

OVERTON GRANGE SCHOOL POLICY

GOVERNORS' CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Govs Comm. RESOURCES

Reason for the Policy

The school is committed to the general principle of free education and recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including school visits, residential experiences and clubs, can make towards all aspects of students' education. Whilst wishing to promote and provide as broad a range of such activities as possible for the benefit of all students, the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for certain activities organised by the school from time to time.

This policy covers the circumstances in which a charge or remission may be made, whether for activities or other incidents within school. It also notes the general principles with regard to voluntary contributions.

The policy is written to comply with the relevant terms of the Education Act 1996, the Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999 and the Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) Regulations 1989. It also states the school's policy for charging for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

What is the policy going to do?

The aim of the policy is to provide clarity on charging and remissions for both staff and parents/carers.

The policy will ensure that the school follows national requirements and guidelines.

How is the policy going to be put into practice?

1 Overview of when charges can be made:

The school provides free education for registered students, provided it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours. School hours are defined as those when a school is actually in session, not including the lunch break. Exceptions are:

- Individual musical tuition where this is an optional extra and is not required to fulfil a prescribed public examination or a requirement of the National Curriculum
- Where a third party organises activities in school hours and may charge parents directly.

Charging is permitted for education provided out of school hours, unless it is required to fulfil a prescribed public examination, is within the requirements of the National Curriculum or is to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education when only charges for board, lodging or residential trips can be made.

2 Remission of charges:

The school will apply the statutory remissions to any charges that they make. In addition, parents/carers may apply to the school for remission of charges in whole or part.

To qualify for help, parents/carers must contact the Headteacher's designated representative at the school and if requested provide proof of their income or benefit. The level of support which the school can offer will be entirely at the discretion of the governing body.

Parents/carers in receipt of one of the following will be given remission of charges related to trips or activities that take place during school hours and involve an overnight stay:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Universal credit (if you apply on or after 1st April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year, after tax and not including any benefits you receive)
- 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 they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

The above therefore applies to students receiving Free School Meals/ Pupil Premium.

3 Charging Categories:

(i) Materials & Textbooks

Key Stage 3 and 4 textbooks for classroom use are provided free of charge, but in some subjects additional revision guides or other reference books are available, for which a charge is made.

Where a student or parent/carer wishes to retain items produced as a result of eg Art, Textiles, Construction or Design and Technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. Voluntary contributions may be requested to support the curriculum on occasion.

In the case of Design and Technology and Art students are asked for a voluntary contribution towards materials used. Any contributions sought will be entirely voluntary and students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers make a contribution. Pupil Premium funding can be used when applicable.

(ii) Charging for Musical Instrument Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Instrument tuition may not be charged if the activity is provided to fulfil the essential requirements of the syllabus of the National Curriculum .

However, when the school offers a range of Musical tuition opportunities which are outside the requirements for examination courses or national curriculum, these tuition groups (based on individual or small group work with the music tutor) attract a charge levied by the visiting music tutor.

Parental/Carer agreement is obtained before students are given tuition for which there is to be a charge.

(iii) Examination fees

No charge will be made for the first attempt at a prescribed public examination for which the student has been prepared by the school.

If a student wishes to re-sit a prescribed public examination the full fee will be recovered from parents/carers, save where the student is following a re-sit course specifically designed for this end. Additional revision classes put on to support students re-taking modules do not qualify as re-sit courses. Students will not be charged for re-sits in instances where the department chooses to re-enter the whole or major part of the cohort.

If a student wishes to be entered in an examination other than a prescribed public examination, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents/carers, provided their agreement has been obtained in advance. Recovery of additional costs, including for invigilation and administration can also be sought from the parent/carer prior to the student being entered.

If a student fails without reasonable cause to complete the examination requirements of any public examination for which the school has paid the entry fee, the fee involved may be recovered from the student's parents. Where this is the case, in exceptional circumstances, such as the illness of the student, the fee payable by parents may be waived by the governing body.

If a student requests a 'Review of Marking' of a public examination paper, the school will usually pass on the costs of the review prior to the request being made. Should the grade be increased the charge will be refunded.

Access to scripts will incur a charge which is determined by the relevant examination board. An administration fee will be added to this charge to cover printing/copying and postage costs.

(iv) Food, drink and uniform purchases:

Students may purchase food and drink in the school canteen, using the cashless system once parental permission has been received. Some students are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Parents/carers are informed as to how to apply when they apply for their child to join the school.

Parents may also purchase uniform items from the school uniform supplier. If a student is eligible for FSM/Pupil Premium, then the school is able to assist with the purchase of uniform if requested.

(v) Charity and other money-raising events

From time to time, charity events may involve the selling of items to students at break or lunchtimes. There is no requirement for any student to purchase such items and the school does not profit from such events.

Tickets are sold for out of school hours events eg musical evenings, drama events, etc. Purchase is voluntary.

(vi) Breakages and damage to, or loss of, school property

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 also reserves the right to seek reparation from parents/carers when items (such as textbooks or other equipment loaned) are lost.

(vii) Liability for personal property

The school does not accept liability for any items of personal property lost by the student or damaged whilst in school. This includes such items as mobile phones, PE kit, and school uniform.

(viii) Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in the school's charging and remissions policy statement precludes the governing body from inviting parents/carers to make voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or of any school activity. 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. Any contributions sought will be entirely voluntary and students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers make a contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit then the whole visit will be cancelled unless an alternative fundraising mechanism can be arranged within the timescale.

(ix) Other charges

The school reserves the right to charge an administrative fee for certification of passports, driving licences, confirmation of examination results, photocopying etc.

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

The school will charge an admin fee, plus the cost of exam entry, to students wishing to sit an examination at this centre, who are not students at this school.

(x) Transport

The school cannot charge for:

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school; and,
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Criteria for success

- National requirements and guidelines for charging and remissions are met.
- Staff and parents/carers are aware of the school policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

- to be reviewed regularly by both the school and the governing body.

Links with other policies

- School Visits
- Pupil Premium statement
- Freedom of Information