



ED0016B - Charges, Voluntary Contributions, Remissions and Refunds



Introduction

At Esland Bedford we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our students whatever their needs and ability. Our school aims to raise achievement, remove barriers to learning and increase physical and curricular access for all. Our charging and remissions policy is designed to support us in achieving this aim.

Aims and Objectives

Education placements at Esland's Bedford School are funded by local authority commissioning teams. This policy aims to set out what activities and events can/cannot be charged for in addition to the agreed placement fee.

We aim 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 and will not be made in addition to agreed placement .
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

Legislation and Guidance

[This policy is based](#) on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Roles and Responsibilities

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.

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

Staff: 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 school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

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

Where additional charges to parents/carers charges cannot be made

Education placement fees are agreed with local authorities following referral. The education placement fee ensures that the young person's needs can be met through the school's curriculum offer. The school will, therefore, not impose additional charges on parents/carers for any of the following:

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 or the Bedford School Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school and religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/carer.
- 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.

Transport

- Esland Bedford school takes no responsibility for providing or funding transportation for registered students to or from the school premises. Where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport, this must be arranged by the funding Local Authority throughout the duration of a student's placement. Where the funding Local Authority does not have a statutory obligation, responsibility lies with the young person's parent, guardian, foster carer of registered care placement.
- Esland Bedford will provide any transportation required for registered students to other premises where the governing board has arranged for students to be educated.
- Esland Bedford will provide transportation for any offsite provision that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Esland Bedford will provide any transportation in connection with an educational visit. At times it may be agreed that the child/young person meets the teacher and/or education staff at the visit.

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 or religious education.

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him or her to own them.
- Optional extras (see section 7.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 7.3)
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. These may include:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the Bedford School curriculum, the National Curriculum, A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school or religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- 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)
- *Parental/carer agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.*

Music tuition

Schools 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/carer. 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 Bedford School or for a student who is looked after by a local authority.

Residential visits

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

Voluntary Contributions

The school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities which would not otherwise be possible. Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include sporting activities or enrichment visits that extend beyond the scope of the curriculum. 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 school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any 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)

Monitoring Arrangements

The headteacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.