

Charging, Remissions & Refunds Policy

Approved by Governors: 4 December, 2008,
Reviewed: Apr 2009, 1st March 2012, January 2015

Introduction

There are three main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding.
- To discharge the Governing Body's responsibility to draw up, and keep under review, their Policies in respect of charging and remission arrangements.

Aims

The Governors wish to promote inclusion and ensure that all pupils have access to all areas of the life of the school, regardless of the parent's ability to pay.

The Charging and Remissions Policy of Herts County Council has been adopted by the Governing Body.

To discharge the Governing Body's responsibilities to draw up, and keep under review, their policies in respect of charging and remission arrangements.

Objectives

The objectives of the charging provisions in the Education Form Act 1988 which we have adopted are:

- to maintain the entitlement to free school education;
- to establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost;
- to give schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours, while emphasising that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity;
- to confirm the right of schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of providing activities organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours;

Charging Policy

The school's policy is to charge for the following areas of activity as permitted under the Education Reform Act 1988:

- board and lodging on residential visits;
- costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours, unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum; this may be subsidised at the Headteacher's discretion.
- optional extra activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious

education, participation in any such activities to be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made;

- the cost of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations and for preparing the pupils for such an examination outside school hours;
- the cost of re-sits or prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school;
- the cost of entering a pupil for a second public examination when preparation by the school enables the pupils to take more than one examination;
- the cost of any scrutiny examination results if so requested by parents;
- the cost in cash or in kind of ingredients and materials needed for practical subjects such as food technology and craft, design and technology if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Remission Policy

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision. The school will seek voluntary contributions to cover the cost of school trips.

Where 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 lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided Working Tax Credit is not also received and their annual income, assessed by HM Revenue & Customs, does not exceed £16,105 (**2016**)
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)
- The school operates the County remission policy in relation to individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument.
- The school will seek a voluntary contribution towards all off site visits.
- The school will seek a voluntary contribution towards all school educational visitors.

Any transport provided in school hours by the authority or a school to carry pupils between a school and any other place where education is to be provided by the authority must be provided free of charge, although voluntary contributions may be sought. In the case of travel direct from home however, parents may be asked to meet the cost of such travel. The policy is to expect that parents will meet the cost of such travel with any difference between this cost and normal home to school transport being met by the School or Authority.

Refunds

At the end of each journey or visit, the surplus or deficit should be calculated from the journey book or visit sheet and confirmed against the ledger records.

If the journey or visit makes a surplus, then parents and guardians should be offered a refund where the sum involved per pupil might reasonably be expected to be refunded. As a guideline, any surplus of 5% or more of the contribution per head (or proportionate amount where full per head cost was not paid, should be offered as a refund (or whole pounds below this amount). Five pounds is regarded as a reasonable threshold to warrant refunds.

The school can ask for parental permission in advance of the journey to treat any surplus below a given sum as a contribution to school funds. This will ease the financial administration of the journey. Although there is no legal obligation upon the school to refund surpluses – where a voluntary contribution is requested – schools should not use journeys as a backdoor method of fund raising. Any refunds should be made as soon as possible after the visit, either to pupils or parents by cheque or cash against signed receipts.

Links

[QTL policy](#)

[SEN inclusion policy](#)

[Pupil Premium Policy](#)