



Introduction

This policy is intended to provide clarity over when parents can be asked to contribute funding towards the cost of activities, materials etc. and to provide clarity over when parents/carers may receive remission to support the cost of activities.

As an independent academy trust, King Edward VI School makes no charge for admitting students. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours (excluding the midday break), it is free. No charge can be made for books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport in connection with education during normal school hours.

The School will follow the advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Permitted Charges

The School may recover the full cost of the following activities but charges will not exceed the actual costs:

- Materials, books, instruments and other equipment, where the child's parents wishes him/her to own them
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below)
- Any cost associated with optional extras (see below)
- The cost of entering public examinations not prescribed in regulations (see below)
- School resources lost, defaced or otherwise damaged whilst in a student's keeping
- Repairs to school buildings, furniture or property necessitated by a student's behaviour
- Administration relating to Subject Access Request (SAR)
- Library fines

All students are encouraged to play a full part in the rich school life we have to offer, and we are committed to ensuring no student is excluded from an activity because parents/carers are unable or unwilling to pay. However, if there is insufficient funding for an activity available then reluctantly, we may have to cancel it. Where a permitted charge is likely to be made, the parents/carers will be told the amount in advance.

Optional extras

Charges may be requested for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the national curriculum or part of religious education
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit (subject to remission arrangements)
- Extra-curricular activities and other school trips outside school hours
- Sale of equipment such as revision guides and sundry equipment (these will be sold at cost plus any administration fees incurred)

When calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- The cost of buildings and accommodation i.e. residential trips
- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged purely to provide an optional extra, this may include cover supply teachers;
- Specific administrative costs

The charge must not exceed the cost of the provision, and parents/carers must agree to their child receiving the optional extra.

Music and vocal tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Public Examinations

No charges are made for entering students for public examinations. However, examination fees will be charged to parents if:

- The examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at the School.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the School arranges for the student to take it.
- A student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the School paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
- A student chooses to re-sit an examination or module in order to try to improve their module score.

- A student requests access to their answer paper and/or requests a re-mark.

Parents should note that pre-payment in full is required if applying for a re-sit, re-mark or access to an answer paper, and that applications will not be processed without payment.

Data Access Request (DAR)

Where the School is required to produce materials in respect of a Data Access Request a charge will be made to cover administrative costs if they think the request is unfounded or excessive.

Voluntary contributions

The School may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of any activity which takes place during school hours. The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, and the students of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Requests for voluntary contributions made include a small amount for Key Stages 4 and 5 Art and Technology for additional resources. In some circumstances, when there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled. Please note that a fee is applied by the School for administration and staff cover which are necessary for the activity to take place.

The “Pound-a-Day” Scheme

The School traditionally has relied upon parental voluntary contributions to the School Fund “Pound-a-Day” Scheme to financially support the huge range of extra-curricular activities. The specific types of extra-curricular activities and enrichment to be funded will be determined at the discretion of the Headmaster, who will assess the School’s needs and priorities to ensure the best use of the resources.

Remissions

Students in receipt of the following support payments, are entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential trips. The relevant support payments are:

- Universal Credit
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (providing you’re not also entitled to Working Tax Credit)

In addition to the above, in cases where parents/carers are experiencing financial hardship, the School may undertake to support students in activities by providing all or part of the costs from School funds. This will be at the sole discretion of the Headmaster.

Sixth Form students can apply for financial support via the 16-19 Bursary. Details of the application process are published on the school website.

To request help, parents can write in confidence to the School Business Manager and, if requested, provide proof of their income or benefit. In all cases, the remission of charges cannot be guaranteed.

Refunds

Refunds following withdrawal from any permitted charge will not be provided if the student has been excluded from the activity due to disciplinary reasons. Refunds relating to unforeseen circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis, and at the discretion of the School Business Manager.

Recovery of Permitted Charges

The School will seek to recover charges which remain outstanding from parents/carers.

Policy Review

The School will monitor the impact of this policy annually to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.