



Lakeside
School
Learning for life

Charging and remissions Policy

Lakeside School

Revised: July 2023

This policy sets out the Charging and Remissions policy of Lakeside School and provides information to parents on the circumstances where the school may charge for activities; whether these are within school hours or out of school hours.

Principle

The Governors of Lakeside School uphold the principle of free education embodied in the Education Act 1996 Sections 49-462 and have adopted CSF's Charging and Remissions Policy. Where charges are permitted the Governors give their authority to the Head teacher to use her discretion in waiving costs when considering individual circumstances.

No pupil will be denied the opportunity to participate in any activity during or outside school hours on account of parents being unable to pay the cost.

EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials and equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.

EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Some activities take place partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made.

Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours. As an example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or do not form part of the school's basic curriculum.

The Education Act 1996 describes these activities that can be charged for as "optional extras". It is up to the LA or governing body providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Charging can be made for residential trips that fall outside of school time.

A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24-hour period is divided into two half-days, beginning at noon and at midnight.

On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would last for nine half-days, include five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would count as seven half-days, include three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50 per cent or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day should be treated as spent on the trip.

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving:

Income Support; • Income based Jobseeker's Allowance; • Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; • Child Tax Credit • the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; and an income-related employment and support allowance

The head teacher should advise all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits.

ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE SCHOOL OR LOCAL AUTHORITY

When an organisation acting independently of a school or LA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Where such an activity is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the DCSF's view that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school and no charge should be made to the parents or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an "approved educational activity" within the meaning of Regulation 4A (a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended).

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further.

All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Governing bodies should also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this should be explained to them at the planning stage.

The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not, make a contribution of any kind.

The school tries very hard to fund as many activities as possible and the PTA is usually able to help fund special projects such as theatre trips.

Voluntary Contributions Requested at schools

There are some activities for which voluntary parental contributions may be sought such as sailing, riding, swimming and class funds.

Sailing / Riding. The school is charged for these sessions and a suggested cost may be requested from parents as a voluntary contribution.

Swimming. In order to cover some of the costs of using a community swimming pool, for which the school is charged, a voluntary contribution may be requested.

Class funds. This fund operates to cover the costs of buying drinks and healthy snacks for break times, and to enable the pupils to use local shops and cafes as part of social training. Parents may be asked for an appropriate sum and / or consumables to be sent in. These funds are subject to regular internal and external audit. Requests may be sent for these contributions but no parent should be sent reminders for money and accounts should not list parents by name.

All of these contributions are requested as voluntary and there is no pressure placed on parents to comply. When parents do not comply children continue to join in all the activities.

DAMAGE / LOSS TO PROPERTY

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent, the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement. Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and dependent on the situation

In any matter of dispute arising over interpretation, the Governors will be guided by Hertfordshire County Council regulations currently in use.

8. REMISSIONS

In addition to free provision of education during the school day, some pupils qualify for free school meals. Pupils not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per day.