

Wadebridge School



FINANCE POLICY

Appendix 9

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Document Governance	
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Wadebridge School Charging Policy

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the requirements of section 457 of the Education Act, 1996 as amended by section 200 of the Education Act 2002.

There are four principles underlying the provisions on charging:

- That education in schools should be free.
- That activities offered wholly or mainly during normal school teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- That there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education, but that schools have the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
- That schools have the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

1. The Policy

The Trustees recognise that there are a number of activities which will only take place if parental contributions are available but it stresses that no child should be excluded from any activity of agreed educational significance organised by the school because of the inability or unwillingness of their parents to pay such a contribution.

All payments should be made in advance of the activity.

2. Optional visits wholly or mainly outside school hours.

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges, meals and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some pupils to go on the visit without payment or to cover teachers' travel costs, where a separate contract is issued.

The Trustee's policy on charges for school visits outside school hours is that the visit will proceed only if all those who wish to go pay the full costs. Where the Headteacher considers the educational value of the visit to be significant then individual cases may be considered by the Trustees for support. Support for charges may come from the Main School Budget or the School Fund Account and the Trustees will set aside a limited annual budget for this purpose.

3. Visits wholly or mainly during school hours.

It is the intention of the Trustees to invite voluntary contributions toward the cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly during school hours and which may, or may not, be provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and may, or may not, be required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some pupils to go on the visit without payment or to cover teachers' travel costs. The suggested amount for voluntary contributions should take into account all known and some contingency costs associated with the visit.

4. Board and lodging charges on residential visits.

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of board and lodging on visits taking place wholly or mainly during school hours, or if out of school hours, provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education.

Where the parents are in receipt of income support, jobseeker's allowance (income based), child tax credit (but only when the recipient does not also receive working tax credit), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or personal independent payments, the board and lodging charges must be remitted, and this cost will have to be met from within the school's funds (either delegated or private). The costs of transport, insurance, admission charges, etc. incurred during residential trips may not, however, be charged, although voluntary contributions may, of course, be requested and could become a necessary prerequisite for the visit taking place.

5. Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument.

It is not the intention of the Trustees to charge for such tuition where it is provided by Wadebridge School staff, whether in or out of school hours. However where tuition or ensemble activities are provided by external agencies and peripatetic teachers a charge may be made to pupils concerned.

6. Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school. It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of the re-sit.

7. Entry to examinations which are not prescribed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State.

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of the entry, unless the Trustees agreed advice from the Headteacher that it would be appropriate for the examinations to be funded by the school

8. Charges for ingredients, materials and equipment.

Schools must be prepared to provide any ingredients, materials, equipment needed for the delivery of the curriculum. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash, or in kind, can be encouraged to do so, on a voluntary basis. The school may charge for, or invite parents to supply, ingredients, materials and equipment if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Cash payments from students should be recorded in departmental sales registers which should be signed by the teacher and passed with the cash to the school bursar. Receipts are to be retained within the sales registers.

9. Charges for breakages and fines.

The Headteacher, at her discretion, will on behalf of the Trustees ask parents, via letter, to pay for damage to equipment or property caused by their child.

10. Recovery of unpaid charges.

Sums payable by parents for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they had agreed, or for board and lodging, are recoverable as civil debts.

11. Communications with parents

The Trustees have agreed to write to parents for any activities that seek a contribution.

Definitions.

The most important definition concerns whether an activity takes place within, or out of, school hours.

- If the number of school sessions missed by the pupils is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours. If the number of school sessions is 50% or more of the number of half days, the activity is deemed to take place during school hours.

Numbers of half days, or of school sessions, are to be rounded up as follows:

- Where 6 or more hours in a half day is spent on a residential visit the whole of that half day counts as having been spent on the visit; where half or more of a school session is devoted to a residential visit the entire session counts as having been spent on the visit.

The DfE Guide to the Law states that no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials, equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the school 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. Full details are in Chapter 16 of the Guide - Charging for school activities and includes information on the following:

- Education during school hours.
- Musical instrument tuition.
- Voluntary contributions.
- Activities not run by the school
- Education outside school hours.
- Charging policies.
- Education partly during school hours.
- Residential activities.
- Public examinations.
- School minibuses.