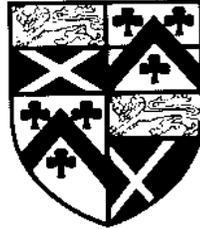


THE ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL



Charging and Remissions Policy January 2017

The Mission statement:

“Transforming Life Chances”

This will be evident because:

- **Students** will support each other and be motivated to learn and to achieve.
- **Staff** will provide the learning environment, the support and the personal challenge through which each student can excel.
- **Parents** will support the school ethos and fully contribute to the life of the school.
- **Governors** will be critical champions of the school.



The Rochester Grammar School

CHARGING & REMISSION POLICY

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The school conforms to the LA's charging policy, the DES Circular 2/89 and the Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities and Charging for School Activities, Fair Access Division, DCSF, January 2009.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities.

The Governing Body cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside of 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.
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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
- Entry for prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for students. We hope that parents will continue to contribute to school fund to facilitate the delivery of additional activities during school hours. The present annual contribution sought is £25 per student.

However due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The Governing Body will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

SECTION 2: DEFINITION OF IN OR OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS

EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials and equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity. "School

hours” are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. It is good practice for schools to make this information available to parents and others.

EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours). As an example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge.

By contrast, a trip that involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place **outside school time**. **Charges would then be allowed.**

EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or do not form part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education. In addition, no charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination (see section on examinations).

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities that can be charged for as “optional extras”. It is up to the LA or governing body providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24-hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and at midnight.

On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would last for nine half-days, include five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday would count as seven half-days, include three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50 per cent or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day should be treated as spent on the trip.

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that you’re not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.00)

- Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

The Principal should advise all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits. However the full costs of residential activity must be at least covered by the voluntary contributions from parents and the agreed amount that will come from the school. If this is not the case the school reserves the right to cancel the activity (see below under voluntary contributions).

SECTION 3: CHARGING FOR VISITS

The group leader should always meet with the Finance Manager to agree the following items

- The total cost of the visit
- How much of the cost will come from school
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to voluntarily contribute towards the cost of the visit
- How much spending/pocket money students will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element)
- Use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits?

Group leaders should ensure that parents are notified as early as possible of the above using the standard trip and visits letter. This is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e., transport, accommodation, food etc.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Governing bodies should also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents this should be explained to them at the planning stage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, **the activity must be cancelled**. The essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not; make a contribution of any kind. The school must first decide which class, or group of pupils, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity, or by general fund-raising.

ACTIVITIES DURING NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS:

Visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled – parents must be notified of this. Students whose parents/carers do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

PAPER WORK TO BE SENT TO PARENTS

a) No Contribution required

A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and must contain the wording “Under the school’s charging policy there will be no charge for this activity”.

b) Contributions required

Parental permission should be obtained by the following

A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit. The letter must be accompanied by the “**Policy Statement for Financial Support**” provided in **Appendix 2**.

The letter should contain the following wording

“This activity costs £.... per student and is based on student places. Under the school’s charging policy, this activity is offered with a request for a contribution of £.... A non-refundable deposit of £... is required by If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please read the “**Policy Statement for Financial Support**” and write to the Principal who will consider each individual application on its own merit. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay but the school reserves the right to cancel this activity if insufficient funds are not raised by voluntary contributions or fewer thanstudents take up this opportunity”.

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS/OPTIONAL EXTRAS

The Principal can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an ‘optional extra’. An optional extra:

- Falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a skiing holiday during the school holidays is an optional extra, a trip to a London Theatre that leaves period 5 or after school.
- Does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education;
- Is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination – if an ‘A- level Biology syllabus mentions fieldwork as a requirement then this in itself does not necessitate a residential fieldtrip to another part of the country as local facilities may suffice. However, if the syllabus mentions that students need to know about the ecology of rocky shores and they live in a city a long way from the coast then the fieldtrip would not be classed as an ‘optional extra’.

The parents’ agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for students whose families do not meet the full charge.

PAPER WORK TO BE SENT TO PARENTS

Parental permission should be obtained as follows:

A letter about the activity/trip is sent out to parents and should contain the following wording

“Under the school’s charging policy, because this activity takes place wholly/mainly outside school hours and is optional, places will be offered to students who pay the full cost which is £....”

