

Ercall Wood Technology College **Charging and Remissions Policy**

INTRODUCTION

This policy is produced in line with

- Chapter III of the Education Act 1996 (sections 449-462) Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999
- Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003
- Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005
- Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 Education Act 1996: section 457
- Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999/2255

EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

No charge may be made for admitting pupils to the school. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes 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 lunch break in the middle of the day.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TUITION

This is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. A charge may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or a group of up to four pupils, 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 pupils.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the school cannot charge for school-time activities, the Governing Board may make voluntary requests of parents and carers for contributions towards optional activities such as educational visits. It should be noted that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. However, such activities may be cancelled if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to meet the costs incurred. When invited to take part in such an activity, parents and carers will also be notified as to the level of any such voluntary contribution and how this sum has been calculated.

ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE SCHOOL OR LEA

When a non-school organization arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents or carers want their children to join the activity, such organizations may charge them. Parents and carers must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent. The Head teacher will then decide whether this is in the pupil's best interest.

CLASSROOM MATERIALS

No charge will normally be made for materials and equipment used during school hours. However, parents and carers of pupils undertaking practical subjects may be charged for the cost of materials if their children wish to own the finished product.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

No charge may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in Regulations. The school will enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for. However, this will not apply if the school think that there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil, or if the pupil's parents or carers ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents and carers 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 school or LEA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
- Where a parent knowingly absents a pupil from an exam for reason other than illness e.g. for a holiday during term time.

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, charges may 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.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents or carers may only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when those activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education. No charge will be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents and carers agree to pay them. The Education Act 1996 describes such activities as 'optional extras' and the Head teacher retains discretion as to whether or not to make a charge for such activities.

EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, then that activity will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

In contrast, a trip which involved leaving the school an hour or so earlier than normal in the afternoon, but which lasts until quite late in the evening, would be classed as taking place outside school hours. Under these circumstances, the Head teacher may make a charge for the activity.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school times if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions, and each 24 hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and midnight. (For example, a trip from noon on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday would count as seven half days, but only three school sessions and so would fall outside school time). A charge may be made for such residential trips falling outside school times.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours students whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;⁶
- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance;
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- 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 statutory threshold for that financial year:
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008; and

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is necessary as part of the national curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the student to sit, or the syllabus for religious education.

DAMAGE/LOSS TO PROPERTY

A charge may be made in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property, including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials. The charge may be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the headteacher may decide.

A charge may be made in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property, including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge may be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the headteacher may decide

OTHER CHARGES

The governing board or headteacher may charge for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services - e.g. for complying with requests made under the freedom of information act.

REMISSIONS

The governing board or headteacher may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it is reasonable in the circumstances.