



Charging Policy

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This policy has been written and implemented in accordance with the School's dedication to its Christian values. These are underpinned in the Stopfordian ethos and the message and example of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

The School's policy on charging conforms to the advice detailed in the DfE guidance dated October 2014, Charging for School Activities.

No charge is, therefore, made for admission, education in school hours (with certain exemptions for instrument tuition), education required by the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or education, which is part of the National Curriculum. However, due to the limitations of the delegated budget the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the circumstances described below for activities organised by the School. The Governing Body will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Examinations

Our School is committed to the achievement of all ethnic groups and all our policies and practice support this commitment.

Internal candidates

Candidates and their parents/carers will sign to accept that the School is prepared to fund the entry of external examinations where Heads of Department have confirmed the entry. It is understood from this acceptance that if the candidate fails to complete any component of the exam (e.g. by not handing in coursework or failing to turn up for an exam without a medical certificate authorised by a doctor) then the candidate will be liable for the examination fee. In most subjects, the School has to enter students at a designated level. If the student and parent/carer insist, against the School's advice, on entry to a higher level, which must be in writing, the parent/carer must fund the cost of entry prior to the exam entry.

Students wishing to be entered for an examination in a subject which they are not studying at School (e.g. a community language) must fund the cost of entry prior to the exam entry, including the cost of paying external examiners and invigilators where necessary.

External or resit candidates

Where the School specifically requests a resit (this must be approved by the Head of Department in writing), the School will fund cost of entry from the Department's own budget. Where the parent/carer/student requests the resit, which must be in writing, the candidate will be charged for any syllabus/module they wish to enter and must fund the cost of entry prior to the exam entry.

Any ex-student or a student who is doing a re-take will be charged a fee for each syllabus/module they wish to enter. One administration fee will be charged per candidate for any number of exams/modules entered.

Failure to pay the entry fees before the due date will result in the student not being entered for that examination (whether resit or exam funded by the student).

Enquiries Upon Results

Candidates who request an Enquiry Upon Results will be charged the Examination Board's fee for this service plus a small administration charge. It should be noted that where a candidate's final grade given by the Examination Board is at least two grades different to the predicted grade, the Board will automatically recheck the marking for that candidate. Therefore, Enquiries Upon Results rarely result in a change of grade (note that grades can be lowered as well as improved). If a Head of Department requests an Enquiry Upon Results, the cost of this will be met by the School's departmental budget.

Alteration to personal details

Candidates have two chances to check their personal details (i.e. correct spelling of their name and date of birth) used for their entry (which are reproduced on their certificates), as well as the subjects for which they are entered. Candidates who have been offered this check who then discover, after the given deadline, that their personal or entry details (including tier of entry) are incorrect, will be liable for amendment fees, including an administration charge.

Notification of results and despatch of certificates

Results slips will be posted to candidates no longer at the School if they do not wish to collect them from the School. Certificates are available for collection from the School although where preferred, they will be sent recorded delivery. Costs for despatching the certificates will be met by the candidates.

Confirmation of results letter

Confirmation letters can be requested by candidates who have mislaid or never collected their certificates. The Examination Boards charge up to £25 per letter, whereas the School charges £10. Any such fees are payable in advance.

Double entry requests for Certificate of Achievement / Basic Test

In some subjects staff in charge of a syllabus may recommend that a candidate is entered for a Certificate of Achievement or a Basic Test in addition to a full or short course GCSE. The School department will then be liable to pay the lower of the two entry fees. Where a candidate requests entry for both, which must be in writing, the candidate will be liable for

the lower fee – normally the Certificate of Achievement. No administration fee will be charged to an internal candidate in this situation.

Costs incurred by late entries

Heads of Department will be asked to check and sign provisional entries and final entries. If it can be seen that a late entry has occurred due to this checking being inadequate, the penalty fee (not the original entry fee) will be charged to the department concerned.

Voluntary contributions

The School may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- School equipment;
- School funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and students of parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. However, if there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity / trip may be cancelled.

School trips

During normal school hours

Trips occurring during school hours are provided free of charge. However, parents/carers can be asked to make a voluntary contribution (see above) towards the cost of the trip.

Payment of deposits / stage payments

Each trip will have a payment profile, usually involving a deposit and subsequent deposits to confirm booking. These are then used to pay the supplier to reserve places. This is confirmed by letter on a case-by-case basis which will also state whether deposits / stage payments are refundable if the student withdraws from the trip. Where the money has already been committed to the supplier, or where cancellation charges apply, the School will not be able to refund the money to the parent/carer.

Partly during school hours

If most of the time spent on either a residential or non-residential trip is during school hours or it meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is part of the National Curriculum, then the School must follow the procedure for voluntary contributions as stated above. This means where the child has a free school meals entitlement, no charge may be made for travel, the educational part of the trip or lunch. However, if the trip is residential it is allowable to charge for the board and lodging costs unless the student's parents/carers are receiving any of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances

- Income support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- or Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs HMRC) does not exceed £16,105 (Financial Year 2015-2017), which is the lower earnings figure for Free School Meals entitlement.
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit.
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance

Parents/carers wishing to claim free board and lodging for their child will be expected to provide current evidence of the above support.

Outside normal school hours / optional extras

Charges can and will be made for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or that form part of the School's basic curriculum for religious education or form part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination. This means that charges for activities that happen outside school hours, including holiday periods, which the Education Acts describes as 'optional extras' e.g. Music Tours, Ski Trips, are lawful. Therefore parents/carers who wish their child to take part in 'optional extras' must pay the amount required by the School to cover the cost of the trip in advance. A contingency sum may be added to the overall cost of a trip for emergency purposes – if it is not used, this will be returned to parents/carers after the conclusion of the trip.

The School may also remit charges to students whose parents/carers are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit at the time of the trip.

Books and equipment

Essential books and equipment are supplied by the School. However, parents/carers may be given the opportunity to voluntarily purchase additional books and equipment to supplement their learning.

It is expected that any text books or other equipment issued to students in relation to their studies should be returned and in a state of good repair. Failure to return text books or equipment or the returning of such in an unusable condition will result in parents/carers being sent a bill to cover the cost of purchasing a replacement.

Broken equipment

The Governors will ask students and/or their parents/carers to contribute towards the cost of replacement items of equipment or the cost of repairs to the fabric of the building, fixture or fittings where damage or breakage has occurred as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students.

Musical instrument tuition

This is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual student or groups of students to play a musical instrument, where the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

Ingredients / materials / equipment

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents/carers) or require them to be provided if the parents/carers have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Design or Food Technology, Art.