Policies

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school 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.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents will be informed how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information will be made available to parents.

Remissions

Where the parent of a student is in receipt of qualifying state benefit(s), the Governing Body will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for

1. Any residential activity that is organised for the student and which takes place within school time. This will also be the case where the residential activity forms part of the syllabus for a public examination
2. Any residential visits outside Academy time which are covered by the following criteria, where the education is provided:
 - a) To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination;
 - b) Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum imposed by Section 10 (ii) of the 1988 Act;
 - c) The costs of individual instrumental music tuition will also be remitted in all cases where the individual tuition is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum;
 - d) Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.
3. The Governing Body may remit charges in full or in part to other parents after considering other specific hardship cases. The Governing Body invites parents to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. The Principal will authorise remission in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

However, a charge will only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel

itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of the school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.