



Westcliff High School for Girls

Policy on Charging for School Activities

March 2014

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL 2014

HEADTEACHER

Paul Hayman (Headteacher)

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

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WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

POLICY ON CONTRIBUTIONS OR CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHARGING FROM THE 1988 EDUCATION REFORM ACT

1.1 Statement for the School's Prospectus

The school's policy is based on the general principle that education during normal school hours should be free of compulsory charges to parents, and that all pupils should take part in school activities irrespective of their circumstances. However, the Governing Body recognises that there are many valuable activities that continue to be dependent on contributions from parents.

Parents will therefore be invited to make voluntary contributions to the cost of visits that take place during the normal school day and will be charged allowable costs for visits out of school time. Contributions may also be invited for materials used in technology where parents require their child to bring the finished artefact home. Public exam fees are paid by the school except where pupils are not prepared for an exam by the school. A copy of the school's charging policy is available from the school office on request.

[The above two paragraphs are to appear in the school prospectus.]

1.2 The Governors have adopted, in broad terms, the three following principles from the 1988 Education Reform Act:

- i) To make charges as allowed by the Education Reform Act 1988
- ii) To remit charges for board and lodgings for girls whose parents' are in receipt of:
 - Income Support (IS)
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
 - Employment Support Allowance – income related (ESA(IR))
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, provided they are **not** entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed the stated amount as assessed annually by the HM Revenue and Customs.
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, or
 - Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment finishes or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a letter from HMRC stating that they are entitled to a four week 'run on' of Working Tax Credit.
- iii) To seek voluntary contributions from parents' so that activities during school hours, for which charges can no longer be enforced can continue.

1.3 Restrictions on Activities if Insufficient Parents Contribute

There will be no obligation to make contributions and no pupil may be treated differently if parents do not contribute. However, we must point out that if parents do not wish to do this there will inevitably be severe restrictions on what is possible. We hope that parents will support the wish to maintain the varied range of activities for which Westcliff High School has become known.

2. THE CHARGING POLICY

In accordance with Section 110 of the Education Reform Act 1988, the following policy has been drawn up by the Governors of Westcliff High School for Girls to operate with effect from April 1989 in respect of charges for school activities.

2.1 Board and Lodging

Where a school activity involves pupils in nights away from home, the school will make a charge for board and lodging in all cases, whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours, subject to the Governors' remissions policy. However, the charge will not exceed the actual cost of the board and lodging provided for each pupil involved.

- Where a pupil participates in a residential trip deemed to take place in school hours, or is involved in a residential trip in or outside school hours which forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or to fulfil statutory duties under the National Curriculum, the Governors' policy provides for the remission in full of any board and lodging charges for a pupil whose parents are in receipt of:
 - Income Support (IS)
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
 - Employment Support Allowance – income related (ESA(IR))
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, provided they are **not** entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed the stated amount as assessed annually by the HM Revenue and Customs.
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, or
 - Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment finishes or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a letter from HMRC stating that they are entitled to a four week 'run on' of Working Tax Credit.

2.2 Transport Costs

Where a trip is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and is not required for the purposes of a prescribed public examination, charges will be levied for travel and in such circumstances will take into account the actual cost of the travel.

In general any transport provided in school hours for school visits in connection with the school's curriculum will not carry an enforceable charge. However, where a pupil makes use of transport not provided by the school to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided, by the school, then parents will be expected to meet the costs of such travel. An example of this is travel direct from home to work experience. The cost of travel for pupils direct from home to work experience will be reimbursed to the parents in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Employment Support Allowance – income related (ESA(IR))
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are **not** entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed the stated amount as assessed annually by the HM Revenue and Customs.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, or
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment finishes or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a letter from HMRC stating that they are entitled to a four week 'run on' of Working Tax Credit.

However parents are likely to be asked for a voluntary contribution to transport costs as, without these contributions, many visits will have to be cancelled.

