

Charging Policy

Introduction & Source of Reference:

This policy has been formulated in accordance with guidance on Charging for School Activities (DfE guidance October 2014)

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

Responsibilities:

Governors have applied the policy in accordance with DfE guidelines, and notification of changes will be circulated to parents in the term preceding the one in which the changes take effect.

DfE Guidance to Schools:

The Local Governing Body recognise that legislation* means we **cannot** charge for:

- 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- 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.

The school **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras;
- music and vocal tuition, in certain circumstances ;
- community facilities.

* DfE Guidance Charging for School Activities, October 2014

Activities in school hours:

All education during school hours is free, including the supply of materials, books, equipment and transport provided by the school to carry students between the school and an activity.

For school-time activities with an additional cost parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution, these may include:

- Activities within a curriculum area
- Support towards education trips and visits
- Associated travel costs

Any request made to parents will specify if it for a voluntary contribution which means it does not represent a charge. In terms of voluntary contributions the school will make the following clear to parents:

- a) That the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay;
- b) That students at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.
- c) That if any activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip/activity, and the school cannot fund it from another source, then it will be cancelled.
- d) A voluntary contribution may be made in cash or kind (i.e. ingredients or materials for catering or technology).
- e) Voluntary contributions for transport costs in respect of offsite activities may also be sought from parents. Where extra costs are inevitable, parents will be informed by letter at the planning stage.

Students whose parents do not make contributions will not be left out of activities or treated differently in the course of the lessons from those whose parents contribute, but any finished projects or artefacts remain the property of the school unless the Headteacher decides otherwise.

When a non-school organisation arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must ask the school to agree to their child's absence and the Headteacher will decide whether this is in the student's best interest.

Music Tuition:

Musical instrument tuition charges are reviewed annually by the school at the time of setting the budget for the following financial year. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. Parents will be informed in the preceding term of any increase in charges. Parents whose children are eligible for pupil premium funding or receive free school meals may apply to the Headteacher for remission of costs.

Activities outside school hours*:

Charges may be made for activities outside school hours when they are not:

- part of the National Curriculum
- part of Religious Education
- part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.

Charges may be made for 'optional extra' activities provided by the school outside school hours. Governors decide whether a charge should be made. Parents are informed about how the charge is worked out.

Where charges are made, the charge for each student is not more than the actual cost although it may cover some of the costs of teachers from the school who have been asked to supervise the activity.

Special rules apply for residential activities. For those which are required for the syllabus of a public examination or are to do with the National Curriculum or Religious Education, no charge is made for the education or the cost of travel. However, charges may be made for board and lodging except for students who receive free school meals.

*'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the breaks. Information about the timing of the school day is included on the school website.

Trips:

Residential and Day trips that do not form part of the national curriculum syllabus but are available as an optional extra during a student's time at Upper Shirley High will be charged for. Charges will be made for the full cost of the activity and the full payment must be received prior to the activity for the student to take part.

Day trips: Full payment will be required at least one week prior to the departure date.

Residential trips: The school will request a non-refundable deposit to secure a place on any residential trip. Once the trip has been confirmed by the school, parents are thereby agreeing to make all future instalments as per the payment plan set out by the school. Parents are advised that any cancellation will be at their cost. If a student is unable to attend, or no longer wishes to attend a trip the school will liaise with the travel

company to see what money can be recouped (if any). The school will not bear the cost of any student cancellation or withdrawal from a trip and any loss incurred by the school will be passed on to the parent for payment.

Full payment will be required at least one month before the departure date or as specified on the individual trip letter. Any student who has not paid in full will not be allowed to go on a trip, but the school will still expect payment in full to cover the cost of the place that was booked and paid for by the school.

The safety of both students and staff is paramount. The school will therefore review student inclusion on any trip at two stages, at initial acceptance and again just before the trip takes place; participation will be based on a positive attitude to learning. The school reserves the right to remove a student from attending a trip if there are significant concerns regarding behaviour or conduct in any aspect of school life. In these exceptional cases, the school will not make any refund to parents.

Photocopying :

A charge of 10p per A4 copy will be made for private photocopying.

Public Examinations:

No charges are made for entering students for public examinations for which they have been prepared in school. The school enters students for each examination in a public examination syllabus for which the student has been prepared unless:

- They think there are educational reasons for not entering the student OR
- The student's parent asks in writing that the student should not be entered.

Examination fees may be charged if:

- The examination is on the set list but the student has not been prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the student to take it.
- The student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

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.

For clarity, 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 (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, and supervised homework sessions).

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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, 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.

Financial support for pupils with extra-curricular activities in cases of economic hardship

- The school will make parents aware of their right to claim free activities if their child is eligible for pupil premium funding or if they are on low incomes or receiving eligible benefits. Parents are informed of this through individual trip/activity letters and regular whole school communications with parents.
- All letters sent out about trips must state that parents can write to the Headteacher in confidence in cases of financial hardship.
- In cases where a trip is a compulsory part of the curriculum and/or involves the whole class or a whole year group, the school will support cases of financial hardship.
- In the case of trips which are voluntary, the initial letter should state that financial support may be available but:
 - It would normally be only half the cost of the trip (although this could vary according to circumstances);
 - Such support would only be available for one expensive (e.g. foreign and/or residential) trip for a child in an academic year and will be limited to £50.
- Letters about Music Tuition must have the same statement about writing in confidence to the Headteacher in cases of hardship. For eligible pupils, the school will meet all the cost but only for one set of music tuition.
- In cases of genuine hardship but where qualification in terms of such benefits is not apparent, the view of the Head of Year will be sought and then a judgement made by the Headteacher.