

Abbeyfield
School



CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Status:	Approved
Governing Committee:	Finance & Resources
Author:	Bursar & Finance Manager
Approved on:	13 th March 2019
Next Review:	March 2021

Bursar: Jessica Vaughan
jrv@abbeyfield.wilts.sch.uk
Finance Manager: Racheal Bromley
rab@abbeyfield.wilts.sch.uk 01249 464500

1. Rationale

The Board of Governors recognises that it must fulfil the legal requirements as laid down in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Regulations 1999 with regard to charging and remissions and acknowledges the following basic principles:

- 1.1. Education provided during school hours must be free. School hours do not include break and lunchtimes. This education includes materials, equipment and transport provided by the school to carry students between school and an activity. Equipment does not include uniform or PE kit but does include some protective clothing such as safety goggles. Activities in this context include sports fixtures and include trips which form an essential part of the curriculum.
- 1.2. Education outside school hours is free if it forms part of a syllabus for a prescribed examination or is part of the National Curriculum or part of the statutory Religious Education.
- 1.3. An activity which forms an essential part of the curriculum and occurs 'mostly' during normal school hours will be classed as occurring during the school day and only voluntary contributions may be invited.
- 1.4. An activity that occurs mostly outside of normal school hours will be classed as an activity outside of school hours and payment may be sought to cover costs including travel. Where a charge is made, this must not exceed the actual costs. The school must not use educational activities as a means of raising funds.
- 1.5. The school may be able to offer some subsidy for non essential trips for students in receipt of free school meals. This subsidy will normally be up to a maximum of 50% and is dependant upon all other conditions being met, e.g. with regard to behaviour, selection criteria, etc.
- 1.6. Voluntary contributions only may be invited to cover the costs of travel and tuition on residential visits that are an essential part of an examination syllabus. Every Free School Meals and Pupil Premium student is offered a percentage of financial subsidy toward the cost of trips.
- 1.7. The school will not be liable for any costs incurred by students travelling to and from work experience placements.
- 1.8. Where arrangements have been made for off site education/provision, the cost of such provision and the transport will be borne by the school. However where a student fails to attend such provision after arrangements have been made, a charge will be made to cover cancellation fees and the administrative costs involved in such cancellation.
- 1.9. Materials and ingredients for practical subjects cannot be charged for unless it is clear that the finished product will be the property of the student/parents. The school reserves the right to maintain ownership of finished products if payment for such materials has not been received or ingredients have not been provided.
- 1.10. The school may offer revision books or other useful materials for sale to the students. Such items are optional and do not materially affect the quality of education received by a student. Such items will only be distributed to students on receipt of payment.
- 1.11. Parents will be charged for all breakages, damage and lost school resources resulting from their child's behaviour or negligence whether deliberate or accidental.

- 1.12. The following terms apply in respect of payment of examination fees to external awarding bodies. These are in line with the school's examination policy.
- 1.12.1. The school will normally pay for one examination entry for each component of the subject being studied where the student has satisfied the requirements for coursework of that subject and is likely to achieve a grade.
- 1.12.2. The school will not normally support the entry of a student for an examination for which they have not prepared in school. However in some circumstances the headteacher may decide that such entry may be made, e.g. where tuition has been provided by a collaborative partner of the school. In this case responsibility for payment of examination fees may or may not rest with the school, and this will be decided on an individual basis taking all circumstances into account.
- 1.12.3. The school will not normally pay for re-sitting of examinations other than in exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will make the decision for the school to pay in exceptional circumstances, taking into account the recommendation of the Head of Department for the subject and representations made by students or their parents.
- 1.12.4. Where parents or students wish to pay for the re-sitting of examination components, full payment including late entry fees and any other administration or invigilation fees chargeable, must be made before the student is entered for the examination.
- 1.12.5. The school will not normally make amendments to examination entries, including tiers of entry, where such changes would necessitate the payment of additional examination fees.
- 1.12.6. Where students are undertaking voice or individual instrumental examinations, leading to the award of "grades", these will not be funded by the school. Responsibility for entry and payment for these exams rests with parents. This also applies to other external examinations deemed to be 'extra curricular' and would include, for example, dance examinations, fees for final assessments for Duke of Edinburgh's Awards etc.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1. The **Board of Governors** will ensure that this policy is adhered to and will settle any dispute between parents and school staff in relation to this policy. The Board of Governors' finance & resources committee may, in consultation with the headteacher, write off outstanding parental debts over £100 where there are extenuating circumstances. The decision of the finance & resources committee is final. There is no right of appeal to the full governing body. Outstanding debts may result in court proceedings being issued and, if judgement is obtained, may result in bailiffs being instructed or other forms of enforcement being taken. .
- 2.2. The **Headteacher** is responsible for the day to day implementation of this policy and any queries regarding charging should be referred to them.
- 2.3. The **Deputy Head and Assistant Head with responsibility for exams** in consultation with other members of senior team, has responsibility for decisions pertaining to examination entries.

