

THE CHERWELL SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Status - Statutory

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review.

Purpose

The Cherwell School believes that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will offer a good range of visits and activities and, at the same time, minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's funding agreement, equality policy and Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching policy (CAT).

Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher, other staff, governors

The Headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

The policy identifies activities for which:

- voluntary contributions may be requested
- charges will be made
- charges will not be made.
- charges may be waived

1. No charges will be made for

- An admission application
- 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 Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) 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

- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school (except where a charge is deemed relevant by the school as per section 4)
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.
- education provided on any trip 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip

2. Activities for which charges may be made

a) Activities outside school hours

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school time, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school time (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).

b) Residential activities

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above). When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

Definition of school time

School time is defined by the school's calendar that depicts the 195 annual days of allocated teaching time, including INSET days.

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of sessions spent on the trip, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours. (The school day is counted as two sessions, with the evening counting as an additional session).

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to four pupils

d) Home to school student transport

Costs incurred by the school in providing home to school transport for students who live outside of the school's designated catchment area.

3. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, The Trust's schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents from the outset.

No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

If insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

4. Summary of active / approved charges

It is the policy of The Cherwell School that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as "optional extras". Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Help available
1 Charges may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, additional to the course materials <i>where a parent wishes their child to own them</i>	For example a revision guide, DT or art project, or other work. A charge may be made to purchase the necessary equipment	Voluntary contributions are requested only Assistance for category C in certain circumstances (see below)
2 Charges will be made for music tuition	The full cost for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where	Assistance for category A and C (see below)

	the tuition is an optional extra	
3 Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Assistance possible on request for category B & C (see below)
4 Locker deposits for all students choosing to use a locker at school	A set charge will apply which is to be refunded at the end of the student's course	Assistance possible on request for category C (see below)
5 A charge for all Y12 students called a book deposit to cover course materials	A set charge will apply which is to be refunded at the end of the student's course	Assistance possible on request for category C (see below)
7 Charges for students sitting exams, where the exam is being re-sat at the request of a student or parent, or where the school is unable to support an entry in a post-16 exam, but the student/parent still wants the entry to be made.	The whole cost of the exam plus a set administration charge for the school arranging the entry.	Assistance for category A, B and C where appropriate
8 Administration charges are applied by the school to all school trips through either a set amount or percent	The charge is based on the school's cost in arranging the trip and covers staffing and insurance costs incurred by the school	Assistance for category A, B and C where appropriate
9. Chromebooks - All students will be required to have access to a Chromebook to aid learning	The charge is based on the cost of the device plus a small admin charge. The cost of licences cannot be charged to the student	Assistance for category A, B and C where appropriate

5. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Category A

Parents in receipt of

- 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules - £16,190 in 2014
- Guaranteed State Pension

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances

Category B

Parents who have:

- Specific individual circumstances that have caused temporary hardship
- Recently moved into hardship but not yet receiving the benefits listed in Category A
- Made a specific request to the Headteacher for any other justifiable reason via the appropriate form

Remission is always at the Headteachers' discretion in these circumstances based on any evidence provided.

Category C

- Parents who have children who qualify for Pupil Premium Funding
- Parents / Students who receive a 16-19 Bursary fund grant

6. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the breadth of the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and educational visits do not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for items of large scale expenditure
- we shall establish a system for parents to pay online to simplify the process (while at the same time supporting families who may not have access to this facility)
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.