



Charging & Remissions Policy

Author	Written / Reviewed	Approved by Governors	Next Review
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Introduction

Shenstone Lodge School seeks to ensure the highest quality education provision for our pupils, allocating resources appropriately to meet identified activities, achieving value for money at all times. The Charging and Remissions Policy is applied in line with Section 457 of the Education Act 1996.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities or services provided, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from Parents/Carers, Staff, Visitors and others.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Executive Head Teacher and Heads of School for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual Parents/Carers will be considered jointly by the Executive Head Teacher and the Governing Body.

Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body recognises that legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- 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 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;
- examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
- 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 religious education;

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the Governing Body or Local Authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he/she has been prepared for that examination at the school;

Charges that may be applied

- board and lodging on residential visits (not to exceed the costs)
- the proportionate costs for an individual student of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:
 - travel associated costs
 - materials and equipment
 - non-teaching staff costs
 - entrance fees/activity fees
 - insurance costs
- individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument
- re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- costs of non-prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited
- breakages, replacements, repairs as a result of damage caused willfully or negligently by students
- Telephone – Pupils are allowed to contact Parents/Carers/Relatives at convenient times, free of charge, with permission of a member of staff. There is a pupil designated telephone for calls of a confidential nature on the Shenstone Lodge site. Students at The Brades Lodge will have access to a phone as required.

- Meals – Staff who are not timetabled for duty cover are able to pre-order meals and pay the school at the rate determined by the meal provider. (see app 1). Staff who are available as on call support are not entitled to a free meal.
- Photocopies - private photocopies are limited to a maximum of 50 A4 or equivalent per day and are charged at the rate prevailing (see app 1)
- Public documents provided under the General Data Protection Regulations are no longer charged for.

Note: Any chargeable items or services are provided solely at the discretion of the school and may be subject to availability. The school reserves the right to vary charges without notice.

Remissions

Students whose parents are in receipt of government support payments may, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- a) Income Support (IS)
- b) Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- c) Support under part V1 of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- d) The guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- e) 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 the limit for that tax year
- f) An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced in October 2008.

Parents/Carers who believe that they may qualify for this remission must apply in writing to the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters.

- Car allowance - Mileage allowance for authorised journeys only will be refunded at the rate indicated in the LA guidelines in force at the time of travel. (see app 1) Claims should be submitted within 3 months of the mileage covered. School will not pay mileage beyond this date unless there are exceptional circumstances as determined by the Executive Headteacher/School Business Manager. In any instance, all claims need to be submitted by the end of the financial year that they relate. Any claims received after that date will not be authorised.
- Telephone - Staff and Governors of the school whose duties require evening or overnight attendance will be entitled to a phone call of reasonable length to their immediate family. Emergency phone calls will be at the discretion of the senior member of staff present.

- Meals - Staff who are not timetabled for duty cover are able to pre-order meals and pay the school at the rate determined by the meal provider (see app 1). Governors carrying out their normal duties, and invited guests of the school will be entitled to meals free of charge. Staff who are available as on call support are not entitled to a free meal.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents/Carers may be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the following:

- Activities within a curriculum area
- Support for educational trips and visits
- Associated travel costs

The terms of any request made to Parents/Carers will specify that the request is for a voluntary contribution and in no way represents a charge. In this case the following applies:

- the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a Parent/Carer is under no obligation to pay;
- no student will be treated differently according to whether or not a voluntary contribution is made
- Should insufficient voluntary contributions be received for any trip/activity/event to be deemed not financially viable the school reserves the right to cancel the trip/activity/event.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution to be requested delegated to the Lead Organiser of each activity in consultation with the Head of School.

Voluntary contributions will be used to:

- Enhance and support learning activities
- Support some educational visits
- Assist with travel costs

Implementation

Charges will normally be levelled at the point of delivery of the items or services concerned. If appropriate an invoice will be raised by the Business Manager, detailing the items or services supplied, and the appropriate charge/s levied. Receipts will be issued if requested. Any monies received will be logged and handled appropriately as per normal internal financial procedures.

Remissions will be refunded within a reasonable time period either via petty cash or cheque on provision of a receipt signed by the Line Manager, or an appropriate claim form signed by the Line Manager together with all relevant receipts. The claim form should indicate the nature of the claim and the value claimed.

Receipts and/or claim forms should be submitted to the Admin Team and will be honoured only if signed by the Line Manager and are submitted within three working months of the expenditure.

It should be ensured that appropriate authorisation for any intended expenditure is obtained before the expenditure occurs. The school reserves the right not to refund any unauthorised expenditure.

Charges and remission values will be as set by the LA or by the Governing Body, as appropriate, and will be available for inspection from the School Business Manager.

Appendix 1

School meal charge 2020/21 £2.10

Photocopy 10p per sheet

Car mileage allowance 2020/21 - 45p per mile (for first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter). Claim forms should be submitted within three working months of the mileage covered. School will not pay mileage beyond this date unless there are exceptional circumstances as determined by the Executive Headteacher/School Business Manager. In any instance, all claims need to be submitted by the end of the financial year that they relate. Any claims received after that date will not be authorised.

Appendix 2

The Data Protection Act (Section 7) allows for a flat fee of £10 to be charged for the supply of structured personal information.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the “appropriate limit” prescribed in the regulations. The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, identify the “appropriate limit” of fees and charges the school is permitted to levy in response to requests made under Freedom of Information. This also applies to requests for “unstructured” personal information under Section 9A of the Data Protection Act 1998 (inserted by section 69 of the FOIA)

The ‘appropriate limit’

Under Regulation 4 of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, the “appropriate limit” is set at £450 for Local Authorities and therefore schools.

This is calculated on a standard rate of £25 per hour based on estimating the staff time taken to:

- Determine if the information is held
- Locate the information or a document which may contain the information
- Retrieve the information, or a document, which may contain the information
- Edit or extract the releasable information contained within a document

This calculation does not take into account the time spent/costs of:

- Checking that a request for information meets the requirements of FOIA
- Considering the application of exemptions; prejudice and/or public interest tests
- Obtaining internal or external legal advice
- Consulting with third parties and obtaining authorisation to send out information

Based on the standard hourly rate of £25 specified in the FOIA Fees Regulations, the maximum amount of staff time spent finding, retrieving, collating and editing before exceeding the £450 cost limit is 18 hours.

Appendix 3

Lettings

The school does not have a formal lettings policy but follows the process given in the Sandwell MBC sample lettings policy.

Current letting charges are as follows:

Football pitch	£50.00 per match
Gym	£32 per hour
Classroom/meeting room	£12 per hour

All prices exclusive of VAT