

Batley Girls' High School - Visual Arts College

Policy Document

Charging and Remissions

Produced by: WJB

Date: November 2014

Date of review: November 2017

Introduction

The policy of the governors of Batley Girls' High School is to provide free education for all attending pupils. This policy is implemented within the letter of the law, whilst also embracing the spirit of it.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all students have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum and sets out the charges and remissions for activities.

Outline

Visits

Where visits are arranged, either as an integral part of a particular syllabus or to enhance pupils' learning experience, parents may be asked to contribute towards the cost. However, legislation states that a pupil should not be debarred from a visit if a parent does not wish to contribute. In cases of family hardship, parents may apply, in confidence, to the visit leader, Co-Heads or Governing Body for exemption from such contributions.

If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising, and not by charging the paying pupils more.

This may mean that there comes a point when a trip is not viable if sufficient contributions are not forthcoming, and the trip may need to be cancelled.

Other Activities

Batley Girls' High School believes that pupils should be given as many varied learning experiences as possible, and will do its utmost to ensure that all students have the opportunity to benefit from such experiences. For other activities such as music tuition, field trips, concert and theatre visits, the following table below indicates the charges that will be made. It also covers charges related to examination fees in specific cases.

Activity	Comment
Individual instrumental music tuition that is over and above the national curriculum, and/or an approved examination syllabus.	Although currently provided free of charge, a charge may be made per lesson. This will be reviewed annually. Parents in receipt of certain benefits could be eligible for a reduction of fees. Examination fees are paid by parents.
Transport to work experience	Parents/students shall pay directly (except stated pupils where the statement refers to transport).
Activities outside school time not related to statutory duties.	Charges may be levied.

Board and lodging on residential visits.	A charge will be made, although these may be reduced where families receive benefits and/or students are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.
Re-scrutiny of exam results; parental request.	A charge will be made.
Exam entry for prescribed exam for which pupils have not been prepared by school.	A charge will be made.
Entry for an exam which is not on prescribed list where preparation takes place outside school hours.	A charge will be made.
Recovery of wasted exam fees.	A charge will be made.
Educational visits and field trips.	Parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution.
Ingredients/materials for practical subjects	Parents encouraged to provide materials for practical subjects, but no child must be disadvantaged because of parents' inability/reluctance to pay. Where necessary, school will pay.
Lost school equipment, books etc.	Parents may be expected to replace or purchase items of lost property.
Breakages and damages to school buildings, furniture or property	Parents to be made aware that wilful damage to school buildings or property may be charged to parents by the school.

Charges for Optional Extras

Optional Activities Outside of the School Day

Batley Girls' High School may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example trips to the theatre.

Participation on any optional extra will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement will therefore be a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra. Parents may also be requested to pay a non-refundable deposit.

Activities Partly During School Hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside of school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either outside or inside school hours. If 50% or more of the activity, including travel time, falls during school hours, it will be deemed to take place during school hours. However, if 50% or more of the activity including travel time falls outside of school hours it will be deemed to take place outside of school hours and a charge can be made under optional extras.

Music Tuition

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 (available here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2239/contents/made>) came into force on 1 September 2007. These regulations provide for the charging of tuition in groups of any appropriate size and allow charging for vocal tuition. However, instrumental and vocal tuition, which is part of the national curriculum cannot be charged for .

Other Activities During School Hours

Non-school organisations, such as theatre groups, may be asked by school to arrange an activity to take place during school hours. Such organisations may charge parents who want their children to join in with the activity. While schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they can still ask parents to make voluntary contributions to help school funds go further where this is the source of funding. While it is legitimate for the school to say a particular activity cannot take place if sufficient voluntary funding is not forthcoming, no pupil may be left out of such an activity because her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Parents who do not wish their child to attend must ask the school to agree to their child's absence. The Co-Heads and Governing Body must decide whether this is in the pupil's best interests.

Public Examinations

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in regulations. The Governing Body must enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus for which the school has prepared the pupil. This does not need to apply if the Governing Body thinks there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil, or if the pupil's parents ask, in writing, that the pupil should not be entered.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, 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 regulations.

Residential Visits

Residential activities are treated in a similar way to educational activities that take place wholly or partly outside school hours. A residential visit counts as falling within school-time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to at least 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity.

For a residential visit that takes place largely during school-time, or that is essential to the curriculum provided by the school, no charge can be made for the education element or the cost of travel. Charges can be made for board and lodging.

School Mini-Bus

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

Charges for use of the school mini-bus are made in accordance with the Minibus booking form.

Voluntary Contributions

The staff and governors recognise the importance of activities, that while may not be an essential part of the curriculum, add value and enjoyment to the experiences of the pupils. However it may be necessary for voluntary contributions to be sought for such activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example Extended Learning Day activities.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Pupils of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

Calculating charges

Where charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Remissions

Pupils, whose parents are in receipt of the support payments will in addition to having a free lunch entitlement, be entitled to a remission for any charges for board and lodging for residential visits which are part of the National Curriculum.

Remissions may also be available for residential visits that are not part of a prescribed examination or basic curriculum situation, or for trips and other activities which are part of extended school provisions.

Support Benefits

Remissions will be made as above for pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (the government plans to prescribe these circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out).
- Income support.
- Income-based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child tax credit, provided that the family's income as assessed by HMRC does not exceed certain limits.
- The guarantee element of state pension credit.
- An income-related employment and support allowance.

At the discretion of the Co-Heads other cases of hardship where parents are not in receipt of any of the above support may be considered to remit charges wholly or in part of.