

St Katherine's School



Charging For Activities, Damage & Remissions Policy

Policy Number SKP C 002

Next Review: November 2021

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Headteacher

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Chair of Governors

1.0 Rationale

The Governing Body of St. Katherine's School believe that the education of students is broadened and enhanced by visits, exchanges, sporting and cultural activities both within and outside of school time. It is the school's policy to seek voluntary contributions where these are legally allowed, but also to have regard to the individual circumstances of students whose families may find it difficult to contribute. The school has limited funds to provide financial support.

2.0 Relationship to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Equal Opportunities Policy
Examinations Policy
Trips & Visits Policy

3.0 Aims

St. Katherine's School is committed to providing the best educational opportunities to students within the funding allocation received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Where the education of students takes place wholly or mainly during school hours it should be free of charge, as legislation provides. This means that it is not possible to levy a compulsory charge for activities and/or services that are provided during the school day. Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities. There may be circumstances in which charges or part charges may be levied on parents/carers. No charges can be levied unless they are included in this policy. This policy is to clarify the position with regards to those items of expenditure raised on behalf of students for which parents/carers will either be recharged or asked for a contribution towards the cost.

4.0 Items that cannot be charged

4.1 The school cannot, by law, charge for the following items:

- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books or other equipment;
- Education provided outside these hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school;
- Examination re-sits if the student is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

4.2 However, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents/carers.

5.0 Items that may be charged

5.1 The school may charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment where the student's parents/carers wish to own them;

- Optional extras (as per 6.0 below);
- Music tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);
- Damages (as per 10.0 below);

6.0 Optional Extras

6.1 The school may make charges for specified activities that are optional extras. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge may be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - part of the National Curriculum;
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school;
 - part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s), if the student has not been prepared for the examination at the school;
- Transport that is not required to take a student to school, or to other premises where the Trust or governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;
- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with an optional extra;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers also engaged to deliver an 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.

6.2 Any charge that is made in respect of individual students may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided by the number of students taking part. It may not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Also 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 students who do not wish to participate.

6.3 Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers engaged to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

6.4 The charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra or the board and lodging.

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

7.0 Voluntary Contributions

There is nothing in the legislation to prevent the school from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the students. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Headteacher should make this clear to parents/carers from the outset. The governing body or Headteacher should also make it clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make a contribution. The School will not exclude any student from an activity simply on the basis of their parent/carer being unwilling or unable to make a contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled.

8.0 Residential Visits

8.1 The school cannot charge for:

- 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 part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

8.2 The school may charge for:

- Board and lodging, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

8.3 When the school informs parents/carers 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 for the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- 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 (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £26,000 (financial year 2012/13 based on a family with one child).
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

8.4 If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The school will make it clear to parents/carers from the outset what the policy for allocating places will be.

9.0 Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during the school day is to be free of charge, music lessons are an exception to this. Charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, for either an individual student or groups of students up to four in number, provided that the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or part of a public examination syllabus that the student is being prepared for at the school. Children In Care are entitled to free music tuition. The costs, or a proportion of the costs, for providing teaching staff for tuition outside school hours can be charged, if the tuition is not part of the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the student is being prepared for at the school. This is a permitted optional extra.

10.0 Damages

The School will always seek to recover all costs and charges incurred with regard to reinstatement after damage to school facilities, infrastructure, furniture or assets, where an individual or individuals are identified.

10.1 Charges for damages may include third party contractor costs, and school Site Team working time costs.

10.2 Where more than one individual or several individuals are identified as directly causing or contributing to damage, a percentage will be apportioned based on proven culpability.

10.3 Culpability of individuals with regard to damage liability will be established by:

- Written statements of admission by those identified.
- Corroborative written statements by witnesses.
- Review of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) footage.

10.4 Parent/Carers will be directly invoiced by the school. A staged payment period will be considered by the Headteacher on application and subject to mutual agreement. Overdue invoices (whether partially or fully outstanding) for payment will be pursued through the school/Trust for recovery.

11.0 Transport

11.1 The School, in accordance with the law, cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from the school grounds, where the Trust has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or Trust has arranged for students to be educated;
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has prepared for that examination at the school;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

11.2 The School may charge for:

- Any other transport. This is a permitted optional extra.

12.0 Remissions Policy

The Governors shall on occasion better the terms of the above remissions policy and will leave to the discretion of the Headteacher the decision as to what proportion of the costs of an activity should be charged to public or non-public funds.

12.1 In some circumstances, the Headteacher will remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable in accordance with this Charging Policy with reference to the guidance set out below. Parents who would qualify for support are those families who are in receipt of eligible benefits, or who face sudden financial hardship. Eligible benefits include Universal Credit, Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 as per 8.3 above.

12.2 Guidance for Remission of Charges:

- Satisfactory information provided by parent/carer in writing to the Headteacher
- A contribution of at least 50% from parents (only reduced in very exceptional circumstances)
- If students have had assistance previously and continued assistance will prevent others receiving a contribution
- If families have multiple costs to meet as a result of siblings in the same year group wishing to participate in the same activity
- If families have multiple costs to meet as a result of siblings in different year groups
- If there are other specific sources of funding for families in particular situations (e.g. Young Carers, Looked After Children) we may recommend these to parents as a way of meeting costs

- Requests for contributions towards overseas visits will only be considered where the activity has sound educational value directly related to the curriculum.

13.0 Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, the basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place during or outside school hours will be proportionality i.e. if more than 50% of the time is during school hours it will be deemed that the activity has taken place during school hours; if less than 50% of the time is during school hours it will be deemed that the activity has taken place outside school hours. However, a charge may only be made for an activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a student is being prepared for by the school and not part of religious education.

14.0 Non Residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on an 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 the school day. School hours do not include the midday break. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during the school day, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

15.0 Residential Visits

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. Regulations state that the school day is divided into two sessions. A 'half day' is defined as any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example: Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days and 5 School sessions. Therefore the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

17.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be undertaken through regular monitoring of expenditure provided to the Senior Leadership Team and Governors and reviewed via the Local Governing Body.