



St Edward's
RC/CE VA School

Charging and Remissions Policy

**Reviewed and Approved by Business and Premises Committee
On: 17 October 2017**

**Reviewed and Ratified at the St Edward's FGB
On: 14 December 2017**

Next review date: December 2020

Member of SLT responsible: Mrs M Lane

Contents

1. Key Points
2. Who does this policy apply to
3. School Charging
 - a/ Education
 - b/ Optional Extra
 - c/ Voluntary Contributions
 - d/ Music Tuition
 - e/ Transport
 - f/ Charging and Remissions Policies
 - g/ Residential Visits
 - h/ Education partly during school hours
4. Student Borrowing

1. Key points

- School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, 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/carers on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 6 of this document of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits. St Edward's do this on each individual visit.

2. Who does the policy apply to?

The policy applies to all staff, parents/carers/students and Governors of St Edward's School

3. School Charging

a/ Education

School governing bodies and local authorities, **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school (paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process);
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum¹, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/carer;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the student's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page 4);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 5);
- community facilities (under s.27(1) of the Education Act 2002)

¹ It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents/carers.

b/ Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the national curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parent/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parent/carer agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

c/ Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or headteacher should make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. The governing body or headteacher must also make it clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no student should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents/carers. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents/carers at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents/carers must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents/carers as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents/carers when requesting contributions.

d/ Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/carer. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a student who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

e/ Transport

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the
- local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and transport provided in connection with an educational visit;

f/ Charging and Remissions Policies

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.

The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents/carers need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents/carers. At St Edward's this is done on an individual basis by letter / email to parents / carers of the student being offered optional activity.

The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school or local authority propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those students whose parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits.

g/ Residential Visits

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours (See section 452 of the Education Act 1996 for guidance as what counts as during school hours);
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;⁶
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Student 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;

h/ 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 student is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

i/ 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 students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

j/ 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: Visit during school hours

Students 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: Visit outside school hours

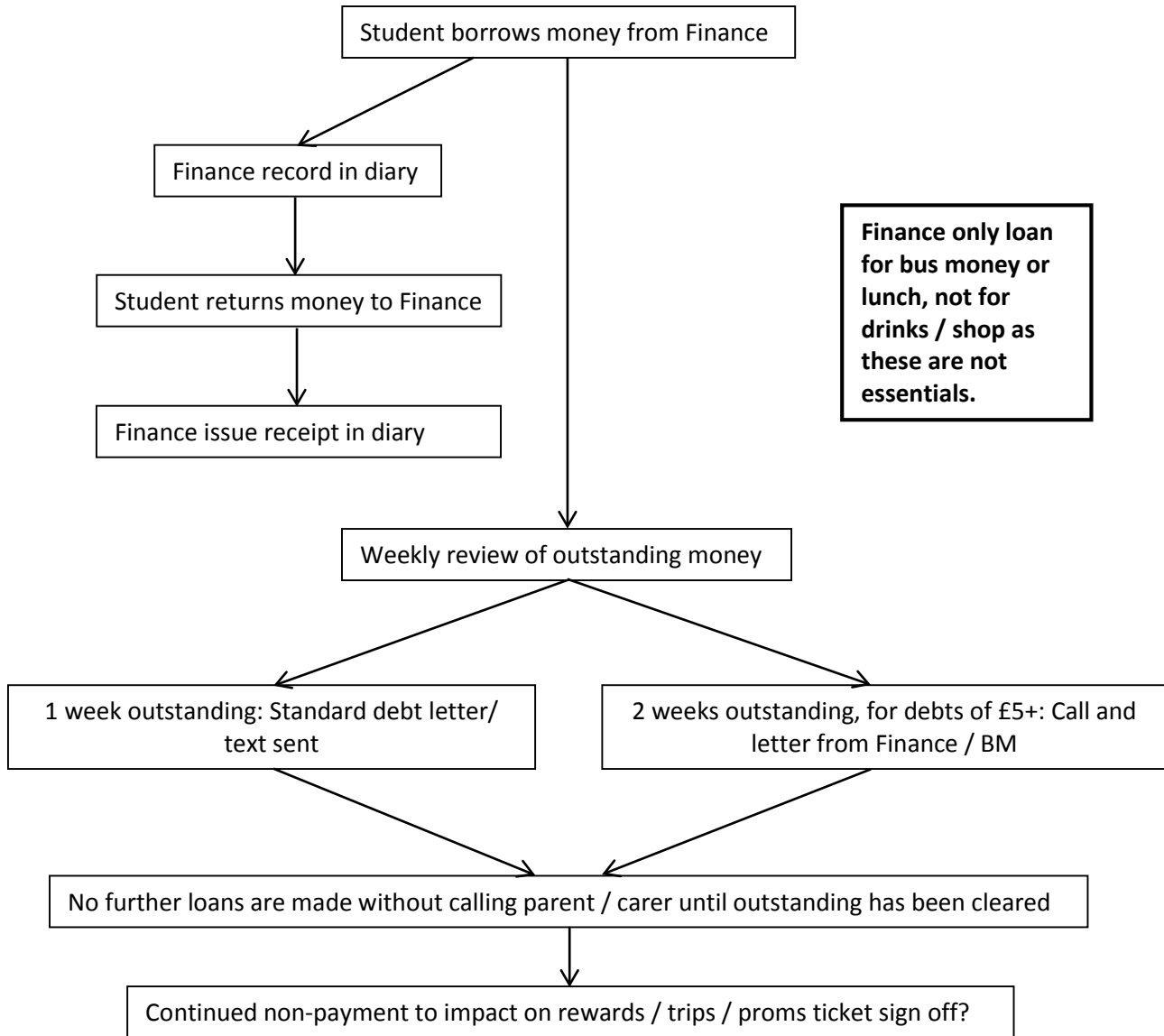
Students are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

4. Student Borrowing

Students forget lunch / bus money and as this impacts their wellbeing / safety, St Edward's will lend students enough money for lunch or to get transport home. A call home will be made prior to loaning money to obtain parents / guardians permission and inform them that the school requires the money repaid at the finance desk on the next school day.

St Edward's will therefore take the following steps to recover any unpaid debts without increasing administration costs.

Student borrowing process



The policy applies to all staff, parents/carers/students and Governors of St Edward's School