



Esland North Limited - Exec

ED00160 - Charges, Voluntary Contributions, Remissions and Refunds



Introduction

At Esland Online School 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 seeks to raise achievement, remove barriers to learning and increase access to learning, participation and the curriculum for all pupils. Our charging and remissions policy is designed to support us in achieving this aim.

Aims and Objectives

Education placements at Esland Online 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

The school is committed to ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged or excluded from educational opportunities due to financial circumstances.

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

The agreed placement fee covers the provision set out within the pupil's placement agreement, including access to teaching, pastoral support, assessment, reporting and any additional provision specified within the agreed placement package. 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 Online 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 (if required)

- Transporting registered pupils to or from places of learning, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport. Any transport to and/or from school will be included in the placement fee agreed with the local authority if this is required.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided 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.

Where charges can be made

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him or her to own them.

- Optional extras.
- 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 Online 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.
- Optional enrichment activities, extended learning sessions, intervention programmes or additional services that fall outside the agreed placement package.

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 Online School or for a student who is looked after by a local authority.

Refunds

Where payments have been made for chargeable activities and the activity does not take place, the school will consider whether a full or partial refund is appropriate.

Any refund decision will take account of costs already incurred by the school.

Refund requests should be made to the Headteacher in writing.

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.

Voluntary contributions may be sought to support enrichment activities, guest speakers, educational resources, celebrations, educational visits or other opportunities that enhance the pupil experience beyond the core placement offer.

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.

The school may also consider individual circumstances where financial hardship would prevent a pupil from participating in an activity.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Headteacher and Placement Director for Education monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and approved by the governing body.