In addition parents must sign the declaration given below (amend as appropriate): -

Sample Parental Declaration. This is to be completed on the back of the letter along with criteria for financial assistance. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g. I understand:

- That current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- That current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit
- That if insufficient numbers of students opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- That my child cannot attend this ‘optional extra’ visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.
- The deposit required for a place on the trip is 10% of the total cost or the amount stated by the travel operator and payable 1 week from the date of this declaration.
- Regular payments must be made towards the cost of the trip as stated in trip letter to parents (usually 3 equal instalments, 1 month apart).
- Full payment is due at the latest 7 school session days prior to the start date of the trip. Any outstanding payments must be discussed by the parent/guardian with the Finance Manager to ensure students can go on the trip.
- Refunds of deposits, full payments and partial payments in relation to cancellations will be subject to a review by the Finance Manager and will depend on:
 - a) any costs incurred for cancellation through the travel agency/trip organiser
 - b) whether a replacement traveller could be found

SECTION 4: INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to specify circumstances where charges can be made for music tuition. The new regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

SECTION 5: INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: Science, Technology, Art.

SECTION 6: BROKEN EQUIPMENT/DAMAGE (REPLACEMENT)

The Governors will allow the School to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students. This may include the purchase of a replacement planner, should the student's planner be lost, have graffiti or be damaged.

SECTION 7: REMISSIONS

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. The criteria for remissions are:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.00)
- Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in part. Applications should be made in writing to the Business Manager. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the Principal

SECTION 8: EXAMINATIONS

The Governing Body may recover any fee in respect of the entry of a registered student at the school for a public examination in any syllabus for that examination either

1. where the school has not prepared the student for the examination, fees will be charged in full together with the appropriate administration charges.
2. the student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus
3. for a re-sit examination taken at the student's request
4. where a student opts to take an examination against the school's advice
5. for non-attendance at an examination without good reason
6. where a result is contested at a student's request

SECTION 9: SURPLUS

Where charges have been levied for activities, and a surplus of income over expenditure generated, rebates will be made, based on the following formula:

Where the activity costs up to £40, rebates will be made if the surplus per person is 5% of the trip or cost or £10, whichever is greater.

On all occasions when charges are being made or contributions sought for teaching and learning activities the Head of School may decide to contribute from the school budget to assist in cases of hardship.

APPENDIX 1 – Example Letters

Exchanges

RE: German Exchange – Extra Curricular Trip

We are writing to inform you of this year's German Exchange at School. We are organising the exchange visit with our partner school in Traben-Trarbach, for students in Year XX. This visit is open to all students studying Spanish.

An exchange visit is of immense benefit from both the linguistic and cultural points of view. However this trip is an extra curricular activity and not part of the school curriculum. We are only able to offer a limited number of places due to extra costs to the school and the number of Spanish students available.

All students will be paired with a girl or boy from the German school and preferences can of course be given.

The dates are as follows:

This activity costs £300 per student and is based on 25 student places. Under the school's charging policy, this activity is offered with a request for a contribution of £300. A non-refundable deposit of £150 is required by the end of June to cover the cost of the flight. If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please read the "Policy Statement for Financial Support" and write to the Principal who will consider each individual application on its own merit. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay but the school reserves the right to cancel this activity if insufficient funds are not raised by voluntary contributions or fewer than 25 students take up this opportunity

Please be aware that under the new legislation, there is a possibility that parents and any adults aged 18yrs or over living in your household will be asked to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

I would be very grateful if you could provide me with the following information by returning the slip below before

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX 2

If an activity takes place during school hours and a request for a voluntary contribution is sought the following policy statement must be sent to parents in addition to the letter. This can be printed on the reverse of the letter to parents if required or sent out as a separate page.

Policy Statement for Financial Support for Trips and Educational Visits

Statement:

As far as practically possible, children and young people should not be excluded from taking parts in trips or visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

- 1) All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Principal, or in his absence, the Finance Manager, in advance of the visit.

