

TCS Charging Policy

Policy responsible: Business Manager

Approved by: Finance, Community and Business

Statutory/Discretionary: Statutory

Review cycle: Annual

Last reviewed: Autumn 2020

Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation and guidance
3. Definitions
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Where charges cannot be made
6. Where charges can be made
7. Voluntary contributions
8. Activities Testbourne Community School charges for
9. Remissions
10. Monitoring arrangements

1. Aims

Testbourne Community School (TCS) aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Hampshire School' Manual of Financial Practice and Procedure – Charging for School Trips, Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools in England.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable
- The school day: 8.45am to 3.10pm
- During School Hours: If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit.
- Out of School Hours: If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is less than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our TCS, responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to Finance, Community and Business Committee

4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out **what TCS cannot charge for**:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided as an additional service in agreement with the student's parent
 - Entry for a 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

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for students to be educated. It is expected students would use public transport wherever possible
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

When charges are made for any activity they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of students participating. This will include, when appropriate, a contribution to cover administrative costs. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

TCS is permitted to charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, the school can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board has arranged for the student to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions) When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:
 - Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
 - The cost of buildings and accommodation
 - Non-teaching staff
 - Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
 - The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra Any charge made in respect of individual students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the

charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

TCS can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of students, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition. Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- For a student who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

TCS can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which TCS may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

a) School Trips during school hours

The contribution is calculated as the total cost of the trip divided by the number of students attending the trip

b) Residential trips during school hours

TCS **can** charge for the board and lodging but the charge must not exceed the actual cost. If a parent is in receipt of certain specified benefits (see **9.1** for list of relevant benefits), they will be exempt from paying the board and lodgings element. The charge must not exceed the actual cost and the school cannot enforce payment of the voluntary contribution, only the board and lodgings element of the trip.

c) External organisations providing activities From time to time

TCS may invite a non-school based organisation such as a theatre workshop to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge. Parents may be asked to contribute towards these costs.

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If the TCS is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities Testbourne Community School charges for

Activities TCS will charge for include:

a) Trips outside of school hours (e.g. Theatre trips)

The total cost of the trip can be charged to the parent if it is outside of school hours, for example a theatre trip, provided the trip is not part of the national curriculum or part of a prescribed.

b) Residential trips outside of school hours

The total cost of the trip can be charged to the parent if it is outside of school hours, for example a skiing trip, provided the trip is not part of the national curriculum or part of a prescribed exam. All associated costs for the trip can be included but the charge must again not exceed the actual cost and must be divided equally by the number of students participating. The school's contribution towards the teachers' costs for attending the trip is included in the overall charge to the parents as this equates to an actual cost to the school.

c) Work Experience

Parents will be asked to pay for the cost of the Work Experience programme. No student premium student will be omitted from Work Experience because of parents' inability to contribute.

d) School mini-bus

Only the school's students, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school minibus. Charges can only be levied if the school has a permit issued by the LEA under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. No permit is required if no charge is made to the user. Charges made for travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the school.

e) Contribution towards cost of damage

Parents will be asked to make a contribution towards replacing damaged or lost school property caused wilfully or negligently by their children.

f) Deposits and Cancellation Fees

Deposits paid towards educational visits, trips or activities will be non-returnable unless: -

- the vacant place is filled up by another student prior to the visit;
- the reason for withdrawal is covered under the insurance policy for the visit.
- the deposit can be reclaimed and the school, staff or students taking part in the activity incur no additional cost as a consequence of the cancellation.

Refunds of monies will not be given in the case of cancellations, except for the three reasons given immediately above.

Acceptance on an educational visit is dependent on a student's good behaviour. If a student is persistently disruptive prior to the trip, and is excluded from school as a result, the school reserves the right to remove the child from that trip. If no other student is available to take the place and the company is unwilling to refund monies paid, then it will not be possible to refund to the parents any payments made up to that point.

9. Remissions

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Finance, Community and Business Committee will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a yearly basis a financial report, with the year-end accounts, on those activities that resulted in charges being levied the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.