

Charging and Remissions Policy

1. Introduction

This policy describes our policy on charging and remissions at Derrymount School. The policy provides a framework informs staff and parents about charges for School activities. It conforms to the requirements of the guidance detailed in 'A Charging for School Activities' Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities, (October 2014) and Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies (including free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges) are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

It also supports our aim in "Finding pathways to learning and living" in an ever expanding multicultural world, underpinned by a belief that Determination and Motivation is the key to Success.

The policy is designed to be clear about what we can and cannot legally charge for and reflect our ethos in regard to charging and remissions.

This policy will be revised in line with the whole school policy review programme after no longer than three years.

2. Aims

The Charges and Remissions Policy contributes to whole aims and objectives by providing a framework for financial management and planning so that all students learn in an atmosphere in which they can:

- feel happy and secure and are enabled to participate, enjoy and achieve
- value cultural diversity and difference
- develop creativity and self-expression
- experience learning that is clear, continuous and shows logical progression
- develop self-confidence and personal interaction skills
- to make good or better progress from their own individual starting points

3. Objectives

Our objectives include enabling our young people to participate fully in activities offered so that they can:

1. Develop the skills to use a range of tools and materials to learn effectively
2. Communicate their ideas, observations and feelings to the best of their ability and enjoy interaction with others.
3. Develop enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning
4. Develop interest and knowledge about the way of life and cultures of other countries.
5. Develop attitudes which help personal and social development and positive attitudes to the ideas of other people, caring for the environment and sustainable lifestyles.
6. Learn skills which will support creative thinking and visual awareness.
7. Learn at their own level and experience a positive sense of achievement.

4. Charging

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;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school
- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where we have arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they been prepared for that examination at the school;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit 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;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- certain early years provision
- community facilities
- board and lodging (residential visits) and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.
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Parents in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging on residential trips.

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 (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, tea 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 must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must 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.

6. Voluntary Contributions

If a planned activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will make this clear to parents at the outset. Parents have no obligation to make any contribution and no child will 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, or we cannot fund it from some other sources, then it will be cancelled. Where parents are unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. We will make it clear to parents at the outset what our policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

7. Education Partly During School Hours

Where an activity will take place partly during and partly outside school hours and 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 the following is taken into consideration:

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.

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 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

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

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.

This policy is to be reviewed no later than September 2024