- 2) To be eligible for assistance the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (provided that you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.00)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit

- 3) In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments, even when the full payment is not received by the date that the visit takes place, or would consider any individual application on its own merit

In cases where there are insufficient funds for an educational visit to take place, it may be cancelled.

Example letters

1. Contributions required

The letter should contain the following wording

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

The school is proposing to organise a visit to 1 (destination) for 2 (pupils) in order to study 3 (nature of trip). This is a trip which will enable the pupils to 4 (justification in educational terms).

Subject to there being sufficient funds to cover the cost, the visit will take place on 5(date and timing). This activity costs £.... per student and is based on student places. Under the school's charging policy, this activity is offered with a request for a contribution of £.... A non-refundable deposit of £... is required by If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please read the "**Policy Statement for Financial Support**" (on the reverse of this letter) and write to the Principal who will consider each individual application on its own merit. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay but the school reserves the right to cancel this activity if sufficient funds are not raised by voluntary contributions or fewer thanstudents take up this opportunity.

I am sure you will see the benefit of this activity and look forward to your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Bassan
Principal

✂.....
(Name of trip)

I am willing to allow my daughter/son to take part in the above school visit and enclose £ on behalf of:

Name..... Form.....

Signed..... Date.....
Parent/Carer

Please forward completed slip, consent form and payment to Mrs J Ingram at the finance hatch XXXX
(This policy statement to be put on the reverse of letter 1 for school trips)

Policy Statement for Financial Support for Trips and Educational Visits

Statement:

As far as practically possible, children and young people should not be excluded from taking parts in trips or visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

- 1) All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Principal, or in his absence, the Finance Manager, in advance of the visit.

- 2) To be eligible for assistance the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (provided that you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.00)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit

- 3) In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments, even when the full payment is not received by the date that the visit takes place, or would consider any individual application on its own merit.

In cases where there are insufficient funds for an educational visit to take place, it may be cancelled.

2. No Contribution required. Example would be walking to Rochester to look at castle.

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

The school is proposing to organise a visit to 1 (destination) for 2 (pupils) in order to study 3 (nature of trip). This is a trip which will enable the pupils to 4 (justification in educational terms).

Under the school's charging policy there will be no charge for this activity

Yours sincerely

Mr G Bassan
Principal

.....

I am willing to allow my daughter/son to take part in the above school visit on behalf of:

Name.....

Form.....

Signed.....
Parent/Carer

Date.....

Please forward completed slip and consent form to
Mrs J Ingram at the finance hatch XXXX

3. Letter including “optional” payments. Example would be travel to theatre to see a show that is not linked to curriculum.

Dear Parent/Carer

The school is proposing to organise a visit to 1 (destination) for 2(pupils) in order to study 3(nature of visit). This is a trip which will enable the pupils to 4(justification in educational terms).

Subject to there being sufficient funds to cover the cost, the visit will take place on 5(date and timing).

“Under the school’s charging policy, because this activity takes place wholly/mainly outside school hours and is optional, places will be offered to students who pay the full cost which is £....”

Please see over for further information.

I am sure you will see the benefit of this activity and look forward to your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Bassan
Principal

The detail to be on the back of the “optional” payments letter are as follows:

I understand:

- That current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- That current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit
- That if insufficient numbers of students opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- That my child cannot attend this ‘optional extra’ visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.
- Full payment is due at the latest 7 school session days prior to the start date of the trip. Any outstanding payments must be discussed by the parent/carer with the Finance Manager to ensure students can go on the trip.
- I am willing to allow my daughter/son to take part in the above school visit and enclose £XXX.

Name.....

Form.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Parent/Carer

Please return slip, consent form and payment to Mrs J Ingram at the finance hatch by XXX



.....
Policy Statement for Financial Support for Trips and Educational Visits

Statement:

As far as practically possible, children and young people should not be excluded from taking parts in trips or visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

- 1) All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Principal, or in his absence, the Finance Manager, in advance of the visit.
- 2) To be eligible for assistance the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits:
 - Income Support
 - Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (provided that you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.00)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit
- 3) In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments, even when the full payment is not received by the date that the visit takes place, or would consider any individual application on its own merit

In cases where there are insufficient funds for an educational visit to take place, it may be cancelled.