

Parklands High School – An Academy



Charging and Remissions Policy

Parklands High School

Last Reviewed; November 2022

Next Review; November 2023

Version 202223.mc.v1

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Statement of intent

Parklands High School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE).

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulation 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for School Activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance Handbook'
- Our 'Funding Agreement'
- ESFA (2022) 'Academy trust handbook 2022'

2. Charging for education

2.1. We will not charge parents/carers for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carers.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sits, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

2.2. We may charge parents/carers for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carers wishes their child to own them.
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

3. Optional extras

3.1. We may charge parents/carers for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
 - Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school.

- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the trust board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
 - Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
 - Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision.
- 3.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra.
 - Buildings and accommodation.
 - Non-teaching staff (including teaching assistants).
 - Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra.
 - The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- 3.3. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.
- 3.4. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.
- 3.5. If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents/carers will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

4. Examination fees

- 4.1. We may charge for examination fees if:
- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
 - The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
 - A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

5. Examination re-sits

- 5.1. Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, we will pay the fee.
- 5.2. If a pupil or their parents/carers consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parent/carer. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/pupil will have their fees refunded.

6. Voluntary contributions

- 6.1. We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents/carers to make a contribution and parents/carers will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.
- 6.2. No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.
- 6.3. We will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

7. Music tuition

- 7.1. Instrumental and vocal music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size - provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents/carers.
- 7.2. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.
- 7.3. Eligible pupils will be considered for discounts to the charges.

8. Transport

- 8.1. We will not charge for:
 - Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
 - Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
 - Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
 - Transport provided for an educational visit.

9. Residential visits

- 9.1. We will not charge for:
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
 - Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
 - Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.
- 9.2. We may charge for board and lodging - but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- 9.3. Parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:
- Income Support
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
 - Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit - if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)
- 9.4. If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, we will not charge for the activity.

10. Education partly during school hours

- 10.1. If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
- 10.2. If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- 10.3. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.
- 10.4. Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

11. Damaged or lost items

- 11.1. The school may charge parents/carers for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

12. Remissions

- 12.1. We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.
- 12.2. Parents/carers in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:
- Income Support
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
 - Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit - if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)
- 12.3. To request assistance, parents should contact the school via the Finance and Office Manager and Headteachers PA, Tel: 01257 264596 or Email: admin@parklandsacademy.co.uk

13. School trip refunds

- 13.1. All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.
- 13.2. In the event that a pupil or their parent/carer cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.
- 13.3. In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

13.4. Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £5 per pupil.

14. Monitoring and review

14.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2023.