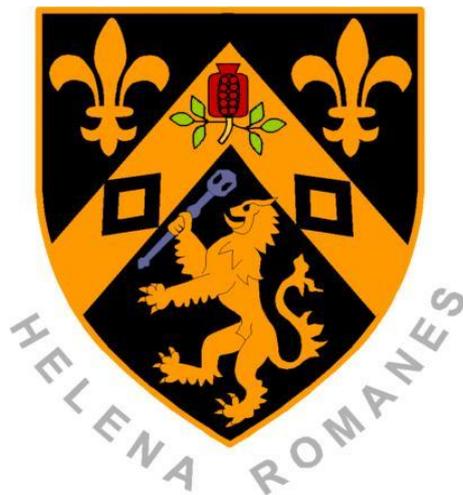


HELENA ROMANES SCHOOL



CHARGING POLICY

**APPROVED BY HELENA ROMANES SCHOOL
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

**THIS POLICY IS REGULARLY REVIEWED
FOLLOWING RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES**

Charging for activities connected with schools

The governing body of the school must have a policy on charging for activities that take place during or outside of the school day, without such a policy they are not allowed to make any charge.

In general, no charge can be made where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours that are part of the national curriculum. It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums during school hours.

Voluntary contributions

Head teachers or governing bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours
- school equipment
- school funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the students of the parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

There is no legal reason why a school should not invite parents/carers to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of providing activities within and outside school hours.

Residential trips

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

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

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support 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 applicable guidelines
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but it is a necessary part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed

examination that the school is preparing the student to sit, or the syllabus is religious education. If the trip takes place outside school hours and **does not** form part of the above, the school can make a charge for transport.

Transport

In general, the cost of any transport provided by the school in school hours for activities not deemed as essential parts of the curriculum, will have to be met from voluntary contributions otherwise the activity will not go ahead. However, where a pupil makes use of transport not provided by the LA or the school to travel directly from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided, by the school, then parents will be expected to meet the cost of such travel. An example of this is travel direct from home to work experience.

Instrumental Music tuition

A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition for groups of any size provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents.

Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by a pupil or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Public Examinations

No charge may be made for entering students for public examinations that are set out in regulations. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared at the school
- the examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the student to take it
- a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or L`A originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee

If a pupil or their parents consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parents. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parents or pupil will have their fees refunded.

Charges for "finished products"

Schools can make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where the parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

Optional extras

A charge may be made for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Employment of non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- Teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils.

The school will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.