



CONNAH'S QUAY HIGH SCHOOL

Creu Llwyddiant | Creating Success

Charging Policy

This Policy has been written in accordance with the most recent Government guidance. This Policy will be rewritten as necessary to reflect the changing emphasis of the school and the changes in Government legislation and reviewed biannually.

Policy Title	Safeguarding Policy
Date of Publication	October 2023
Approved by & Date	October 2023
SLT Lead	DMI

This policy has been compiled in conjunction with Flintshire County Council and the Education Reform Act 1988.

Introduction to the Formulation of the Policy

L.E.A's or schools are not statutorily required to charge for any activity.

Where charging is permissible within Section 106-111 and 117-113 of the Education Reform Act, the nature of those charges will depend on the Policy of the L.E.A and on the policy of the Governing Body.

The provision of the sections of the Education Reform Act detailed above are effective from 1st April 1989.

L.E.A Policy on Charging

The LEA does not require charges to be raised for any school activity.

Where Governors determine to charge; those charges must conform to the requirements listed in the Welsh Office Circular 4/89.

Governing Bodies may request voluntary contributions from parents and others but must make it clear to parents that for activities, wholly or mainly in school time, children may not be excluded if no contribution is made (except in the cases of boarding and residential charges or optional extras).

Educational Visits and School Journeys

In schools other than independent schools the education provided wholly or mainly during school hours is free. This means that Heads may not impose a charge on parents for any visit that occurs during school hours. The Head teacher however, may ask for a voluntary contribution.

Parents should be made aware that the contribution is not compulsory, and the children of parents who do not contribute may not be discriminated against. It is permissible to ask parents to contribute more than the minimum amount in order to subsidise those young people whose parents have not contributed. In the last resort, the visit may have to be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions and the shortfall cannot be made up.

The Head teacher may, however, charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full costs when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours;
- does not form part of the National Curriculum;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination; and
- is not in scope of the statutory requirements relating to religious education.

For example, a skiing holiday during the school holidays would be an optional extra.

The Head teacher should obtain the parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before the visit is planned in detail. Charging parents for an optional extra visit may not include an element of subsidy in respect of other young people whose families do not meet the full charge.

On residential visits which are not optional extras, or which take place during school hours, some parents may have board and lodging costs remitted. The LA's remission policy will provide details of eligibility for remission of fees.

The visit leader should ensure that parents/carers have written information about the costs of the visit, how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent/carer will be charged or asked to contribute. Parents/carers should be given enough time to prepare financially for the visit. It may be useful to break the costs down into subheadings such as travel, hostel, meals etc.

The Head/EVC should ensure that banking arrangements are in place to separate the visit's receipts from other school funds and from private accounts.

The Head/EVC/visit leader should reach a pre-agreement with parents/carers on whether any funds left surplus after the visit will be returned to parents/carers or retained for another visit.

Collection of deposits and accounting

Visit leaders will frequently have to act as agents for the authority or school in the collection and accounting of parental contributions. Leaders must, at the early planning stage, familiarise themselves with arrangements for financial accountability within the school.

It is particularly important to:

- ensure that the Council requirements and the school's/centre's internal procedures for financial accountability are adhered to;
- have specific times for collection and receipting of deposits and to avoid ad hoc arrangements;
- ensure that monies are not credited, or bills paid, through an individual visit leader's personal bank account, however convenient this may appear, without the specific, prior, written approval of the Head;
- ensure simultaneous recording/receipting of amounts collected;
- maintain adequate records to ensure that all monies due are identified and collected;
- make arrangements with the school/centre for the hand over of records and monies as appropriate.

Materials for Practical Subjects and Project Assignments

A charge for ingredients may be asked (cash or kind) provided parents have agreed in advance that they wish to own the finished article/ product. It is recommended that parental agreement be sought at the beginning of each course.

Governors may request voluntary contributions in cash or kind on the understanding that children may not be excluded if no contribution is made.