2.4. The **School Finance Manager** is responsible for:

- 2.4.1. ensuring that charges are appropriate and at the correct level, and advising curriculum staff in this respect;
- 2.4.2. ensuring that charges comply with current VAT regulations;
- 2.4.3. obtaining invoices from G4S for repair of damage to school premises;
- 2.4.4. raising invoices for damages and other charges as appropriate in accordance with this policy;
- 2.4.5. keeping a record of outstanding debts from parents and pursuing these through the legal process if agreed by the board of governors receiving income from parents;
- 2.4.6. ensuring that all income from parents is banked promptly and that accurate records are kept of all parental income received;
- 2.4.7. keeping other relevant staff informed regarding income received and payments still outstanding;
- 2.4.8. arranging for subsidies for those students who are in receipt of free school meals, pupil premium students, LAC students and 16-19 bursary students

2.5. **Heads of department** are responsible for checking with the Finance Manager that charges are appropriate, are at the correct level and comply with current VAT regulations. Heads of departments of practical subjects must have clearly stated policies for requiring parents to supply materials or ingredients, or for the charging of finished products that go home.

2.6. **Leaders of trips/visits** have responsibility for:

- 2.6.1. establishing at an early stage whether it is appropriate to invite voluntary or compulsory financial contributions from parents for an activity or visit and before any communication is made with students or parents;
- 2.6.2. drafting up a budget plan at an early stage indicating the various costs of the activity and how this money is to be raised;
- 2.6.3. informing parents in writing of the amount and type of financial contribution required. Parents must at the same time be informed as to the educational purpose of the activity and whether participation is voluntary. If an activity relies on parental payments, it must be made clear to parents that it may not be viable if insufficient contributions are received. All trip letters are to be produced by the Finance & EVC administrator. If parents choose not to contribute to activities attracting a voluntary contribution or receive a subsidy in any form for any trip or visit, their children must not be treated any differently from those whose parents did contribute.

2.7. **The staff** are responsible for ensuring that they do not personally receive money from students but direct them to pay either by the online payment system, Parentpay, or by posting a cheque into the post box situated outside the finance office. Students must take cash to the finance office where a receipt will be issued.

2.8. **Parents** are responsible for:

- 2.8.1. ensuring that they pay any invoices for damages, examination resits, etc. promptly;

2.8.2. ensuring that there are sufficient funds in their bank account to meet cheque payments. Bank charges incurred as a result of returned cheques, for example, will be passed onto parents.

Students are responsible for making payments by using the post box situated outside the finance office for cheque payments, and handing cash to the finance office where a receipt will be issued.

3. Training

Staff will be supported in the implementation of this policy through high quality training which may be formal or informal in nature, as appropriate, bearing in mind best value.

4. Other policies

This policy should be considered in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures, including the Finance Procedures and Regulations, Examinations Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Curriculum Policy and Teaching and Learning Policy.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher will monitor the implementation and suitability of this policy and report to the Board of Governors on its effectiveness. The policy will be reviewed by the Board of Governors on a biennial basis.

This policy was agreed by the Board of Governors on 13th March 2019