



CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Introduction

At New Dawn Trust we want to provide a range of experiences which add excitement and enjoyment to children's learning and personal development. All our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Many of these activities have a cost associated with them and, unfortunately, cannot be provided unless we ask parents for voluntary contributions and, in some cases, make a charge. There are some strict rules we have to abide by. Our charging policy sets out what we will charge for, how we will try to make it manageable for parents and how we will help parents with limited incomes.

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities, in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This policy has been written to summarise the information given in "A Guide to the Law for School Governors" (Chapter 23). This guidance accurately reflects the terms of the Education Act 1996, but is not a complete substitute for this document.

Education

New Dawn Trust will not charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;

The Trust can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.

Optional Extras:

Charges will be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school, or to other premises where the local education authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip;
- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers and non teaching staff engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;

- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

No charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

The charge cannot exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra or the board and lodging.

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.

Charging for provision of a school meal:

Any charge for provision of a school meal will not exceed the actual cost of the supplier.

Voluntary Contributions:

Nothing in legislation prevents the school from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or any school activities. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. It will also be made clear that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is also important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his parents are unwilling or unable to pay. Parents who are unable to pay may make an appointment with the head of school to discuss payment options.

All contributions must be made by the due date. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a trip, then it may be cancelled, at the discretion of the Heads of School of the academies within the Trust.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The schools will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places will be.

Swimming:

The Trust organizes swimming lessons for one year group of children in the academies. Lessons take place in school time and we request a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of the hire of the pool and specialist teacher.

Residential Trips:

The Trust organizes annual residential visits. Parents will be given the option of a payment plan to spread the cost of the visits. In the event of severe financial difficulty special arrangements may be made with the Head of School in order to allow children to access the residential trip which will form a major part of the curriculum for that term.

Music Tuition:

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule. The new regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing.

Out of school hours activities:

A charge may be made for activities which take place partly or wholly outside school hours. Out of school activities will be organized to supplement and support formal learning in curriculum areas and to provide further experiences to enable pupils to develop their full potential.

If a particular activity is limited to a specific number of pupils, the inclusion of pupils must not make reference to the ability or willingness to pay on behalf of the parent.

Breakages and Fines:

The Trustees reserve the right to ask parents to pay for the cost of replacing any item such as broken windows, replacement reading or homework diaries, defaced, damaged or lost text books, any item damaged as a result of unsatisfactory pupil behaviour.

Items sold by the Trust:

The Trust makes a number of items available for purchase by parents eg water bottles and book bags.

Costs are kept as low as possible and the Trust takes full advantage of bulk purchasing opportunities. Any profits are directly reinvested for the pupils benefit.