

Ridgewood High School

Stour Vale Academy Trust



Charging and Remissions Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually

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| Version | Date | Amendments |
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| V0 | 01/02/2022 | First issue. |
| V1 | 09/05/2023 | Annual review and update into new policy format. |

INTRODUCTION

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging from school activities in England. 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.

The Local Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Head teacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered by the Head teacher.

Under this act school governing bodies cannot make charges for the following:

- an admission application
- education provided during school
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school;
- examination re-sit(s), if the student has been prepared for it at the school. However, if a pupil fails without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered.

A school governing body can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes to own them
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Optional extras:
 - Education provided outside of the school time that is not:
 - Part of the National Curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the School, or
 - part of religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport that is not required to take the student to school or to other premises where the governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education and
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential trip
- Breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by students

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and willingness to meet the charges.

There is nothing in the legislation preventing school governing bodies from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and trips can make towards a student's education. It aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities.

The Governing Body will maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the school budget. The principals of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charge to parents/carers

PRACTICE

Charges will not be made for any activities which form part of the prescribed examinations syllabus, or are in fulfilment of National Curriculum requirements.

Activities where are wholly or mainly within school hours should not normally be chargeable. Any associated insurance costs will be included in charges for trips and activities

The cost of examinations entries for subjects taught within the school will normally be met by the school.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activities for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing activities for students.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Head teacher. If a request is made for voluntary contributions it should be made clear to the parents:

1. That if the activity cannot be funded by voluntary contributions and that there is insufficient funding the activity may be cancelled.
2. That they are under no obligation to contribute
3. That students at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed in response to the request

CHARGES

The governing body will make a charge for each student for activities organised by the school in the following circumstances:

- Instrumental music tuition and/or loan of instruments may be compulsorily charged unless it is part of a public examination or National Curriculum course
- In practical subjects, parents will be asked for the full or partial cost of material or ingredients if they have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product
- The full cost of activities, including board and lodgings for residential activities, deemed to be optional extras taking place outside the normal curriculum
- If a residential visit is designed to fulfil a statutory requirement the cost of board and lodgings will be charged unless families are in receipt of special benefits (see Remission of Charges)
- At our discretion a charge may be made for replacement of any item of school property that is lost or damaged

In cases where charges are to be levied, parents must be advised in advance and monies collected prior to the activity.

REMISSION OF CHARGES

Residential Visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodgings for residential visits.

The relevant support payments are:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- An Income related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part V1 of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the limit for that tax year
- Working Tax credit run on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individually stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (different rates apply depending on individuals' circumstance, the school would assess each application separately).

Parents who believe that they may qualify for this remission must apply in writing to the Head teacher. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters.

Date of Approval: 9th May 2023

Policy Approved by Chair

Date of Review Summer Term 2024