



COLMERS SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Charging & Remissions Policy

Agreed: July 2018
Next Review: September 2019

Statement of intent

Colmers School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2014) 'Charging for School Activities'
- DfE (2015) 'Governance Handbook'

2. Charging for education

2.1. We will not charge parents **and carers** for:

- Admission applications.
- **Education for EU and UK (Home) students provided during school hours.**
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sits, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

2.2. We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music and vocational tuition (where it is not part of timetabled music lessons)
- Use of community facilities
- **Education for international students where funding is not provided by the Department for Education**

3. Optional extras

3.1. We may charge parents **and carers** for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
 - Religious education.

- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school or where a re-sit is not recommended by the school
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

3.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- The employment of non-teaching staff
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument

3.3. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

3.4. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra.

4. Examination fees

4.1. We may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.
- **The examination fee relates to entries for overseas students**

5. Examination re-sits

5.1. Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, we will pay the fee when in our professional opinion it is in the best interests of the pupil.

5.2. If a pupil or their parents consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parents. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/pupil will have their fees refunded.

6. Voluntary contributions

6.1. We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

- 6.2. No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.
- 6.3. We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

7. Music tuition

- 7.1. Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents.
- 7.2. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

8. Transport

- 8.1. We will not charge for:
- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
 - Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
 - Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.

9. Residential visits

- 9.1. We will not charge for:
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours where it forms part of the National Curriculum.
 - Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
 - Supplying teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.
- 9.2. We may charge for board, lodging and travel – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- 9.3. Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:
- Universal Credit
 - Income Support
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year
 - The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
 - An income related employment and support allowance

10. Education partly during school hours

- 10.1. If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.
- 10.2. If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- 10.3. **Residential visits:** If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, we will not charge for the activity.
- 10.4. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.
- 10.5. Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

11. Tuition Fees for Overseas Students (non EU)

- 11.1. We make charges for the cost of providing post 16 education for students who are not funded directly by the Department for Education, or Local Authority.
- 11.2. Students from the UK and EEA funded through the Education & Skills Funding Agency will not be required to make a charge.
- 11.3. All other students will be classed as overseas students and required to make payment of fees on a termly basis.
- 11.4. The tuition fee for academic year 2019/20 will be £6000 for education tuition.
- 11.5. Examination fees will be charged at cost to the school.
- 11.6. International or overseas students are expected to pay fees in full prior to the commencement of their course, in line with UK Border Agency guidelines
- 11.7. An administrative fee of up to £750 will be levied for international students where visa applications have been refused by the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA).
- 11.8. The college may apply the full international fee to the student, should the student leave their course prior to the completion of the course.
- 11.9. Fees paid by an international student may not be deferred to a further academic year unless in circumstances where the college has cancelled the course.
- 11.10. Tuition fee refunds will only be available in line with the refunds section 14, of this policy.

12. Damaged or lost items

- 12.1. The school may charge parents for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour. Parents will not be taken to court for failure to pay such costs.

13. Remissions

- 13.1. We have set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance

will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

13.2. Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

13.3. To request assistance, parents should contact the school Finance Office or a pupil's Head of Learning & Achievement.

14. Refunds

14.1. General Refunds may be considered where a parent or carer makes a written request to the school finance office setting out the reasons for requesting the refund.

14.2. Refunds may only be authorised where the goods or services that the payment relates to have not yet been received.

14.3. All other requests will be considered on an exceptional circumstances basis.

Refunds for tuition fees:

14.4. Refunds for tuition fees will only be considered if Colmers School & Sixth Form College has cancelled a course.

14.5. All other requests will be considered on an exceptional circumstances basis.

14.6. If Colmers School has not cancelled the course, all refunds for fees paid must be supported by a refund request form signed by the student.

14.7. It is the responsibility of the student to contact and discuss with the Head of Sixth Form the reason they want to withdraw from the course.

14.8. Where a student has taken a loan from the Student Loan Company and decides to withdraw, the balance of the fees outstanding will be payable by the student.

14.9. Once confirmation of a course cancellation has been received students can claim a full refund.

14.10. Where an alternative course has been offered and accepted by the student, fees paid will be transferred to the new course. Overpaid fees will be refunded at the time of course transfer.

14.11. Where a student has taken a loan from the Student Loan Company the balance of the fees refundable may be returned to the Student Loan Company or if verified in writing from the Student Loan Company, the individual student.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body Finance & HR Committee.