

POLICY ON CHARGES FOR ACTIVITIES

The Education Reform Act sets out the law on charging for school activities by which we are all bound. The school wishes to provide for all pupils the best possible educational opportunities available within the funds allocated by the Education Authority. The law states very clearly that education during normal school hours is to be free of any compulsory charge to parents and the school warmly endorses that principle and is committed to uphold the legal requirements.

It is recognised, however, that many educationally valuable activities have been and will continue to be dependent on financial contributions in whole or in part from parents. Without that financial support, the school would find it quite impossible to maintain the quality and breadth of the educational programme provided for pupils. The law allows us to ask for voluntary financial support and Governors will attempt to keep this to a reasonable minimum and ensure, as far as possible that all children are able to take part, irrespective of their circumstances.

The law recognises that charges may be made to parents in certain defined circumstances provided that the school has identified the activities for which charges will be made and has explained the basis on which charges may be reduced or waived for certain pupils. The Governing Body of The Chantry School has decided that until further notice its policy will be as follows:

1. Day Visits

For visits occurring during school time the school will invite a voluntary contribution from parents to meet costs. For visits outside school time parents will be charged for all allowable costs. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head.

Allowable costs include;

- (a) The pupil's travel and subsistence costs.
- (b) Materials, books, instruments and other equipment.
- (c) Non-teaching staff.
- (d) Costs of teaching staff where separately engaged under a contract for services for the visit or activity.
- (e) Entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.
- (f) Insurance costs.
- (g) SchoolComms transaction charges

Where the trip is considered a reward e.g. whole school Drayton Manor trip, rather than of educational benefit the charge can be considered a compulsory one and therefore parents will be expected to pay unless hardship is approved.

2. Residential Visits During School Time

The school will invite voluntary contributions from parents to meet costs other than children's board and lodgings. Parents will be charged for the full cost of children's board and lodgings. However, board and lodging charges may be waived for children whose parents make application to the Head.

3. Residential Visits Outside School Time

Parents will be charged for the full cost of the visit, including all allowable costs listed under item 1 and board and lodging. Charges may be waived or reduced for children whose parents make application to the Head.

4. Prescribed Visits

Any visit required because of recognised public examinations, the national curriculum or the law on religious education - As (2) above.

5. Instrumental Music

Instrumental lessons are charged at £13 for a 30 minute individual lesson. Group lessons are also available for reduced fees. Parents are invoiced by Worcestershire Instrumental Service or the Tutor direct. Instruments can be hired for a small termly fee from the Worcestershire Instrumental Service.

6. Classroom Materials

There is usually no charge for classroom materials or equipment. However, for certain practical activities parents may be invited to provide materials or ingredients on a voluntary basis. Where parents would like to possess the finished product, the school reserves the right to charge the cost or require the supply of the necessary materials.

7. Examination Fees

- a) The school will pay the entry fee for all prescribed examinations except:
 - (i) Where the Governors consider that there are educational reasons why the pupils should not be entered or where the parents have so requested in writing.
 - (ii) Where the school has not prepared the pupil for the particular examination.
- (b) If a pupil (with parental agreement) is entered for a non-prescribed examination then parents may be charged for the entry fee together with any associated charges.
- (c) The school reserves the right to recover from parents the costs of examination entry fee(s), should the pupil fail to complete (without good reason) the required course work or sit the final examinations).

8. Charges Levied on Parents by a Third Party, (e.g. Travel Company).

These charges lie outside the legal provisions.

9. Work Experience / Community Service

There is no requirement that the School meet the costs of pupils who travel direct from their home to an activity sanctioned (but not provided) by the School.

10. Charges for use of Telephone, Photocopying and Other Facilities

When staff do approach with requests for private use of any school facility, charges will be determined by the Headteacher. Payments will be administered by the Finance Officer.

11. Financial Support

Where it is demonstrated that a pupil would benefit from an activity or resources the charges for which the parents would be unable to meet the Government has funded the school Pupil Premium which will be used for such cases. Applications will be assessed and approved by the Headteacher and the system is detailed further in appendix I. The majority of pupils where this will be applicable will be on the free school meals list but others outside this list may be identified as 'financial hardship'.

12. Review

The Governors of the school are required to keep their policy under review. The review will take place annually.