

Great Baddow High School



CHARGING POLICY



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RATIFIED by	:	GOVERNING BODY
REVIEW DATE	:	Spring 2020
NEXT REVIEW	:	Spring 2022

CHARGING POLICY

Guidance has been provided by the Department for Education (May 2018).

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

Main points

- School governing bodies cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of Benefits* (see 11.) of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The School believes that all pupils should have free access to the school curriculum and that no pupil will be penalised on the basis of cost.

2. EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Where possible, education provided during school hours **should** be free.

This includes not only materials and equipment but also transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity.

'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Parents / carers will find information about school hours in the prospectus or on the website.

- Schools cannot charge for:
 - 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 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 the school;
 - Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school, unless the re-sit is at the request of the pupil's parent;
- Schools can charge for:
 - any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
 - Community facilities

3. MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TUITION

Where it is not an essential part of the National Curriculum, charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition for an individual pupil (or groups of any size) provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Where this is offered, the school will agree a contract with the parent/parents of each individual outlining the obligations of both the school and the parent/parents. Payment should be made by the end of the term preceding the term when the tuition is scheduled to take place.

Should a pupil who is looked after by a local authority chose to learn an instrument (limited to one) - No charge may be made.

4. LOCKERS

Lockers are available for Years 7 to 11. The following charges and refund aspects apply to all students hiring a locker

- Payment for renting lockers will be charged annually (at the appropriate rate).
- All payments are to be made in advance.
- Some students would have paid on a once-off basis for the full 5 year term or pro-rata for a shorter period. In those cases - refunds will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for unused terms/years.
- Refunds will be given on return of the key to the school except where the amount is less than **£5** which is uneconomic to process.
- Where all student keys have been lost or mislaid and a replacement key is needed, this would be arranged by the school with the cost passed on to parents. Students and parents may arrange for additional keys to be cut at their own expense.
- All costs of repairing or replacing lockers withdrawn due to misuse, vandalism or any other reason will be met by parents.

5. PUBLIC EXAMINATION FEES

Charges will not normally be made for entering pupils for public examinations. The governing body will enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for. This will not necessarily apply if the governing body decides there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil or if the pupil's parents / carers ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered. The local authority may not override the governing body's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination.

An examination entry fee should be charged to parents / carers for:

- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the re-sit is at the request of the pupil's parent
- re-marking (a refund will be made in the event of a higher grade being awarded and the school has recovered the fees)
- a re-sit in a public examination in a subject for which the pupil has already attained his/her **target grade** or better at the first attempt
- an examination for which the student has not been prepared by the school
- the fee of a student who fails without good reason (in the judgement of the Governing Body) to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus **including non-attendance**

- The return of examination papers from the examination board
- late withdrawal of an entry for an examination
- the examination is **not on** the set list , but the school arranges for the pupil to take it
- to meet the administration costs involved in any of the above, a small fee may be payable. Details are available from the school

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. But charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in the Education Regulations.

6. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the School cannot charge for school-time activities, it may still invite parents / carers and others to make voluntary contributions to enable an activity to proceed effectively. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. 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.

All requests to parents / carers for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that the contributions are voluntary. The governing body will also make it clear that children of parents / carers who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents / carers cannot or will not make a financial contribution.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Refunds of contributions – should an activity not proceed or is cancelled in advance, refunds of amounts paid in advance will be repaid in full. Where an activity has taken place and the final total costs were substantially less than expected, refunds will be issued to parents for amounts in excess of £10.00; where the refund would be less than £10.00, parents **may** request a refund by cheque, otherwise - the small amounts would be aggregated and donated to the school's voluntary fund.

7. ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE SCHOOL

If a non-school organisation arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents/carers want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parent/carers. Parents/carers must then ask the School to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wish to take their children out of school for a family holiday. The head and governing body will decide whether this is in the pupil's best interest, bearing in mind the requirements of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations that a pupil should not be absent from school unless there are exceptional circumstances.

8. EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents / carers will only be charged for **activities** that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education. No charge will be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents / carers agree to pay. Appendix A (DfE guidance - May 2018) describes activities that can be charged for as 'optional extras'. The headteacher will decide whether to make a charge.

9. CHARGING POLICIES

If a charge is made – the individual charge per pupil will not exceed the actual cost (based on an estimated no. of students going on the trip). If further money is needed to help in hardship cases these will be taken from the school fund.

The charges may include:

- student's travel costs
- student's board and lodging costs
- materials, books, instruments and other materials
- non-teaching staff costs
- entrance fees (museums etc.)
- supply cover (see below)
- insurance and administration costs

Plus, the costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for this activity, including their travel, board and lodging or the cost of providing staff to cover absent colleagues accompanying the activity but not the cost of teaching staff already employed by the school.

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the activity as an optional extra. A contract need not be a formal document. It could be a simple letter to a teacher asking him or her to provide a service on a particular occasion.

10. EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours.

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 pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

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 pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening. Charges would then be allowed.

11. RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Special rules apply for residential activities.

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.

Example 1

A term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2

A term-time trip from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.

Charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances.

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

Free school meals or *

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit), with an annual income below £16,190
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance, income related
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999
- Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit, with a household income of £7,400 or less (after tax and not including any benefits)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

If a child is eligible for free school meals, they will remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2022.

Note: If insufficient voluntary contributions are received to cover the cost of the visit, or activity, and there is no alternative method to make up the shortfall, then the school will cancel the activity/visit. The school will make parents aware of a possible cancellation to the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received from the outset.

12. REMISSIONS

As per item 11 above.

The costs involved in the remission of board and lodgings are to be borne by the school.

13. DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Nothing in the Act prevents a charge being made to parents for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student. Wilful damage, or damage caused by misbehaviour, will be so charged.

Lost or damaged ID cards that need to be replaced will be charged at £4.00 each.

Library resources

When library resources are issued, they become the responsibility of the student until they are returned. If the resources are damaged, students will be asked to pay towards the cost of a replacement resource, this will be a reduced sum from the original. Students will receive reminders via email and tutor about resources which are issued to them. If they fail to return a resource or lose a resource, they will be charged at a reduced cost.

14. PRINTING/STATIONERY

Personal printing (if available) will be charged at 7p per colour print and 3p per Black & White Print.

15. SCHOOL MINIBUS

The school cannot charge pupils for travelling in the school minibus for normal school activities.

APPENDIX A.

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 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;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea 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; and
- 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 pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents 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 cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Therefore, no charge can 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. Parental agreement is, therefore, a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.