2.3 Individual Music Tuition

A charge will be made to parents of pupils receiving individual tuition in the playing of any musical instrument, except where a 20 minute lesson per week is provided to fulfil the requirements for a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the requirements of the National Curriculum taught during normal school hours. The charge may include the cost of the teacher providing the tuition, the cost of sheet music and the hire and insurance of a musical instrument. When charges are to be levied, the parents will be asked to indicate their written agreement in advance of the provision of the tuition. The charges will be determined annually by the Governors' Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Governors' policy provides for the remission of charges for individual music tuition for a pupil whose parents are in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Employment Support Allowance – income related (ESA(IR))

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- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are **not** entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed the stated amount as assessed annually by the HM Revenue and Customs.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, or
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment finishes or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a letter from HMRC stating that they are entitled to a four week 'run on' of Working Tax Credit.

2.4 Charging for "Finished Products"

Where parents indicate in advance a wish to own the finished product the school may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients or materials in subjects such as Design Technology or Home Economics.

2.5 Charging for Activities outside school hours

A charge will normally be levied for activities outside school hours to recover the full cost. Any charges made cannot exceed the cost of providing the activity divided equally by the number of pupils participating in the activity.

Charges for out of school activities:

- i. a pupil's travel costs;
- ii. a pupil's board and lodgings costs;
- iii. materials, books, and other equipment;
- iv. staff costs;
- v. entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc;
- vi. insurance costs;
- vii. the cost of engaging a teacher on a contract for service in order to provide the chargeable activity e.g. GCSE Latin or Music classes out of school hours.

2.6 Public Examinations

The following charges or costs will be passed onto parents:

- i. Where a parent asks for an examination result to be re-scrutinised, a charge made by the examining board for this service will be passed on to parents. This will be refundable if the school receives a refund from the examining body.
- ii. Where the school agrees to enter a pupil for a prescribed public examination for which they have not been prepared by the school any charge for entering the pupil for that examination will be passed on to parents and an administration fee charged as necessary.
- iii. Where a pupil, with parental agreement, is entered for a public examination which is not prescribed by the Secretary of State, the full cost of entry will be passed on to parents.

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- iv. Where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the examination requirement for any public examination for which the school has paid, or is liable to pay a fee, then the fee will be recovered from the parents. This will include situations where the pupil fails to complete the necessary coursework, is absent from more than 20% of the course lessons, or fails to sit the final examinations, but excludes justifiable or unavoidable absence.
- v. All late entry charges will be passed onto parents.

2.7 Re-entry for Public Examinations

Whether or not the school undertakes the preparation for a pupil to re-sit a public examination the school will charge the parents the re-entry fee.

2.8 Letters to Parents

The Governors require the Headteacher or a member of staff to whom the responsibility is delegated to send a letter to parents when it is intended

- i. to organise any activity in or out of school hours where costs are involved;
- ii. to recover the costs of ingredients or materials, in practical lessons;
- iii. to make charges for musical activities, for tuition or hire of instruments;
- iv. to recover examination fees.

The approved wording of a letter requesting a “voluntary contribution” is as follows:

*“The cost of the trip will be £xx per pupil, which includes coach hire and insurance cover. In line with most school trips we are only allowed to ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost. Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make such a contribution. **Contributions are not compulsory, but if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the visit, it will need to be cancelled”***

2.9 The Governors should also be informed if any third party proposes to arrange an activity during school hours, so that they may consider the welfare and safety of the pupils and have regard to the amount of time a pupil may be absent during the school year.

2.10 Charging for Information

Parents will not be charged for a single copy of pupil reports.

When a legitimate request is made for information (eg a Freedom of Information request or to see the content of a personnel file) the school will endeavour to provide this for no charge. If the time taken to gather the information exceeds 15 minutes there will be a charge, to be paid in advance, not exceeding the cost to provide the information.

2.11 General Notes

- i. It should be noted that although no charge can be made for equipment for use in connection with education provided during school hours, the Act specifically excludes, clothing from this definition. Parents can therefore be asked to provide their children with appropriate items such as cooking aprons, science overalls or hockey boots.
- ii. Nothing in the Act, or in this policy, prevents parents being invited to make voluntary contributions towards the costs of providing activities both within and outside school hours, provided that such contributions are genuinely voluntary, and that any request for contributions makes it clear:
 - a) that there is not an obligation to contribute; and
 - b) that pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make such a contribution.
- iii. All payments regarding the above are to be paid using ParentPay

05/03/2014