

Belmont School Charging Policy for Pupil Related Activities



Authorised:
Headteacher

Authorised:
Chair of Governors

Date Approved: 20/6/17

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Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs, educational visits and residential trips can make towards pupils' personal and social education.

Any charges made by the school must meet the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1996. The Governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges.

Any eventuality not covered by this policy will be considered by the Headteacher and Governors and a decision made in line with the LA Policy on Charging.

Aim

We aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum for all pupils within our care. The education provided wholly or mainly during school hours is free. However, it is recognised that many educationally valuable activities have been, and will continue to be, dependent on financial contributions in whole or part from parents. Without that financial support the School would find it impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of educational experiences provided for the pupils.

Day and part day educational visits

Examples – swimming, visits to local museums or leisure centres.

For visits occurring during school time, or required because of recognised public examinations, the National Curriculum or the law on RE, there is no obligation for parents to make any payment. However, it is standard procedure to request a voluntary contribution from parents to meet the cost of the visit on the understanding that where voluntary contributions are insufficient to cover the costs involved, the visit or activity may be cancelled and refunds will be given.

Every effort will be made to keep these costs reasonable, it is, however, not the intention to make a profit.

Voluntary costs

Contributions made are entirely voluntary. Parents are assured that their children will not be prevented from taking part in an activity just because the parents are unable or unwilling to make a financial contribution. This condition applies to all voluntary contributions. However, in the event of insufficient voluntary contributions being made the activity may have to be cancelled and refunds will be given.

There is no legal restriction on the way the school calculates costs. Parents will be informed of the costs to be incurred in any visit e.g. admission charges, travel costs etc. prior to the activity taking place.

Residential visits

For Residential visits within school hours which are not optional extras: parents will normally be charged for the full cost of board and lodging during any residential visit deemed to take place within school hours or required for the purposes of a recognised public examination, the National Curriculum or the discharge of responsibilities relating to Religious Education.

Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make an application to the Head teacher. See REMISSION OF CHARGES (below).

Initial letters home should make a distinction between the obligatory charge for board and lodging and the voluntary contribution towards the other costs.

For Residential visits deemed to take place outside school hours, and with no examination or National Curriculum requirements:

Where the residential visit takes place largely within school hours an obligatory charge may legally be made for the board and lodgings part but a voluntary contribution may be requested for any money over and above this. The letter sent home to parents must clearly indicate the distinction between the obligatory charge and the voluntary contribution elements of the whole charge.

The school will make a straightforward enquiry about the number of parents prepared to meet an obligatory charge for the cost of the visit (i.e. board and lodging + allowable costs) before the visit is planned in detail.

REMISSION OF CHARGES:

The law states that children from parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- 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) does not exceed the current published Inland Revenue Threshold.
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit; and
- an income related Employment and Support Allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

Similarly "if the school is aware of other children whose parents would find difficulty in meeting a particular charge it will be for the Governors to decide whether they wish to entertain requests from such parents for a reduction or waiving of the charges."

The Head will be given the delegated responsibility to consider such cases.

Extended schools activities

A nominal charge will be made for extra-curricular activities occurring outside normal school hours e.g. breakfast club, football and arts & crafts activities.

Cost of teachers accompanying visits

For visits within school time the cost of accompanying staff will be included in the calculation of the voluntary contribution by parents required for the visit to take place. For residential visits the school will include the cost of accompanying staff in their calculation of the charges to be met by parents, provided that the teachers have been engaged specifically for this purpose.

Classroom materials

No charge is made for materials and equipment. However, where parents would like to possess a finished article, the school reserves the right to make a small charge for the materials used.

Parents of pupils who lose or damage school books or equipment may be asked to pay towards the cost of replacement or repair.

Breakage/damage/loss of school property

Students breaking, damaging or defacing equipment or any part of the school premises may be asked to pay all or part of any direct cost incurred by the school in repairing damage. Charges may also be made for any equipment, books or replacement of locker keys or door entry fobs lost by students to enable replacements to be obtained.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Governors Finance Committee and may be amended if appropriate.

Its implementation is seen as the responsibility of all staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the Senior Management Team on behalf of the Governors.