CRESTWOOD
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Charging for School Activities Policy

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Review cycle: 3 years

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities.

The Governing Body cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any maintained school
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- education provided outside of 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.
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent, and no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989). The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme;
- entry for prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

The Governing Body can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition;
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for students.

SECTION 2: DEFINITION OF IN OR OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS

EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials and equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by the school 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.

EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours). As an example, a long-distance trip might involve travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge.

By contrast, a trip that involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place outside school time. Charges would then be allowed.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or do not form part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education. In addition, no charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination (see section on examinations).

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities that can be charged for as “optional extras”.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and at midnight.

On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would last for nine half-days, include five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would count as seven half-days, include three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50 per cent or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day should be treated as spent on the trip.

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination and is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Governing bodies should also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this should be explained to them at the planning stage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, **the activity must be cancelled**. The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not, make a contribution of any kind. The school must first decide which class, or group of pupils, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity, or by general fundraising.

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS/OPTIONAL EXTRAS

If the school organises activities (including residential visits) that are deemed to be "optional extras" the school can charge for the full cost of the trip, including board and lodging for residential visits.

An optional extra does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education and is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination. The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail should always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for students whose families do not meet the full charge.

SECTION 3: CHARGING FOR VISITS

The trip organiser should always meet with a member of the school finance team to agree the following items

- The total cost of the visit
- Whether any of the cost will come from the school
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to voluntarily contribute towards the cost of the visit

- How much spending/pocket money students will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element)

Members of staff who organise trips should ensure that parents are notified as early as possible, this is important as it allows parents to make financial preparations.

LETTERS TO PARENTS

a) Activities where no charge is made
A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and references consent being given online via Arbor and must also make reference to the fact that there will be no charge for the activity.

b) Activities within school hours - Voluntary contributions required
A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and references consent being given online via Arbor and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit. The letter should be based on the following wording
To cover the cost of the (eg transport/entrance fees) we need to ask for a voluntary contribution of £…. If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please write to the Head teacher in confidence who will consider each application on its own merit. In the event of insufficient contributions the trip may have to be cancelled.
The school will use the following criteria to establish whether financial support should be provided,

As far as practically possible, pupils should not be excluded from taking part in educational visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

1. All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Headteacher or, in her absence, the Business Manager, in advance of the visit.

2. To be eligible for assistance, the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of at least one of the following benefits:-

    a) Income Support
    b) income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
    c) income-related Employment and Support Allowance
    d) support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
    e) the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
    f) Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
    g) Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
    h) Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

3. In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments or would consider any individual application on its own merit.

Activities outside of normal school hours/optional extras
A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and references consent being given online via Arbor and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit. The letter should state that the activity is an optional extra and the cost of the trip is £____

Information for optional extras and activities outside of normal school hours

- Current legislation permits the school to ask for the full cost of the visit.
- Current legislation does not require the school to arrange subsidies for the visit.
- If insufficient numbers of students opt for the visit, then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- Regular payments must be made towards the cost of the trip as stated in the trip letter to parents.
- Any outstanding payments must be discussed by the parent/carer with the finance department to ensure students can go on the trip.
- Refunds of deposits, full payments and partial payments in relation to cancellations will be subject to a review by the finance department and will depend on:-
  a) any costs incurred for cancellation through the travel agency/trip organiser
  b) whether a replacement traveller could be found

SECTION 4: INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education (DfE) to specify circumstances where charges can be made for music tuition. The regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

SECTION 5: INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask for a voluntary contribution for ingredients or items made or produced within school.

SECTION 6: BROKEN EQUIPMENT/DAMAGE (REPLACEMENT)

The Governors will allow the school to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students.

SECTION 7: EXAMINATIONS

The Governing Body may recover any fee in respect of the entry of a registered student at the school for a public examination in any syllabus for that examination either:-

1. Where the school has not prepared the student for the examination, fees will be charged in full together with the appropriate administration charges.

2. The student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus.
3. For a resit examination taken at the student's request.
4. Where a student opts to take an examination against the school's advice
5. For non-attendance at an examination without good reason.
6. Where a result is contested at a student's request.

SECTION 8: SCHOOL MINIBUS

Charges will not be made for transporting pupils to or from the school premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated or in connection with an educational visit.

Parents can make an application for transport to and from school on the school minibus service. This is subject to available spaces and current routes covered. The cost is currently £250 per term, subject to review.

SECTION 9: SCHOOL UNIFORM

Applications should be made to the school for support. In general, a school blazer, tie and PE shirt will be available from Skoolkit to students who qualify for pupil premium, or where parents are in receipt of benefits listed in section 3. If none of these conditions apply but the parents are suffering financial hardship, applications will be considered on an individual basis.

SECTION 10: SURPLUS

Where charges have been levied for activities and a surplus of income over expenditure generated, refunds will be made in line with Hampshire County Council guidance.

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