



Pondhu
Primary School

Charging and Remission Policy

Policy Number M 17

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Pondhu Primary School Charging Policy

(LA model policy last updated: 16.10.2015)

The purpose of this guide is to set out the policy of the Children's Service Authority (CSA) on charging for various school activities and to assist governors in considering whether and how they might wish to modify the CSA policy to suit the needs of their own school. 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 CSA's and schools have the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
- That CSA's and 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.

The CSA is required to produce a policy on charging and governors of schools have also to state their policy, which may be more or less generous than the CSA policy providing they meet the requirements of the law.

The CSA Policy and Action required by Governors

The CSA recognises 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 organised by the school because of the liability or unwillingness of their parents to pay such a contribution. This is in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child Article 28 which states Every child has the right to an education and a primary education must be free.

Optional visits wholly or mainly outside school hours

It is the intention of the CSA 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.

At Pondhu the Governors have agreed they will charge for school visits outside school hours on the basis either that the visit will proceed on the basis that they will set aside monies to cover the cost for those parents who wish their child to go on the visit but who are unable or unwilling to pay. These monies may be from the school's funds i.e., for educational activities the subsidy may

come from the delegated budget; for social activities the subsidy may come from private funds (these can also be used for education activities).

Visits wholly or mainly during school hours

It is the intention of the CSA 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.

At Pondhu the Governors have agreed to charging for school visits during school hours, on the basis either that the visit will proceed only on the basis that they will set aside monies to cover the cost for those parents who wish their child to go on the visit but who are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution. This supports the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child Article 28 which states Every child has the right to an education and a primary education must be free.

The effect of the restriction on charging and of the fact that a child may not be prevented from going on a visit during school hours if the parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution may lead to certain visits becoming unviable unless the governors set aside monies (i.e., for educational activities the subsidy may come from the delegated budget; for social activities the subsidy may come from private funds (these can also be used for education activities)) to cover the deficit or an element of subsidy is built in to the voluntary contribution.

Board and lodging charges on residential visits

It is the intention of the CSA 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 and has an annual income of less than £16,190 (April 2011 figure)), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance, the board and lodging charges must be remitted, and this cost will have to be met from within the school's funds i.e., for educational activities the subsidy may come from the delegated budget; for social activities the subsidy may come from private funds (these can also be used for education activities).

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.

At Pondhu the Governors have agreed to follow the CSA recommendation.

The effect of the restriction on charging and of the fact that a child may not be prevented from going on a visit during school hours if the parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution to expenses other than for board and lodging may lead to certain visits becoming unviable unless the governors set aside monies to cover the deficit.

Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument

It is not the intention of the CSA to charge for such tuition where it is provided by CSA employed schools' 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.

Resits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school

It is the intention of the CSA to charge the full cost of the re-sit.

At Pondhu the governors have agreed to follow the CSA recommendation.

Governors may wish to set aside monies to assist parents with the cost of re-sits. This could come from the delegated budget or private funds.

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

It is the intention of the CSA to charge the full cost of the entry.

At Pondhu the governors have agreed to follow the CSA recommendation.

Governors may wish to set aside monies to assist parents with the cost of entry to non-prescribed examinations. This could come from the delegated budget or private funds.

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.

At Pondhu the Governors have agreed that voluntary contributions may be requested.

Charges for breakages and fines

At Pondhu the Governors have agreed that a charge may be made for replacement books or other equipment, up to the value of the item.

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.

At Pondhu the Governors will consider the balance of the cost of recovering such charges in this way against the sums involved and it may be sensible to request payment in advance of all voluntary contributions or permissible charges for board and lodging and trips undertaken outside school hours.

The Governors' Policy

The CSA policy on remissions for board and lodging charges in the case of parents 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 and has an annual income of less than £16,190 (April 2011 figure)), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance reflects the statutory minimum.

At Pondhu the governors have agreed to follow the CSA recommendation.

Communications with parents

The CSA has provided schools examples of the following model letters:

- Model Letter Trips Outside Term Time
- Model Letter Non Residential Trips In Term Time
- Model Letter Residential Trips In Term Time

and one additional contract for teachers, which are recommended for use when advising parents about school visits and engaging teachers to provide supervision. The wording will naturally change if governors adopt a policy of meeting the cost of visits for pupils whose parents are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary payment and which could not otherwise proceed (ie for educational activities the subsidy may come from the delegated budget; for social activities the subsidy may come from private funds (these can also be used for education activities)).

The cost of providing for pupils who choose not to go on a visit which takes place partly in school time must be met by the school or be included in the voluntary payment by parents of children participating in the visit and may be included as part of a charge for board and lodging.

Summary of main points

- Optional trips wholly or mainly (as defined in the Circular) outside school hours will be charged at full cost.
- Trips wholly or mainly (as defined in the Circular) during school hours may be funded by voluntary contributions. NO child may be excluded from such a trip because the parents are unable or unwilling to pay a voluntary contribution.
- Board and lodging costs on residential trips will be charged except to those parents 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 and has an annual income of less than £16,190 (April 2011 figure)), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance.
- Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument by a teacher employed by the CSA in or out of school hours will not be charged for. However where tuition or ensemble activities are provided by external agencies and peripatetic teachers a charge may be made to pupils concerned.
- Re-sits of prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school will be charged for.

- Entry to examinations which are not prescribed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State will be charged for.
- Schools may invite voluntary contributions towards the cost of ingredients, materials and equipment where parents have expressed the wish in advance to have the finished product.
- Schools may make charges for breakages and damage to property.
- Governors may make provision through voluntary contributions for costs incurred by the children or parents who are unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution.

Definitions

The most important definition concerns whether an activity takes places 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.