



## **Charging & Remissions Policy**

Updated: October 2016

Approved by Governors:

Review: October 2017

## **Purpose of Policy**

The 1996 Education Act requires schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which we must regularly review.

The Meadows Sports College believe that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents/carers financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

For the purpose of this policy, school hours are defined as 9.00am and 3.00pm Monday to Friday, term time only.

## **Charging - Education**

The school will not make any charge for the following:

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment that remains the property of the school);
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.

Activities for which charges may be made:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where students will own them (this includes the purchasing of food items for food/catering lessons);
- Non-residential activities which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours;
- Residential activities – Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However,

students whose parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs;

- Residential trips that take place outside of school hours;
- Music tuition – for individuals or groups of any appropriate size.

### **Charging – Optional Extras**

The school may charge for the following activities, known as ‘optional extras’.

- A visit or trip which is outside of school hours;
- A club or activity which takes place out of school hours;
- Transport that is not required to take a student to school or other premises where the school will not be providing education.

When calculating the cost of ‘optional extras’ the school may include an amount in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional ‘extra’;
- non-teaching staff who are supporting the optional extra;
- the cost of employing teaching staff to support the optional extra;
- the cost of transport for the optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **Allocation of places**

#### Educational visits

Most educational activities or visits are organised based on a curriculum focus; any student who is undertaking learning as part of the curriculum focus will be offered an opportunity to participate in the activity or visit.

#### Residential visits

Due to the differing needs of students across the school, we must carefully consider the staffing requirements and individual needs of all students to

ensure that they get the most benefit and therefore will offer residential visits and activities based on grouping students with similar needs.

Students who fall within the particular need group will all be offered a place which can be secured through the payment of a £20 deposit. Please note that at times when the need group is larger than the number of available places, places will be secured through a 'first to pay, first secured' basis; however we will avoid this wherever possible.

Residential visits are normally organised into Key Stage 3 visits and 14-19 visits, however if we are unable to fill the minimum required places on a particular visit we may offer the places to students in the different key stage so that the visit can continue.

We aim to offer every student in school at least two residential visits during their time with us; however whilst we will do all we can to make this happen, it is not always possible.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

The school may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution toward any activity or visit. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school may cancel the activity or visit. Parents/carers will be advised from the outset if the visit may be cancelled due to insufficient voluntary contributions being received; however there is no obligation to make any contribution as it is not compulsory.

Please note that no student will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. If a parent/carer is unable to pay or make a voluntary contribution, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

### **Families qualifying for remission or help with charges**

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

Parents in receipt of:

- Income support (IS);
- Income based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999;

- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules;
- Guaranteed state pension.

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the school taking into account as to whether additional help is justified.

For those students who are eligible for Pupil Premium (those who have received a free school meal within the last 6 years, or Looked After Children or Service Children), the school may decide to fund any activity or visit, both in and out of school hours, which they feel the child would benefit from. Parents/carers will be informed if the school will be funding an activity or visit for their child and will seek approval for the child to participate.

### **Additional considerations**

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- For activities or trips that cost over £20, we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or if we are required to amend it by the Department for Education, whichever is sooner.