

Charges and School Remissions Policy

This Policy and the Procedures applies to all staff, including senior leaders, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Gretton School, students/carers, external agencies and members of the public.

Introduction

We want all our students to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means. This policy sets out our school approach to charging and remissions, and is informed by local authority guidance. In doing this our intention is to ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are able to access all the provision on offer.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

Education

No charge is made for:

- 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 the National Curriculum¹, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school; and

Charges may be made for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- optional extras (see below); and

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

Charges may be made for:

Gretton School

Charges and Remissions Policy

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Links to:

- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) 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 local authority/governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit (we made need to add a proviso re residential students)

In 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;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual student will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those

students who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying student on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions for the benefit of any school activities may sometimes be asked for. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation to make any voluntary contribution.

It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child would still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. Gretton School will avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds. Direct debit or standing order mandates will not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Residential Visits

No charge will be made for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours; (if it's residential then it won't take place in school hours)
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Charges may be made for:

- board and lodging; the charge will not exceed the actual cost. (again not if already boarding at school)

When we inform parents about a forthcoming visit, we will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging (need to be explicit about whilst on residential activity):

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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 £15,575 (Financial Year 2008/09);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Guidance on school policies for Learning Outside the Classroom, including charging is available here.²

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Guidance about these changes to the charging regulations can be viewed at:

<https://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/g/guidasnce%20charging%20regulations%20for%20music%20tuition%20-%20july%2007.pdf>

Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Transport

No charge will be made for:

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the

² <http://www.lotc.org.uk/pdf/1.3.2%20Developing%20a%20LOtC%20policy.pdf> (this is in the footer)

local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

- transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Guidance on school travel is available³.

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-boarding activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Boarding visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day. As above

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

³ <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-00373-2007>
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Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Students are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Damage to Property

The school may reserve the right to ask the parents of students whose inappropriate behaviour causes damage to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property.

The Law

Education Act 1996: sections 449 – 462 (October 2014)

DCSF A Guide to the Law for School Governors (Chapter 23) (Jan 2014)

DCSF Charging for School Activities (Revised January 2009)