



LAURUS
—
TRUST

Charging & Remission Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Background

The Laurus Trust wishes to make a broad programme of activities accessible to as many students as possible. This policy is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of each school's budget. It also defines other circumstances when our schools may wish to ask for voluntary contributions, how these charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs.

The policy is written to comply with sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996. Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities. This policy also references the 'Charging for School Activities' guidance produced by the Department for Education.

2. EDUCATION

The Laurus Trust will **not** charge for:

- Admission to any of our schools;
- Education provided during school hours¹. This includes the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment and transport provided in school hours by the Trust to carry students between the school and an activity;
- 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 student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school.

3. CHARGEABLE ACTIVITIES

When charges are to be made the Trust reserves the absolute right to determine whether the activity has to be cancelled if an insufficient number of parents/carers are prepared to pay for the activity to take place.

The Laurus Trust **may** charge for:

- Materials and Equipment – any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wish to own them (section 3.1);
- Optional Extras (section 3.2);
- Music and Vocal Tuition, in limited circumstances (section 3.3);

¹ School hours are those when the school is actually in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Parents and others have a right to information about school hours, and this information is included in our prospectuses

- Certain fees associated with public examinations (section 3.4);
- Cost of Damages and Loss (section 3.5)

3.1. Materials and Equipment

Parents/carers may be expected to provide materials, or be charged for materials where, the students wish to own the end product, for example, ingredients and or materials for items produced during food technology, textiles, design technology and art classes. Also, should a parent wish to own the books or equipment, such as revision guides, text books and musical instruments, these items will be chargeable.

3.2. Optional Extras

Charges may 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:
 - a) the National Curriculum;
 - b) a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school;
 - c) religious education;
- examination entry fees and re-sits if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the governing body have 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school club and supervised homework sessions).

In 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; this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra.

- The cost or an appropriate proportion of the costs for teaching staff employed to provide music or vocal tuition where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It will not include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. The cost may however include a small administrative charge to cover the cost of ParentPay transaction charges.

No charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

3.3. Music and Vocal Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music and vocal lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual student, or groups of an appropriate size, to play a musical instrument or have vocal lessons, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

3.4. Public examinations

11-16 education

All normal costs associated with prescribed public examinations are borne by a school. This includes any costs associated with re-marks and re-sits where the school has requested that these take place. However if a parent/carer or student requests a re-mark, re-sit or a copy of an examination script, an amount will be charged to the parent/carer to cover costs. This amount shall correspond to any relevant fee levied to the school by the examining body plus a £5 administration fee for each request.

Sixth form

No charge will be made for first entry to a prescribed public examination for which a student has been prepared by the school. However the full fee will be charged for any re-sit or re-mark plus a £5 administration fee for each request.

3.5. Cost of Damages and Loss

These include any damages to the fabric of the school premises (such as a broken window) and the defacing, loss or breakage of books or classroom equipment. In such cases, especially where the damage is due to unacceptable or irresponsible behaviour on the part of the student, parents/carers will be asked to pay the cost of repair or replacement. Such charges may be reduced or waived on an individual basis if this is deemed to be appropriate on educational grounds, for example, in certain circumstances where a student has owned up to a

misdemeanour.

A charge will also be applied for replacement items such as sixth form identity cards or locker keys.

4. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Nothing in legislation prevents the Trust from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of a school or any school activities. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, it should be explained to them at the planning stage. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled. The essential point is that no student may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or will not, make a contribution of any kind. The school must first decide which class, or group of students, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity or by general fund-raising.

5. EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If 50% or more of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made. (Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours.) As an example, a long-distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours, but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours, the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge. By contrast, a trip which involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon, but then went on until quite late in the evening, would be classified as taking place outside school time. Charges would then be allowed.

6. CHARGES BY THIRD PARTIES

When an organisation acting independently of a school arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent. However, where an activity is organised by a third party, and is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, it will be treated as if it were provided by the school, and no charge should be made to the parents, or pupils. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an 'approved educational activity' within the meaning of Regulation 4A(a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended)

7. REMISSIONS

School funds permitting and at the school's discretion, the school may make a contribution towards the cost of essential support, essential equipment or activities for which a charge is levied by the school to students entitled to receive free school meals. Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities.

Board and lodging costs on a non-optional residential trip will be completely remitted for every student whose parents can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £16,190;
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance introduced on 27 October 2008