

2015

Charging for Education Policy

Blackwood Comprehensive School
Ysgol Gyfun Y Coed Duon

This document contains the specific policy and associated information relating to Charging for Education at Blackwood Comprehensive School



Responsible Staff Members Mr R K Pawar (Head)
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RATIONALE

The general principle that no charge can be made for education in school hours (excluding the midday break) in maintained schools was set out in the Education Reform Act 1988. Guidance came in the Circular 2/89, Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School

Activities

The School Will:

- Make no charge for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if the education is:
 - i. within school hours;
 - ii. for statutory religious education; and
 - iii. for a prescribed public examination prepared for by the school.

Examinations

No charge will be made for entry to a public examination, except where the pupil without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. fails to submit coursework). For further information please consult the Examination Entry Policy.

Admission

No charge will be made in connection with admission to the school.

Finished products

Where parents have expressed a wish in advance to have a finished product made at school (e.g. in craft, art or food and nutrition lessons) a charge can be made at cost price. The parents must know the charge for the product in advance.

Board and lodging

A charge can be made for board and lodging on residential educational visits/activities, but parents who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances are entitled to a remission of the charges.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax
- Credit and their annual income does not exceed £14,155
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is necessary as part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the pupil to sit, or the syllabus for religious education.

(Education Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 and Remission of Charges Relating to Residential Trips (Wales) Regulations 2003)

Transport

Transport to and from home to any activity not provided by, but permitted by, the school or LA, can be charged for (the main example is work experience).

Voluntary contributions

Parents may volunteer to pay for any educational activity, and schools may request voluntary contributions for any visits/activities both inside and outside school time. However, NO pupil may be excluded from the activity for not having paid the contribution.

Permitted charges

The following are permitted charges:

- charges for board and lodging on trips;
- costs of lost and destroyed school property and breakages;
- any costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of musical instruments whether in or out of school hours (UNLESS it is provided as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum);
The Local Authority and school will make a contribution to the costs of musical tuition.
- the cost of optional extras provided outside school hours (or mainly outside school hours) , but the charge must not exceed the cost of the provision, and parents must agree to their child receiving the optional extra;

CHARGING POLICY (continued)

- Re-sits of public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school.

In all cases where a permitted charge is likely to be made the parents must be told the amount in advance.

The School will consult **Appendix A of the Circular 2/89 Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities** which includes a flow chart to help the school to determine whether a charge should be made.

Activities partly during school hours

In order to determine whether an activity that is undertaken partly during school hours and partly out of school hours the 50% rule is *usually* applied:

- Non-Residential Activities: if 50% or more is spent on an activity in school time (including travelling time, but excluding midday breaks) the whole activity is deemed to be inside school time, and will not usually be charged for; and
- Residential Activities: the number of half-days is counted (a half-day being any 12 hour period ending noon or midnight). If the number of days and half-days spent on the activity is greater than the number of school sessions (morning and afternoon sessions) that a pupil would spend on a normal school day, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours, and vice-versa. Travelling time is included in the time spent on the activity.

When a departure or return time splits a half-day then all the half-day counts if more than 50% of the half-day is used for the activity.

Third parties

Where the school use a third party to provide some educational activities (especially educational visits) the school will ensure that the monies are paid directly to the third party organisation.

In such cases, if the activity is in school time, the school would have to formally grant leave of absence to the pupils taking part, as the activity would no longer technically be part of the school's official programme.

It is likely, too, that any staff taking part in the activity would also have to be granted leave of absence. The Headteacher would have to consider carefully the position of accompanying staff, depending on the precise nature and duration of the visit.