



THE BISHOPS' BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY

All of the policies that shape our lives and daily practice at Bishops` are informed by our Christian vision and values: to know, nurture and inspire our students to be the best version of themselves so that they can live `life in all its fullness` (Jn 10: 10)`.

Is this policy statutory?	Yes
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Committee	Resources

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1. Introduction

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of this legislation and guidance by setting out the School's policy on the charging and remission for school activities and school visits.

The policy sets out those things, which may be charged for, and those that may not. The policy also sets out the School's remission policy. Despite some items not being subject to charging, the school, in common with most, if not all, other schools, has a voluntary contribution policy (below). It is recognised in this policy that some activities will not take place unless voluntary contributions are made.

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for School Activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance Handbook'
- The Trust's Funding Agreement
- ESFA (2023) 'Academy trust handbook 2023' (ATH)

2. Education

The school will not charge for:

- Any admissions application
- Education provided during school hours¹, subject to the section on Music Tuition
- Education provided outside school hours if it is an essential 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, although the school will seek a voluntary contribution in some circumstances;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the student's parents.
- 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 by school.

The school can charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music and vocal tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities
- Provision of information within the scope of the freedom of information

¹ The definition of "during school hours" is set out in Annex 1

3. Optional Extras (as defined in Annex 2)

The school will charge for optional extras. Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges (subject to the school's Remission Policy, see below). Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

The intention is for the charge of optional extras to match the cost of supply. The member of staff responsible for delivering an optional extra will estimate the cost of the optional extra and divide it by the number of students who will receive the optional extra, i.e. the cost will not include an element of subsidy for any students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the costs of alternative provision for those not participating.

In calculating the cost of an optional extra, the school may take into account the following:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- Non-teaching staff
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the 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
- Administration charges including bank charges for online payments
- Transport, other than that required to take the student to school or other premises where the school has arranged for the student to be provided with education.

Whilst it is the intention for the charge for the optional extra to match the cost of supply, where the final costs do not precisely match the estimate there will generally not be any subsequent adjustment. Any surplus will be paid into the school reserves and any deficit will be absorbed by the school reserves.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

Students will not be invited to apply for optional extras, which require payment if there are debts owed to the school for previous chargeable activities they have taken part in where the due date of payment for those activities has passed. This includes payments due for transport, school meals and chargeable music tuition.

4. Consumable Materials

The School will charge for items such as cooking ingredients or materials needed for a technology lesson. In doing so, it is proposed that the student will be free to take the finished product home. Textbooks are provided free of charge unless parents desire their child to own them. In some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

5. Music Tuition

Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided individually or to groups of any size, if the tuition is at the request of the student's parents.

The charges will be fixed annually by the Business Manager in consultation with Head of Music, and will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition

6. Examination Entries

A charge will not be levied for the first entry for a public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school. We may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but the student was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the school arranged for the student to take it.
- A student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.

If payment is required, the student will only be entered for the examination once payment has been received.

A charge will be levied for students re-sitting an examination unless the student has been prepared for the re-sit at the school.

A charge will be levied for the cost of individual invigilation where behaviour is deemed to be a risk of disruption to other students.

If a student or their parents consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the student or their parents. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/student will have their fees refunded.

7. Transport

The School will not charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from other premises where the school has arranged for students to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when the pupil has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an education visit

8. Damage/ Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

9. Residential Visits

We will not 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

We will charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if the education provided by the visit is part of the national curriculum and they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit – if applied for 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 receive)
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance
- Working Tax Credit run on-paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

10. Education partly during school hours

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

Residential visits: If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, we will not charge for the activity.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

11. Charging and Voluntary Contribution

We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution and notify parents as to whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled, and this will be made clear to parents.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

12. Other charges

The Headteacher, Resources Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an Ofsted report.

13. Remissions Policy

We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a need's basis, and if the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Universal Credit
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year

- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

To request assistance, parents should contact the school business manager via reception.

14. School trip refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits. In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the unlikely event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

15. Income Generation

In line with ESFA's ATH (Academy Trust Handbook), the school will set fees for chargeable services at full cost and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

16. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

Our Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

Annex 1: How to determine if an activity is in school time

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, the following defines whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

Non-residential activities

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.

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 (even if some activities take place late in the evening). 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, whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day,

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from 14:00 on Wednesday to 21:00 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: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from 17:00 on Thursday until 21:00 on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Annex 2 Definition of “Optional extras”

Optional Extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) essential to fulfilling the National Curriculum requirements
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or

c) an essential part of religious education

- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to or from school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

Annex 3: Diagram on charging policy for visits

