



The Castle Partnership Trust

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Charging & Remissions Policy

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Due for review: Autumn Term 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirement of the 1996 Education Act and The Education Regulations 1999, the Board of Directors is required to state their policy with regard to charges and possible remission that apply within the Trust. In preparing this policy full account has been taken of the DfE guidance document Charging for School Activities (May 2018).

By law, children may not be charged for activities that take place during the school day. Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions but if they do not pay, their child cannot be prevented from participating, should the activity go ahead. In any request for voluntary payments, it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- There is no obligation to make any contribution; and
- Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

The Trust has special arrangements for those students eligible for free school meals. The areas below that specifically differ in respect of these students have been indicated with an asterisk (*). The Trust's Pupil Premium policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

Understanding of this policy is greatly enhanced with an understanding of the DfE's definition of what constitutes "during school hours" and what constitutes "outside school hours". The following passage is extracted from DfE guidance:

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

3. AIMS

The aims of the Charging Policy are to:-

- (i) Maintain the right to free school education.
- (ii) Enable all students to take full advantage of the activities provided by the Trust.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Charging Policy are:-

- (i) To ensure that activities offered in school time should be available to all students regardless of their parents'/carers' ability to help meet the cost.
- (ii) To identify those activities for which charges may be levied.

- (iii) To determine which charges will be remitted for parents experiencing hardship.
- (iv) To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activity organised by the school either during or outside school hours.
- (v) To ensure that the operation of the Policy is systematically reviewed and the findings acted upon.

5. **CHARGING**

It is the Policy of the Trust:-

5.1 For Activities during School Hours (see definition)

- (i) To levy a charge for ingredients or materials in practical subjects if they wish to keep the finished product. *
- (ii) To levy a charge for the provision of music instrument tuition to students, either individually or in small groups, outside of statutory music curriculum time. *
- (iii) To levy a charge for residential activities. Governors will remit such charges to parents/carers in receipt of appropriate benefits and support other parents in financial need. *
- (iv) To levy a charge for examination entries where:-
 - (a) the Trust has not prepared students for the examination in the year for which the entry is made; or
 - (b) a student has failed, for no good reason, to complete the requirements of the examination (eg fails to submit coursework); or
 - (c) the school does not support the need for an exam to be retaken or remarked.
- (v) To levy a charge for any other activities as considered appropriate, taking account of the following:
 - (a) Voluntary contributions will be invited if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education. *

- (b) Governors will remit such charges to parents/carers in receipt of appropriate benefits and, in very exceptional circumstances, support other parents/carers in financial need. (See policy section 5.)
- (vi) The Governors reserve the right to seek reparation from parents/carers where their children cause breakages or damage to school property or lose school equipment.

5.2 (i) **For Activities outside School Hours (see definition)**

To levy a charge for activities provided outside school hours taking account of the following:-

- (c) Voluntary contributions will be invited if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.*
- (d) Governors will remit such charges to parents/carers in receipt of appropriate benefits and, in very exceptional circumstances, support other parents/carers in financial need. (See Policy section 5).
- (e) A number of specific after school activities are arranged and funded by the school to encourage participation, as part of the school's extensive enrichment programme.
- (f) The Trust plans for all its activity budgets to break-even but inevitably sometimes surpluses are made. The school policy is that, for economic reasons, excess payment refunds of less than £10 per student are not made; any surplus amount over that figure being refunded after the activity has been completed.

5.3 **For Activities not part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education**

Participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet appropriate costs. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

5.4 **For All Activities**

- (i) Voluntary contributions are requested from parents/carers for school activities in or out of school time but activities may not go ahead if there is insufficient voluntary funding.

- (ii) Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- (iii) The school may seek voluntary contributions from parents/carers (including the cost of travel for accompanying teachers) for any school activity but:-
 - (a) such contributions are genuinely voluntary;
 - (b) students will not be treated differently according to whether parents/carers have made a contribution.

6. **REMISSION**

It is the Policy of the Governing Body:-

- (i) To remit charges for board and lodging to parents in receipt of appropriate benefits.
- (ii) To delegate to the Headteacher the determination of any individual case arising from the implementation of the Policy.

7. **RESOURCES**

The Governing Body will agree a fund within the budget to support this Policy. "Unofficial" funds may be utilised to support school activities.

8. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- (i) Authority for day-to-day management of the fund will be delegated to the respective Headteacher.
- (ii) Staff organising activities must do so within the provisions of this Policy. Plans, at the draft stage, should be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration and approval and costings should be checked with the Finance Team.
- (iii) The respective Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Policy.