

# Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by RET Board

Approved on May 2018

SLT contact Headteacher

Revision due Every 2 years



RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST

## 1. Introduction

- a. This document sets out the charging and remissions policy of the school.
- b. The provision for charges to parents and students for school activities previously set out in the 1944 Education Act has been superseded by the Education Reform Act 1988. In order for any charges to be made by a school for school activities from April 1st 1989, schools must have drawn up a statement of their charging and remissions policy.
- c. The objectives of the charging provisions in the 1988 Act are:
  1. to maintain the right to free school education.
  2. to establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all students regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
  3. to emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give the school the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
  4. to confirm the right of the school to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

## 2. Summary of the policy for charging and remissions

- a. No charge shall be made for admission to the school.
- b. With very few exceptions, parents and students must not be required to pay for any activity arranged by the School or the Education Authority for students which:-
  1. takes place wholly or mainly during school hours or which
  2. takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours and where the activity is provided for prescribed public examinations, the National Curriculum or religious education.
- c. The Governing Body will seek to enhance the range of provision in the School through charges for activities such as individual music tuition, through voluntary contributions from parents and through activities arranged by third parties.
- d. The cost to the School of individual music tuition is payable by the student's parent/guardian, with the cost of shared lessons being apportioned as appropriate, but up to six students per year group will be funded for shared music tuition in cases of financial hardship, provided they continue to demonstrate commitment. These will be judged against criteria drawn up by the headteacher and approved by the Student, Curriculum and Standards Committee on individual's merit. The ceiling for this amount is £1,500 per year group.

## 3. School admissions

- a. No charges are permitted for admission to the school.
- b. Where the school is over-subscribed the criteria for deciding which students to admit must not be based in any way on a parent's willingness or ability to make a contribution.

## 4. Education during school hours

- a. School hours are those hours when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the day. (Regulations requiring information on school hours are to be made by the Secretary of State).
- b. Education Activities
  1. No charge shall be made to parents or students for education provided by the school for registered students where the education takes place wholly or mainly during school hours except in the case of individual musical tuition.
  2. Where the number of places available for an activity which takes place wholly or mainly within school hours is limited, then the decision as to which students will be offered opportunities to participate

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must be made without reference to parents' willingness or ability to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

3. A charge will be made for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument but only if this tuition is not provided to fulfil the statutory requirements of a prescribed public examination or of the National Curriculum. No charge can be made unless prior parental willingness to pay has been obtained.

## c. Incidental Costs

1. Neither parents nor students will be required to pay for or supply any materials, books, instruments or other equipment for use in connection with educational activities, provided wholly or mainly during school hours, except in the cases below.
  - A charge will be made for the cost of materials where parents have indicated a wish to receive the finished products of an activity.
  - Voluntary contribution may be sought from parents or students for materials or equipment but no student shall be disadvantaged because of parents' unwillingness or inability to make such a contribution.
  - The full cost of repair or replacement of books, equipment or property lost or damaged by a student.

## d. Transport

1. No charge is to be made for any transport provided by the school in connection with any educational activity which takes place wholly or mainly in school hours.
2. Parents will be expected to meet the cost of travel direct from the student's home to activities sanctioned but not arranged by the School.

## e. Activities Arranged During School Hours by a Third Party

1. Parents can ask the School to grant leave of absence for students to join an activity arranged by an organisation other than the School Governing Body. Where leave of absence is granted, the organisers are entitled to charge parents directly, but the School will not take part in these transactions.
2. Leave of absence will only be given where the activity is judged to be in accordance with the need of the School to meet the statutory requirements of the school curriculum in respect of both students participating in the activity and those remaining at school.

## 5. Education outside of school hours

- a. The school will not make provision for activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours except where these are necessary to meet statutory requirements for examinations and the National Curriculum. The School Governing Body will fund such activities either from direct charges to parents or from voluntary subscriptions or through voluntary fund raising activities.
- b. Parents and students must not be required to pay for activities and associated incidentals other than board and lodgings where these are provided to meet:
  1. requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
  2. legal duties relating to the National Curriculum
  3. legal duties relating to religious education.
- c. The School will make charges to parents or students for overnight board and lodgings for any activity arranged by the School.
- d. Remission of charges for board and lodgings will be made for students on an individual basis where the activities have been arranged to meet specific requirements of prescribed examination or legal requirements relating to the National Curriculum or religious education.

