



CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

(Based on the guidance provided in the 'Governors' Guide to the Law')

The Local Authority or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging. The Governing Body's policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

Voluntary Contributions:

The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- * any activity which takes place during school hours;
- * school equipment;
- * school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

Residential Trips:

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision. However, the school cannot charge for the educational or travel elements.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- * Income Support;
- * Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- * support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- * Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed the specified current limit
- * the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

Minibus:

Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel for a charge in a school's minibus and only where a permit has been issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. This permit is not required where no charge (in cash or kind) is made. Any charge made may cover the costs of running the vehicle, but must not make a profit.

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Next Review: June 2016