



# Policy

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# Charging

Published:

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For Review:

2011–12





# Our Purpose

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The work of the school is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of each pupil. It seeks to put Christ at the centre of every activity, worship, learning and service to others.

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**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body**

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Lavery', written over a horizontal line.

Mr R Lavery, Chair of Governing Body

Date:

8/6/2011

## POLICY STATEMENT

This policy has been formulated in accordance with section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. In general, the provision of education in maintained schools must be free. The Governors focus upon providing the best education possible at a time of increasing demands on the available finance. The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

### **A. CHARGES**

1. **Residential Visits:** Charges will be levied for board and lodging during residential visits. The cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision and will not include the supply cost of teachers involved in the visit. Parents will be informed of the date of the visit two terms before commencement. Flexible payment terms will be in place.
2. **Music Tuition:** Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, tuition in playing a musical instrument is an exception to this rule. Tuition fees, terms and conditions for 2011 / 12 are outlined in Appendix A.
3. **Books & Equipment:** Books and equipment will be provided by the school and must be treated with care. Parents will be asked to pay for the replacement of lost, defaced or damaged items. School will charge for any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes him / her to own them.
4. **Public Examinations:** No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in regulations. However, re-sit entry fees will be charged in advance if the entry is requested by parents or if the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it. If a pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school has originally paid the entry fee, a charge may be levied.
5. **Activities & Visits:** Known as 'optional extras', non-essential activities that take place outside of the school day (8.30am – 3.00pm) that are not part of the National Curriculum, syllabus for a public examination or part of religious education will be charged for. Charges will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity. Costs of staff engaged to provide optional extras may be charged for. Charges will not include any subsidies for other pupils wishing to participate whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay.
6. **Agreement to Pay:** Consent forms for any of the above charges require an 'agreement to pay' signature from parents / carers. Should payment not be received within 30 days of the date of signing, a reminder will be issued. Failure to pay within 14 days of the reminder may result in recovery of the debt by Leeds City Council Debtor Service.

### **B. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Restrictions on charging in schools do not in any way prohibit schools from seeking voluntary contributions in support of any school activity:

1. There is no obligation for parents to contribute to costs incurred for activities held during or outside the school day which are a prescribed part of the curriculum.
2. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed in response to a request for a voluntary contribution.
3. No child will be excluded from an activity because his/her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.
4. Initial letters will explain the nature of the proposed activity and its likely value in educational terms.
5. The letter will indicate the contribution per pupil which would be required if the activity were to take place.
6. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear at the outset.
7. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit then it may be cancelled.

### **C. TRANSPORT**

Schools are unable to charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport provided in connection with an essential residential visit

Schools may charge for transport in minibuses which hold a permit issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. Any charges made may be used to recover some or all of the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value, however profits may not be made.

### **D. REFUND POLICY**

1. **Deposits:** Deposits for activities are non-refundable.
2. **Cancellation by school:** Where an activity has been cancelled due to insufficient voluntary contributions, all payments received will be refunded in full.
3. **Illness – day trips:** Unfortunately refunds are unlikely, as tickets and transport expenditure will have been committed and paid. However, should another pupil take the place, or the trip has a contingency refunds will be arranged after the trip has taken place.
4. **Illness – residential trips:** The insurer covering residential trips will refund for non-attendance due to illness or injury. Individual policy exceptions will apply.
5. **State Benefits:** It is the parent / carer responsibility to inform school of their entitlement to the benefits laid out in section D. Refunds for board and lodging on residential visits will be back-dated to the date that school are informed in writing of their entitlement.
6. **Free School Meals:** Refunds will be back-dated to the date that school is informed in writing of the entitlement by the benefits agency. A report will be produced from the school meals software evidencing expenditure. Refunds will not exceed the daily free school meals rate as set by Leeds City Council Benefits Service.

### **E. REMISSION OF CHARGES**

**Board & Lodging – Residential Visits:** Parents in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- 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 does not exceed £16,040 per annum.
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

The school has the right to request evidence of benefit entitlement and to seek the repayment of charges which have been waived as a result of false information. Remission of charges only applies automatically to residential visits.

### **F. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY**

Requests for financial assistance for other activities should be made in writing to the Headteacher upon receipt of the letter outlining the details of the activity, or as soon as parents are aware that an activity is to take place.

- The Headteacher may be able to agree flexible, extended payment terms.
- The Governors hold a small contingency fund to support requests for financial assistance. 'Essential' activities will take preference over 'non-essential'.
- Parents in receipt of the above benefits will be considered as first priority for assistance.
- All cases will be treated individually and in confidence.

## **Appendix A – Peripatetic Music Lessons**

The cost to the school of providing peripatetic music teaching equates to £15 per 20 minute lesson. The school enters into an annual contractual agreement with an external agency for the supply of peripatetic music teachers. It is the school's policy to recover all of this cost from parents / carers, except for pupils studying Music GCSE or A level.

### **Fees, Terms and Conditions**

#### **Tuition Fees 2011 / 12**

<b>Per Term</b>	<b>Charges</b>
Group of three	£55

1. The fee agreed by Governors for 2011-12 is **£55 per term**. 33 lessons per year will be provided. This equates to **£5.00 per lesson**.
2. Sessions will be for a duration of twenty minutes during the normal school day. Sessions will be delivered in groups of three pupils. *Please note that some lessons overlap with timetabled lessons.*
3. Fees will be invoiced – payment is required in advance at the start of each term.
4. Should payment not be received within 30 days of receipt of the invoice a reminder will be issued. Failure to pay within 14 days of the reminder may result in recovery of the debt by Leeds City Council Debtor Service.
5. Pupils will be expected to attend all instrumental lessons.
6. Individual lessons may be requested via Mrs Chapman, Subject Leader for Music at an increased fee.

### **Refund / Remission Scheme**

1. Pupils studying Music GCSE or A level are exempt from charges.
2. Refunds will be made in circumstances where the teacher is absent / unavailable or the requisite number of lessons cannot be achieved.
3. Cancellation: One term's notice must be provided in writing to Mrs Chapman. No refund will be given for payments made for the remainder of the lessons in the term in which notice is given.