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- e. When parents are provided with details of such compulsory activities which may involve charges for board and lodging, the entitlement to remission will be assessed on an individual basis following pre-set criteria. This is only for selected trips which are connected to the curriculum.

## 6. Public examinations

- a. The School's annual funding includes an allowance for entry fees for a range of specified public examinations. Parents and students must not be required to pay entrance fees for any of these prescribed examinations.
- b. Parents must be notified in writing of those examinations for which their children are being entered and the cost. They must also be notified where a student is not to be entered for an examination for which preparation has been provided in school.
- c. If an entry is agreed by the headteacher, on school premises, the school will expect that parents or students will be required to pay for entering examinations which are not prescribed and for which no necessary preparation has been provided in school hours.
- d. The school will expect parents or students to pay for the costs of remarking an examination **and refund to them any reimbursement to the school.**
- e. Where a student fails to sit for an examination for which he/she has been entered with notice to his/her parent/guardian by the School and the Headteacher is not satisfied that there are medical or other acceptable grounds for that non-attendance, the examination fees incurred by the School are to be recovered from the parent/guardian and that where a student is entered for an examination additional to those proposed by the School (after consideration of any representations made) the examination fee is to be paid by the parent/guardian requesting entry (this policy to be notified, when student examination entry is confirmed to parents).

## 7. Basis for charges and voluntary contributions

- a. Where parents or students are required to make a payment, the amount charged will not include any subsidy for any other student or for any other activity. The amount will be equal to the total value of directly related charges divided by the total number of students participating.
- b. The amount suggested as a voluntary contribution can include any level of subsidy.

## 8. Determining whether an activity is in or out of school hours

- a. Where an activity does not involve overnight board or lodging, an activity is defined as being wholly or mainly within school hours where:
  - 1. the number of school hours involved is at least 50% of the total elapsed time of the activity excluding travel outside of school hours.
- b. Where an activity does involve overnight board or lodging, then it is deemed to take place mainly in school hours where:
  - 1. the number of half day school sessions involved is at least 50% of the total number of half day sessions included in the activity.
- c. A half-day session is defined as any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day, where the number of hours taken up by the residential activity is at least 6 hours.

## 9. Refunds of Charges or Voluntary Contributions

- a. For activities funded by voluntary contributions (i.e. curriculum related activities taking place wholly or mainly during school hours) the school will not normally refund contributions to parents whose children are withdrawn from the activity.
- b. For activities for which charges are made (non-curriculum requirements wholly or mainly outside school hours) there are often deadlines for payment of instalments to third parties that mean some payments are non-refundable. Some companies have a degree of flexibility with deadlines which we can pass on to

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parents. However, this may not always be possible as most companies have strict payment schedules. The school will therefore take the following actions:

1. Make clear to parents/carers, before accepting payments, what the schedule of payments are and at what points and in what amounts these payments are non-refundable.
  2. If a student is unable to attend a trip or withdrawn from the trip by their parents then the school will make reasonable efforts to recover the payments made for refund to parents by:
    - Seeking a replacement student to take up the place (some costs may be attached to change of name e.g. budget flights are non-transferable)
    - Requesting a refund from third parties
  3. If a parent/carer is unable to make payments for a trip at the point when non-refundable charges to a third party are due the school may withdraw the student from the trip to avoid potential liability for those unmade payments.
    - This may mean that some earlier payments are then lost. Parents/carers having difficulty with payments should consider this and communicate with the school at the earliest opportunity if they have doubts about complying with the schedule.
    - The school will take reasonable steps to remind parents of payments, particularly non-refundable deadlines.
- c. The school reserves the right to refuse to take any student on any external trip whether funded by charges or voluntary contributions if they are in any way concerned about the student's behaviour.
1. The headteacher's decision on this is final.
  2. Any charges made will be refunded to parents/carers and the school will bear the loss.
  3. This necessarily means that the school may refuse to accept a student onto a trip some considerable time before it takes place if there are concerns about behaviour.