

Charging for school activities (Charging and Remissions)



King Henry VIII 3-19 School Ysgol 3-19 Brenin Harri'r VIII

We believe in the limitless capacity for everyone to achieve great things.

Effective from: September 2023

Approved by Governors: September 2023

Next Review Due: September 2024

Introduction

We believe in the limitless capacity for everyone to achieve great things. Achieving this vision requires ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to participate in all activities offered, and that access to educational enrichment is not determined by economic factors.

The purpose of this policy is to set out what charges can and cannot be made for activities in King Henry VIII 3-19 School. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with Sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996 which sets out the law regarding what charges can and cannot be made for activities in schools maintained by Local Authorities.

We believe in providing an enriched curriculum to enhance and support the learning of all our pupils, adding to their enjoyment and understanding of topics and learning experiences. Many of the enhanced activities unfortunately have an associated cost, and due to budgetary constraints, the school is unable to provide them unless we ask our parents for voluntary contributions. However, we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from these enhanced learning experiences independent of their parents' financial means.

This policy gives clarity over:

1. The items which are provided free
2. The items that will be funded by a voluntary contribution (an optional payment required from parents/carers)
3. When there will be a charge (a payment required from parents/carers)
4. How costs are calculated
5. How we try and make paying for items manageable for parents/carers
6. How we will assist those with a limited income

Voluntary Contribution and Charging Principles

1. The items which are provided free of charge

All education during the school day¹ is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the Curriculum.

This includes:

- examination fees (whereby the pupil has prepared for the examinations in school)
- examination re-sits (whereby a pupil has prepared in school)
- subject text books
- learning resources such as exercise books and subject specific [such as, science laboratory] equipment

2. The items that will be funded by a voluntary contribution

These items are generally "optional extras" and relate to activities that take place mainly out of school time or are not part of the curriculum. The following is a list of examples of additional activities which may require voluntary contributions from parents/carers (it is neither inclusive, nor exclusive). We do however, as far as possible, use school funding and grants to cover as many costs as possible.

- Visits to educational establishments (for example: museums, exhibitions and workshop experiences)
- Cluster collaboration events (for example: transition projects, cluster working and pupil voice events)

¹ The school day is defined by the start time and finishing times published by the school.

- Sporting activities which require transport
- Outdoor adventure sessions
- Visits to cultural establishments (for example: theatres and cinema)
- Musical events
- Reading texts, whereby the pupil is required to annotate
- If we were unable to use the leisure centre for swimming lessons (that take place in school time and are part of the school's statutory requirement for delivering PE), and had to use an alternative venue, we would ask for a contribution towards the cost of travel.
- The school can request payment for any materials, books, instruments or equipment where a parent wishes their child to own them, for example a clay model, or cooked food.

There is no legal obligation to make a voluntary contribution. Pupils will not be excluded through parent/carers inability or unwillingness to pay. Pupils whose parent/carers cannot contribute will not be treated any differently. If the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions (and it is unable to fund the activity), the activity may need to be cancelled.

3. When there will be a charge

Residential Trips:

If the school organises a residential visit (where the pupil will be spending one or more nights away from their home) the school will charge to cover the costs associated with each pupil, such as board, lodging. A non-refundable deposit² will be required to secure bookings. Parents whose children receive Free School Meals will pay a reduced amount and should request to speak with the Finance Officer as it is possible for the cost of the pupil to be subsidised by the schools PDG Grant.

Loss and Damage of School Property:

Parent/carers of a pupil who loses or wilfully damages any item of school property, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement. Any matter involving damage or loss of school property will be investigated and discussed with parents. A valuation for the cost of replacement or repair will be given and agreement sought about the timescale for the repair/replacement.

Music Tuition:

Individual and small group instrumental and vocal tuition is available in school through Gwent Music and other independent organisations. Tuition in these circumstances should be organised with, and paid directly to, the provider. Any music activity organised by the school to enhance the curriculum will be funded through voluntary contributions.

4. How costs are calculated

When charges are made for any activity they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and parents/carers. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil). There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't pay.

ParentPay Transaction Charges:

The school reserves the right to pass on the transaction charges for the use of Parent Pay to parents as part of voluntary contributions and charging. These costs are 1.275% of the payment amount. The Governing Body

² Non-refundable unless the school or relevant outside agency decide to cancel the event.

has agreed not to pass on costs from ParentPay to parents for the costs of booking school meals and breakfast club.

Refunds:

In the event an activity makes an unexpected surplus, the school will consider making a refund if the surplus is either (a) 5% or more of the total cost per person (b) £5 or more per person. Parents will be offered the refund and must contact the Finance Office to claim the refund, which shall be made through ParentPay. Any refunds not claimed will be put towards the school's fund. If a parent requests a refund for a contribution they have already made, it may be done so in full or in part, at the discretion of the School Business Manager, dependent upon the circumstances.

5. How we try and make paying for items manageable

The school raises money through events and this helps to subsidise activities. We report annually through the Chair of Governor's report as to how the school's budget is spent.

The school recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we try to adhere to the following:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of activities (and their approximate costs) at the beginning of each term and residential trips at the beginning of the academic year
- We will allow parents to pay in instalments
- When the opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, it will be possible to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We will not offer "first pay, first allocated" opportunities as this discriminates against pupils from families who are struggling financially.

6. Assisting those with a limited income (remissions)

In cases of hardship the Governors will consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils who they consider will benefit from activities. In certain circumstances part or whole of the charges for activities may be waived if particular hardship is being experienced by the family that do not qualify for Free School Meals. Parents should discuss the matter with the School Business Manager in the first instance. In some cases, the school may apply to other bodies and agencies to subsidise or remit the charges for enrichment activities.

Pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals, in most circumstances will be able to participate in activities at reduced rates, paid for by the schools PDG (pupil deprivation grant) allocation.

Additional Considerations

Right to Information:

All activities, whether they are subject to charges or voluntary contributions, can be funded in different ways, including (although not exclusively) through contributions from school, fund raising or from grants from external agencies. Parents have the right to know how each trip is funded. The school can provide this information on request.

How to Pay:

The school uses ParentPay as the cashless system. All payments should be made using ParentPay. Any parents who wish to not pay online can request a payment card and make payments using their local PayPoint (at shops and Post Offices).