



Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall

Charging and Remissions Policy

Policy date: February 2016

Next Review: February 2017

Objectives

The Governors of Queen Mary's Grammar School recognise the valuable contribution a wide range of extra-curricular activities has on a pupil's education. Such activities include: educational visits, residential trips, overseas trips and exchanges, sporting events, clubs and societies and the Combined Cadet Force.

The Governors believe enrichment builds qualities of leadership, independence and resilience which students will benefit from during their time at the School and in later life. The Governing Body therefore promotes and provides these activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils and as additional optional activities.

Charging

In general the provision of education is free and schools are not able to charge for activities, equipment or transport for activities taking place within normal school hours.

The Education Act 1996 and the Education (Residential Trips) Regulations 2003 allow the School to charge for certain costs and this policy sets out the Governors' charges for activities, which depend on the nature of the type of activity and cost involved. The School is also permitted to request voluntary contributions as set out below.

Voluntary Contributions

Although the School will not make charges to parents for educational activities taking place in School hours, the School may request voluntary contributions from parents towards such costs. In addition the School is permitted to request voluntary contributions towards the School Enrichment Fund. This request is usually sent out to parents at the end of each term and contributions due in at the start of the following term. The Governors believe these are invaluable to the School to enable it to make public funds go further to improve the School.

There will be no obligation for parents to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of School activities or to the School's Enrichment Fund. Further it is the Governors' policy that no student will be left out of an activity because their parents cannot or prefer not make a contribution. In such cases students will be treated no differently from those who have contributed. All such requests will make it clear contributions are voluntary. The School reserves the right to cancel activities if insufficient contributions are received.

Residential activities during school time

For a residential activity taking place mainly during school time, or which 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 when using the School's mini buses. However a charge (not exceeding the cost) will be made for board, lodging and any non-teaching staff costs, if applicable.

Optional activities during school hours

Where the School provides optional activities in School hours, the full cost of the activity may be charged to parents. This includes travel, materials, non-teaching staff (if applicable) or any other cost incurred directly in connection with the activity. It will be made clear to parents in advance the activity is optional and pupils are not required to participate.

Education outside School hours, including overseas trips

A charge will be made for education provided outside school hours provided it is with the prior agreement of parents. The charge in respect of a pupil will not exceed the actual cost of providing

the activity divided equally by the number of pupils participating nor will it include a share of the cost of any remissions.

Costs will, if appropriate, include an element for travel, board & lodging, instruments, materials, books and equipment, support staff & teaching staff costs (where a teacher/instructor is engaged specifically to provide the activity) entry fees, activity specific insurance and any other direct costs of the activity. An administration charge of 5% will be included to off-set the school's costs (including those of the Educational Visits Coordinator and finance team) in planning and organising and recording costs and incomes for such trips. Payment for trips and activities must be made in advance of any trip. The more costly trips (over £100) can be paid for in instalments (over a period of not more than 12 months for the most expensive trips) as directed by the trip organiser and/or the School. Where a Trip is organised by an external travel agent or operator, who may require a non-refundable deposit from the school then the initial deposit by parents will be for the same amount and will also be non-refundable, unless the School is able to obtain a refund. The School reserves the right to charge the administration fee in such cases.

Materials, books and other equipment

The School may charge for materials used, where a parent indicates in advance they or the pupil wishes to ultimately own the item. Any charge will not exceed the cost of the materials. Alternatively, parents may provide the materials themselves.

Individual Instrumental Tuition

The School will charge for the cost of instrumental tuition, if it is not an essential part of the national curriculum or examination syllabus. Parents are informed of charges at the start of each term, and as the School must pre book tuition, these are non-refundable. Costs may include tuition and instrument hire if required. The charge for instrument hire contributes towards the cost of buying replacement instruments as required by the School.

Public examinations

No charges will be made for entering pupils for public examinations. The School must enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for, unless they think there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil, or if the pupil's parents ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered. The Local Authority may not override the School's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination. An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of a public examination where the governing body or LEA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee;
- the pupil chooses to re-sit a public examination, where no additional preparation is provided in School, for example if a pupil wishes to improve their original exam grade.

Damage to property

The Governors reserve the right to request the parents of pupils whose inappropriate behaviour causes damage to property, to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property.

Remissions

There is no obligation for parents to make voluntary contributions.

The School may provide some financial support for parents who are having difficulty paying for charges under this policy, to enable their children to attend trips and other activities.

The Governors' policy on remissions is as follows:

- The School will provide a limited amount of funds towards charges for pupils eligible for pupil premium (maximum £100 per pupil)
- Funding will not be provided to pupils in receipt of a grant from the School's 16-19 Bursary Fund, as this can be used by the student to pay such charges (maximum £100 per pupil)

- Any other parent may request support which will be considered on its own merits. This is entirely at the discretion of the School, and parents may be asked to provide evidence of hardship and income. Such requests should be made in the first instance to the Headmaster.