

CHARGING POLICY

Last update: March 2022

The Trustees of Katharine Lady Berkeley's School consider that all students should have equal opportunities to benefit from school activities and visits. The charging and remissions policy describes how we will ensure that a good range of visits and activities is offered while minimising the financial barriers which may prevent some students from taking advantage of the opportunities.

Key points

The school, subject to the limited exceptions referred to below, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

The school will ensure that parents/guardians on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 3 of this document are informed of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

School Charging

The school **cannot** charge for:

- 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/guardian;
- 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.

The school **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/guardian wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);
- recovery of examination entry fees, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the national curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or the school have arranged for the student to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;
- extended services (for example after school clubs and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, in cases where a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover classes which continue at school for those students who do not wish to participate, but which would normally be taken by teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit. For example, if three students in a Year 8 group choose not to go on a field visit during a school day, the charge for the visit cannot include the cost of supply teachers to take classes for the three students who are not participating.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents/guardians at the outset. It must also be made clear to parents/guardians that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. This will be made clear to parents/guardians. If a parent/guardian is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. It should be made clear to parents/guardians at the outset what the policy for allocating places on a school visit will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents/guardians must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. The school will not send colour coded letters to parents/guardians as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents/guardians when requesting contributions.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/guardian. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the

national curriculum. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a student who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

The school **cannot** charge for:

- 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 Trustees or local authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when the student has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- transport provided in connection with a visit which 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.

Residential Visits

The school **cannot** 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, 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;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit which 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.

The school **can** charge for:

- board and lodging but the charge must not exceed the actual cost;
- transport in accordance with the provisions of the 'optional extras' section above.

When a school informs parents/guardians about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents/guardians who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging and transport:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related ESA (employment and support allowance).

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have

taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Educational Visits, Refunds and Cancellations

Full terms and conditions for each school educational visit will be issued to parents/guardians prior to each trip or exchange visit taking place.

Monitoring

The member of the Leadership Team with overall responsibility for visits will check letters to parents/guardians and costing plans to ensure compliance with this policy.

This policy has been compiled in accordance with the DfE Guidance on charging for school activities (May 2018)

Discussed and approved by Trustees Finance and Staffing committee: 23 March 2022

Next revision: March 2024