Optional Extras outside the School Day

For activities outside school hours and not part of a public examination syllabus or a requirement of the National Curriculum or religious education, a charge may be made within the policy determined by the Governing Body. The basis of this charging policy must be made known to parents and the charges must be agreed in advance by the individual parents concerned in writing.

Public Examinations

Learners prepared for a prescribed (approved list from the Minister), public examination must be entered free of charge unless the parents are informed of the inadvisability of entry and the reason well in advance. This will be a professional recommendation based on educational grounds.

Charges may be made for examination entry in the following circumstances:

- When a learner wishes to re-take a subject and has not received tuition since the previous examination (or where such an entry is not recommended or supported on educational grounds by the school).
- When a learner wishes to take the same subject with more than one examining board. The second fee is chargeable to the parent.
- When entry is made for the learner (with parental agreement) for a public examination which;
 - Is not prescribed, and
 - Is prepared for outside school (also a charge to cover the costs of providing the optional extra).
- Where a learner is prepared and entered for a public examination and fails to complete the requirements, the cost of entry(s) should be attempted to be regained.

Individual Music Tuition

Pupils who wish to receive instrumental/ vocal tuition in school must complete an Agreement Form which will allow the school to plan the provision for the full academic year. The charge for this provision will be charged on a termly basis, or a reduction in the price is offered if the annual amount is paid in full. Unfortunately refunds will not be provided if the learner decides to finish tuition before the end of the academic year, as Music Staff are bought in by the school on an annual basis.

Flintshire County Council operates a remissions policy for low income families, enabling learners who qualify for Free School Meals to receive tuition free of charge. Tuition costs are heavily subsidised by both schools and Flintshire County Council with parental contributions representing around one third of the actual charge.

Pupils having lessons from the Music Service are entitled to free membership of the Flintshire Music ensembles, once the required standard has been reached.

Flintshire Music Service also operates an Instrument Loan Scheme, whereby a learner is able to borrow a county instrument for up to two years for an annual maintenance fee of £25. This fee applies to all learners; including those registered for free school meals.

Swimming

Swimming is deemed to be a permissible element of the Curriculum and may attract voluntary contributions.

Out of School Clubs and Activities

The school offers a range of out of school clubs and activities and reserves the right to charge for such sessions to cover the cost of provision where those activities are not directly aimed at providing educational benefit to the learners.

Transport to Extra- Curricular Activities

Parents/ Carers may be charged to cover the transport expenses associated with the trip or extra -curricular activity. Charges for transport will be strictly based on covering actual costs with no profit element.

Supplementary

Governors may determine reasonable requirements for school clothing, including P.E kit, protective clothing in laboratories/ workshops, etc.

Where school property or equipment is damaged or lost as a consequence of learners' behaviour, payment from parents may be requested.

L.E.A Policy on Remissions

Learners who **are** entitled to remission are those whose parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Income related Element of Employment and Support Allowance, Guarantee Credit Element of Pension Credit or Child Tax Credit (same qualifying criteria as Free School Meals).

Those school journeys/ visits that would qualify for full remission of board and lodgings charges are those which:

- Take place during school hours, Monday to Friday, weekends **cannot** be claimed for.
- Trips to Glan Llyn, Nant B.H, Pentrellyncymer and Urdd Centre, Cardiff.

Funds will be made available and based on an average of one journey per year for those who qualify (are entitled).

The funds will be held centrally and the schools would forward the details of the entitlements, and to enable school budgets to be credited with the appropriate sums.

The Governing Body may wish to extend the policy (using School Private Fund or Grant Funding) to other categories of learners, or undertake partial remissions in other circumstances. These cases must be assessed on an individual basis for each learner.

Lettings

The school is permitted to charge for the letting of school facilities (classroom, cookery rooms etc.) for private parties outside of the school hours.

Charges made should cover the cost of utility/ resource costs and also staffing (as there must be a member of the site management team on site at all times).

All monies received in relation to hiring or letting of school premises or equipment must be repaid to the LEA's delegated school account and not into School Fund.