



Larwood Academy Trust

Chair of Trustees: Daniel Login |BA (Hons)|

LARWOOD DRIVE, STEVENAGE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG1 5BZ
Email: admin@larwood.herts.sch.uk **Telephone:** 01438 236333
Website: www.larwoodacademytrust.co.uk



Larwood School

Brandles School

Executive Headteacher: Mr Pierre van der Merwe |BA, NPQH|

Headteacher: Mr Paul Smith |BA (Hons), AVCM|

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V1.1	January 2024	Changed point 10.

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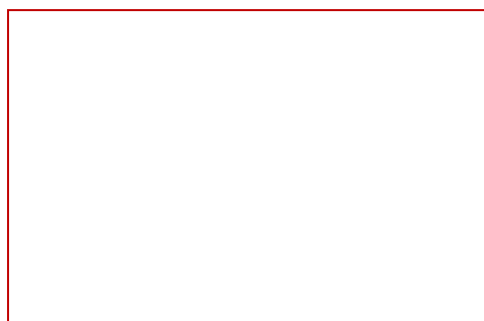
Dan Login

Chair of Trustees

Pierre van der Merwe

Executive Headteacher

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY



Policy Number: 02

Review Committee: Finance and Resources

Type of Policy: Statutory

Review Period: Every 2 years

Approved: January 2024

Next Review: January 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Trust may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to state-funded schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the Trust may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

2. AIM

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Set out what the schools within the Trust will not charge for, and what they will make a charge for or request a voluntary contribution towards, from parents/guardians.
- Clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and guardians understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 What is a charge and what is a voluntary contribution?

- A charge is where the parent/carer is expected to pay the cost for the activity/event, where it is the policy that no profit will be made by the school.
- Voluntary Contributions are made by parents/carers. Voluntary means that the parent/carer is not expected to pay the full cost of the activity/event. In the information given to parents/carers regarding the activity/event, the proportional cost to the school will be made clear.

4. TRUST CANNOT CHARGE FOR:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process.
- 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.

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- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g., geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g., developing teamwork skills).

5. THE TRUST CAN CHARGE FOR:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them.
- optional extras
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- certain early years provision
- community facilities

6. 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:

- A. part of the national curriculum.
 - B. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - C. part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
 - transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education).
 - board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
 - extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea, and supervised homework sessions).

IN CALCULATING THE COST OF OPTIONAL EXTRAS AN AMOUNT MAY BE INCLUDED IN RELATION TO:

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

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore 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 cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on 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.

7. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Nothing in legislation prevents a school trust or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the trust or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The Trust must also make it clear that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from any activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

8. MUSIC TUITION

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Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental, and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

9. TRANSPORT

SCHOOLS **CANNOT** CHARGE FOR:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

10. DAMAGE/LOSS TO PROPERTY

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to school equipment on loan or breakages such as schoolbooks, chrome books, the following will apply: Damage resulting in a replacement/repair value of up to £100 can be charged to the student at the discretion of the Headteacher. Amounts over £100 should be referred to the Executive Headteacher and amounts over £500 should be referred to the Chair of the Governing Body. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

11. SWIMMING

11.1 Where a school organises swimming lessons for pupils, these take place in school time and are part of the school's curriculum.

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11.2 We do not ask for a voluntary contribution towards pool hire because we are providing lessons as part of the school's curriculum. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place

12. RESIDENTIAL VISITS

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A 'half day' means any period of one to three hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

13. NON-RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

15. REMISSIONS POLICIES

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.

The Trust's policy may be more generous than the local authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents.

The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school, Trust or local authority propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The Trust may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

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16. SCHOOLS CANNOT CHARGE FOR:

- 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, 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.
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

17. FAMILIES QUALIFYING FOR REMISSION OR HELP WITH CHARGES

To remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made may be offered at no charge or at reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances. Examples of circumstances are given below:

- Income Support (IS).
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA).
- 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) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14)
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

18. EDUCATION PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

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19. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Executive Head teacher or Trust may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours.
- school equipment.
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

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