




Bridgewater High School

BRIDGEWATER HIGH SCHOOL

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING TRIPS POLICY

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Introduction

The purpose of this is to set out our policy on charging and remission for school activities and school visits. This takes account of Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools. Furthermore, this policy informs parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Statements and procedures

Education

As a school we will not charge for the following, although we may seek voluntary contributions as detailed below in the section 'Voluntary Contributions'.

- 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 Academy Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum or Academy Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at Bridgewater High school;
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school rather than opting to resit.

As a school we will charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a child's parent/carer wishes them to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below).

Optional Extras

Charges will be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge will 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 or Academy Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

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

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

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

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school Governing Body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities and as a Governing Body it has been decided that we may exercise this right. We accept that occasionally there will be times when voluntary contributions are sought in the supply of some materials, books, instruments or other equipment. If this is the case it will be made clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution. Also, no child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents/carers at the outset.

If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Furthermore, when making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents/carers will not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

Residential Visits

We will not charge for the following although we may seek voluntary contributions as detailed above in the section Voluntary Contributions

- 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 Academy Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We will charge for board and lodging as long as the charge does not exceed the actual cost.

Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by a student or parent/carer the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement. Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a student, 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 Principal and dependent on the situation.

Foreign Exchange Trips

We encourage foreign exchanges. However, for the purpose of our charging policy we regard exchanges as enrichment activities rather than core elements of the curriculum. However, given that part of the purpose of an exchange is to experience different educational environments we recognise that exchanges must for some or all of the time coincide with school dates. To ensure equality of access, exceptionally we may be able to provide some additional financial support for the "away leg" of the exchange. Finally, any hosting arrangements must be subject to DBS clearance.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or Academy Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by our pupil(s).

Transport

We will not charge for the following although we may seek voluntary contributions as detailed above in the section Voluntary Contributions.

- Transport for pupils to other premises where we have arranged for pupils to be educated;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Remissions and Concessions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents/carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support.
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit.
- Income related employment and support allowance.
- Universal Credit.

Pupils of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents/carers who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The Principal and Chair of Governors will authorise the remission of charges.

Inability or unwillingness to pay

Bridgewater High School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all students, and this means ensuring that no student is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that student are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the student or parents/carers of the student who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.