



POLICY IN RESPECT OF CHARGES FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Aims

Thriftwood School and College aim to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

Legislation & Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. It is also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Roles & Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board (Local Governing Group) has overall responsibility for approving the Charging & Remissions Policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor, or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the Charging & Remissions Policy has been delegated to the executive headteacher.

Headteachers

The executive headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging & Remissions Policy, and that it is being applied consistently.



Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Charging & Remissions Policy consistently
- Notifying the executive headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school & college will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the executive headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging & Remissions Policy.

Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

Education

- Admission applications
- 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:
 - o The National Curriculum
 - o A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or college
 - o 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/carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school or college
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school or college

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school or college premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school or college
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit (see exceptions below)

Residential Visits

- 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:
 - o The National Curriculum
 - o A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or college
 - o Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school or college, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the pupil's parent/carer wishes the child to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school or college **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

Optional Extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - o The National Curriculum
 - o A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school or college
 - o Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school or college
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or college, or to other premises where the LA or governing board has 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 (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When 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 (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- 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 be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

Music Tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a Local Authority

Residential Visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Voluntary Contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out above, the school or college is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would otherwise not be possible.

Some activities for which the school or college may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Additional activities in school hours, day trips, local visits (this list is not exhaustive)

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no pupil will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. However, it should be borne in mind that if insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the activity may not take place.

Activities we charge for



The school or college will charge for the following activities (note this list is not exhaustive):

- After school clubs
- Horseriding (for those pupils selected for this activity)
- Swimming
- Off-site Gymnastics
- Residential Visits (details above)
- Finished products – where parents indicate, in advance, a wish to own the finished product, a charge may be levied to cover the cost of ingredients or materials in subjects such as technology, needlework or cookery
- Forest School

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined in advance as soon as is practicable, and will be communicated to the parents/carers at the beginning of the relevant school year or term.

Remissions

In some circumstances, the school or college may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. This will be at the discretion of the executive headteacher and/or the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

Remissions for Residential Visits

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (UC) – if you apply on or after 1st April 2018, your household income must be less than £7400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Individual requests due to hardship not covered by the benefits above can be discussed with the executive headteacher on a case by case basis.

Monitoring Arrangements

The school & college business manager monitors charges and remissions, in conjunction with the executive headteacher, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the school and college business manager annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the executive headteacher.



Reviewed February 2024