



CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SEPTEMBER 2020

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The LEA or Governing Body may not levy any charges to pupils or their parents unless it has drawn up a statement of general policy on charging. The basis on which charges are made needs to be made clear to parents as should the eligibility criteria for support. Parents have a right to ask for this information and it is commended that a summary be included in the prospectus published by the school. If a charge is made for each pupil this should not exceed the actual cost of the activity. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fundraising.

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the optional extra. A contract need not be a formal document. It could be simply a letter to a teacher asking him/her to provide a service on a particular occasion.

Considerations

a) *Education during school hours*

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools and this includes the cost of materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity. School hours are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the lunchtime, which is not part of the school day. Details of the timings for the school day must be included in the prospectus as published by the school.

b) *Musical Instrument Tuition*

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of up to four to play a musical instrument if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a Public Examination syllabus being followed by the pupil.

c) *Voluntary Contributions*

Although schools cannot charge for school time activities subject to the musical instrument tuition as above, they can invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions. All such requests must make it clear to parents that the contributions are to be made on a voluntary basis and that the children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents that should be explained to them at the planning stage. Where



there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall then it must be cancelled.

d) *Education outside school hours*

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or syllabus for an approved examination or religious education. Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside of school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours then that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made.

e) *Residential Activities*

For residential activities taking place largely during school time or which meet the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made for education. However, charges can be made for board and lodging.

f) *Public Examinations*

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in regulations.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

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

Charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

g) *Charges*

Charges levied for any of the above must not exceed the actual cost of the activity.



Introduction

Given that all schools are now responsible for their own budgets under the Fair Funding scheme of financial delegation charging and remission is in the main a matter for governing bodies, subject to compliance with the statutory requirements as described above. The Authority's policy would only be directly relevant where it had used its powers to suspend financial delegation. In that event the Authority's policy, as set out below, would operate. However, the main purpose of the policy is to provide useful guidance for Governing Bodies who may adopt without amendment or with such variations as they think fit, providing that they comply with the law. A separate policy statement on music tuition is in place for the Havering Music School.

Individual Music Tuition

A charge will be made to parents of pupils receiving individual tuition or in groups of up to four pupils in the playing of any musical instrument, except where the tuition is essential to fulfil either the requirements of the National Curriculum or a syllabus for a prescribed public examination. Voluntary contributions may, however, be sought. Where a charge is made it will include all teaching costs and the cost of sheet music and any other relevant items and the hire and insurance of the musical instruments.

Charges will be remitted in full for individual or small group music tuition for a pupil whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Working Families Tax Credit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit or an income-based Job Seekers allowance.

Board and Lodging

Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home the Authority will make a charge for board and lodging in all cases whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours.

Residential Visits

Charges will only be made for the costs of such visits if they are largely out of school time and are not required by the National Curriculum, the syllabus for a public examination or for statutory religious education purposes.

Charging for Finished Products

A charge may be levied to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.



Public Examinations

Charges may be levied for:

- 1) The cost of any entry fee for any examination for which a pupil has not been prepared by the school.
- 2) The costs arising from a parental request for the reassessment of an examination script or associated material
- 3) The costs of any examination entry fee for an examination that is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it.
- 4) The cost of the examination entry fee where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body had originally paid the fee.

Charges may also be made for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

Non Residential Visits

Charges will only be levied where the activities are provided wholly or mainly outside of school hours and where they are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or syllabus for an approved examination or religious education. The charges will include:

- 1) The pupil's travel costs
- 2) Materials, books, instruments and any other equipment
- 3) Any additional staff costs
- 4) Entrance fees to museums, theatres etc
- 5) Insurance costs

Subsidy of costs

Should the governors approve subsidy of costs these costs will be met by the Contingency budget or if appropriate the disadvantage fund.

If a loss is made on any school activity these costs will be met from the Contingency budget, the disadvantage fund or from the School Fund account.

The school does not aim to make a profit on any such charge – in the unlikely event that the costs vary due to price changes that result in a profit in excess of £5.00 per child the school will reimburse parents.