

# Great Baddow High School



## CHARGING POLICY



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RATIFIED by	:	GOVERNING BODY
REVIEW DATE	:	Spring 2017
NEXT REVIEW	:	Spring 2019

### CHARGING POLICY

The law on charging for school activities is set out in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. Guidance has been provided by the Department for Education (October 2014).

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

#### Main points

- School governing bodies cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Schools must ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of Benefits\* (see 11.) of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

#### 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The School believes that all pupils should have free access to the school curriculum and that no pupil will be penalised on the basis of cost.

#### 2. EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

**Where possible**, education provided during school hours **should** be free. This includes not only materials and equipment but also transport provided in school hours 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. Parents / carers will find information about school hours in the prospectus or on the website.

#### 3. MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TUITION

Where it is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum, charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition for an individual pupil (or groups of up to four) provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Where this is offered, the school will agree a contract with the parent/parents of each individual outlining the obligations of both the school and the parent/parents. Payment should be made by the end of the term preceding the term when the tuition is scheduled to take place.

#### 4. LOCKERS

Lockers are available for Years 7 to 11. The following charges and refund aspects apply to all students hiring a locker

- Payment for renting lockers will be charged (at the appropriate rate) on a once-off basis for the full 5 year term or pro-rata for a shorter period. All payments are to be made in advance.
- Refunds will be given on return of the key to the school except where the amount is less than **£5** which is uneconomic to process. Refunds will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for unused terms/years.
- Where all student keys have been lost or mislaid and a replacement key is needed, this would be arranged by the school with the cost passed on to parents. Students and parents may arrange for additional keys to be cut at their own expense.
- All costs of repairing or replacing lockers withdrawn due to misuse, vandalism or any other reason will be met by parents.

#### 5. PUBLIC EXAMINATION FEES

Charges will not normally be made for entering pupils for public examinations. The governing body will enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for. This will not necessarily apply if the governing body decides there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil or if the pupil's parents / carers ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered. The local authority may not override the governing body's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination.

An examination entry fee should be charged to parents / carers for:

- re-marking (a refund will be made in the event of a higher mark being awarded and the school has recovered the fees)
- a re-sit in a public examination in a subject for which the pupil has already attained his/her **target grade** or better at the first attempt.
- an examination for which the student has not been prepared by the school;
- the fee of a student who fails without good reason (in the judgement of the Governing Body) to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus **including non-attendance**.
- The return of examination papers from the examination board
- late request for certification
- late withdrawal of an entry for an examination
- late change of tier for an examination
- the examination is **not on** the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it
- to meet the administration costs involved in any of the above, a small fee may be payable. Details are available from the school

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. But 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 the Education Regulations.

## 6. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the School cannot charge for school-time activities, it may still invite parents / carers and others to make voluntary contributions to enable an activity to proceed effectively. All requests to parents / carers for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that the contributions are voluntary. The governing body will also make it clear that children of parents / carers who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents / carers, it will 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, then it will be cancelled. No pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents / carers cannot or will not make a financial contribution.

**Refunds of contributions** – should an activity not proceed or is cancelled in advance, refunds of amounts paid in advance will be repaid in full. Where an activity has taken place and the final total costs were substantially less than expected, refunds will be issued to parents for amounts in excess of £10.00; where the refund would be less than £10.00, parents **may** request a refund by cheque, otherwise - the small amounts would be aggregated and donated to the school's voluntary fund.

## 7. ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE SCHOOL

If a non-school organisation arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents/carers want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parent/carers. Parents/carers must then ask the School to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wish to take their children out of school for a family holiday. The head and governing body will decide whether this is in the pupil's best interest, bearing in mind the requirements of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations that a pupil should not be absent from school unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## 8. EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents / carers will only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education. No charge will be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents / carers agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities that can be charged for as 'optional extras'. The **headteacher** will decide whether to make a charge.

## 9. CHARGING POLICIES

If a charge is made – the individual charge per pupil will not exceed the actual cost (based on an estimated no. of students going on the trip). If further money is needed to help in hardship cases these will be taken from the school fund.

The charges may include:

- student's travel costs
- student's board and lodging costs
- materials, books, instruments and other materials
- non-teaching staff costs
- entrance fees (museums etc.)
- supply cover (see below)
- insurance and administration costs

Plus, the costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for this activity, including their travel, board and lodging or the cost of providing staff to cover absent colleagues accompanying the activity but not the cost of teaching staff already employed by the school.

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the activity as an optional extra. A contract need not be a formal document. It could be a simple letter to a teacher asking him or her to provide a service on a particular occasion.

## **10. 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 much 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 which 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.

## **11. 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 24-hour 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 pm on Sunday would last for nine half-days, including five school sessions, and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9 pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, including three school sessions, and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50% or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day will be treated as being spent on the trip.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances. When the School informs parents about a forthcoming visit, it will make it clear that parents/carers who can prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

### **Free school meals or \***

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- 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 £16,190 (financial year 2013/14);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

## **12. REMISSIONS**

As per item 11 above.

## **13. DAMAGE TO PROPERTY**

Nothing in the Act prevents a charge being made to parents for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student. Wilful damage, or damage caused by misbehaviour, will be so charged.

## **14. SCHOOL MINIBUS**

**The school cannot charge pupils for travelling in the school minibus for normal school activities.**