

Reviewed: Summer 2021
Review period: Biennial – Summer 2023

Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School



Charging and Remissions Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This charging and remissions policy complies with statutory requirements and is reviewed on a biennial basis.

Regulatory Framework

Provisions relating to the charge for educational activities are set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. As an academy, BRGS is required through the funding agreement to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

The objectives behind these charging provisions were explained in earlier DFE documentation as follows:

- To maintain the right to free education;
- To establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parent's ability or willingness to help meet the costs;
- To emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give local authorities and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours, for example, theatre trips or homework clubs;
- To confirm the right of local authorities and schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activities organised by the school whether during or outside school hours

The most recent DFE guidance was updated May 2018 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

2. CHARGING POLICY

All students are entitled to full access to the school curriculum, regardless of parent's capacity to pay. No student will be disadvantaged due to financial hardship.

Therefore, no charge is made for any educational activity which takes place during school hours. However there are some exceptions:

1. Trips and residential activities in school time: the transport, board and lodging element of the residential visit.
2. Activities outside school hours: the full cost for each student of journeys, trips and overnight stays in the United Kingdom and abroad which take place at weekends and during holidays, which are deemed to be optional extras;
3. Materials: the cost of materials or ingredients for practical subjects, if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the final product;
4. Acts of vandalism and negligence: the Governing Body reserves the right to recover part, or the whole cost, of damage to buildings or equipment which is the result of vandalism or negligence by a student;

5. Instrumental music lessons which are not provided free as part of the 'Music for All scheme'
6. Examination fees: if a student has not regularly attended the lessons for a particular examination subject, the examination fee may be requested in advance, refundable if the student attends for examination.
There will be a charge for examination resits where the resit has been requested by the pupil or parent.
If, without a medical certificate explaining the reason, a student fails to complete examination requirements for any public examination for which the Academy has paid an entry fee, the Governing Body may seek to recover the fee from the parent.
There may be a charge for examination entry where there is a request from the parent for additional subject entries to be made which are not supported by the school.

The school will charge for activities and items which fall outside of the scope of the DfE guidance and therefore outside the charitable purpose of the organisation. These include but are not limited to:

- School meals
- Curriculum equipment which remains the property of the pupil / parent
- Activities to generate funds for the BRGS Fundraising trust
- ABRSM music examinations
- Non-educational trips
- Trips which take place outside of normal school hours
- Exam remarks, return of original scripts and resits requested by the pupil or parent
- Music lessons at the request of the parent (no charge for a pupil who is looked after by the local authority)
- Exam entries for external candidates
- School events, concerts and productions
- Replacement uniform
- Uniform or costumes for extra-curricular activities or trips
- Lettings and community use of facilities

The school will allow trip and activity leaders to include a contingency into the cost of a trip to cover actual costs. If after meeting all the costs of a trip, the individual account is in surplus and this amounts to £15 per student or more, then the surplus will be shared out and returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of those students who originally contributed to the trip.

Where an individual trip account is in surplus but the surplus amounts to less than £15 per student, then the surplus will be retained by the school to be used for the benefit of the pupils in any of the following ways:

- To provide individual pupils with financial support for a school trip where, because of financial hardship, the pupil would otherwise not be able to attend
- To make general financial contribution to the cost of the same trip in future years
- To make financial contribution to the cost of running other trips in future years.

3. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The school may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school time activities to assist with funding subject to the following conditions:

- Parents will be informed at the outset that there is no obligation to pay for a particular activity;
- Any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently.

Where charges are not made but where contributions need to be requested to ensure financial viability of a trip or activity, information sent out to parents will include an agreed statement. Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parent are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

4. REMISSIONS POLICY

Parents who can provide evidence they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodgings for educational, residential visits which take place during school hours:

- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1st April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year- after tax and not including benefits)
- Income support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support 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 does not exceed £16,190
- Working Tax credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

Further guidance is available in the most recent DfE guidance for Charging for School Activities.

The school may remit other charges in full or in part to other parents/carers after considering other specific hardship cases. The school invites parents/carers to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. Applications should be made in writing to the School Business Manager.