



CHARGING POLICY

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Introduction

Rochdale Borough Council set out guidance to School Governing Boards in the Scheme for Financing Schools, Financial Regulations & Guidance for Best Practise.

School governing boards, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment. They cannot charge for education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum.

Transport

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport (please refer to the LA policy for Travel Assistance);
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport which enables a pupil to reach an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Please refer to the BLC Travel Assistance Policy regarding Home to School Transport

- It is parent's/carers responsibility to apply for the IGO bus pass.
- On admission, pupils are entitled to free travel assistance if they live more than 3 miles away from their centre. Pupils will be admitted to the centre closest to their home unless this is not the most appropriate site. School will apply for this initially but responsibility will then fall to the parents to maintain this.
- Until a bus pass can be issued, bus fare will be refunded at concessionary rates on the production of the bus tickets.
- Replacement bus passes are the responsibility of parents and at this point bus fares will not be refunded.

Parents/carers of pupils who have an EHC plan should refer to the RMBC Travel Assistance Policy. Parents/carers of all other students should refer to the BLC Travel Assistance Policy.

School Meals

Governing boards have direct responsibility for the provision and delivery of school meals and determine the charges for those meals so long as those pupils entitled to a free meal can obtain a meal, free of charge.

It is anticipated that all schools would wish to set their meals prices at the level determined by the LA under its School Meal Pricing Policy, regardless of whether the school receives its service through the Council's contractor 'Facilities Management' or another provider. However, it is recognised that it is within the remit of the governing board to set meal prices.

The BLC set their meal prices at the level determined by the LA under its School Meal Pricing Policy

Residential visits

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.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Where a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove that they are in receipt of benefits such as income support will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

The BLC do not normally charge for residential visits but reserve the right to ask for a contribution towards the costs where the exceptions do not apply.

Music Tuition

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 BLC do not charge for music tuition.

School Milk & Breakfast Club

All schools are obliged to offer milk on a daily basis to all primary aged children. This should be provided free of charge to all children in nursery and in KS1 and to children in KS2 who are entitled to a free school meal.

The BLC do not charge for Breakfast club or refreshments provided during the school day, after schools clubs, extended school or youth provision other than the school meal provision.

School trips - Voluntary contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing board 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 governing board or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset.

The governing board or head teacher should also make it clear to parents 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 making payment 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.

The BLC do not normally charge for residential visits but reserve the right to ask for a contribution towards the costs.

School trips – Educational or Non Educational - Dealing with income and expenditure

The determination of whether a trip is 'Educational' or 'Non Educational' is at the discretion of the Headteacher. As a general guide, if the trip generates class work or discussion either before or after the trip then it would fall into the 'Educational' category.

If the trip is regarded as a treat for the children such as a Christmas pantomime or an end of academic year trip to Blackpool or Alton Towers for example, then these would fall into the 'Non Educational' category.

If the school trip is regarded as 'Educational' then it is recommended that any expenditure (including VAT) is charged against the **school's ISB account**. Any voluntary contribution received is also receipted against the **school's ISB account** but in all cases, this income should be treated as 0% VAT – Non Business. Furthermore, the income collected should **not** exceed the NET cost of a particular school trip as the school is **able** to claim back the VAT expenditure on 'Educational' trips.

If the school trip is regarded as 'Non Educational' then it is recommended that the Gross expenditure (which includes VAT) is charged against the **Private School Fund account**. Any voluntary contribution received is also receipted against the **Private School Fund account**. This income should be collected inclusive of 20% Standard VAT as the school is **unable** to claim back the VAT expenditure on 'Non Educational' trips.

The BLC do not normally charge for school trips but reserve the right to ask for a contribution towards the costs.

Damage

The procedure to recover damage costs is as follows:

Stage 1: Letter issued:

At this stage, a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting a percentage of the total costs that school have incurred to repair or replace an item or part of the school building. The minimum payment that parents must pay towards damages will be £10.

The letter will include details of the total amount of damage caused along with, if available, an invoice from the supplier who has replaced or repaired the damage.

This is to be paid at any BLC site as all admin offices can process payments received by parents/carers. Parents can request at this point to meet with the Centre Manager to discuss the potential for the pupil to pay from the point allocation for rewards if this is preferred.

Stage 2: Meeting with Centre Manager

If no attempt to repay monies owed for damage within a reasonable timeframe, a meeting will need to be arranged by the Centre Manager with parents to discuss a way forward.

Any damage in excess of £300 could lead to it being reported to the police as criminal damage. Parents/Carers will be informed if this is a possible outcome.

Uniform

Pupils who attract Pupil Premium will be entitled to a free sweatshirt, polo shirt and PE Kit every year.

Pupils who do not attract Pupil Premium, the parents/carer will be charged for uniform.

The current Prices are:

- Adult Size Sweatshirts £12.00
- Child Size Sweatshirts £10.00.
- Adult Size Polo Shirts £10.00
- Child Size Polo Shirts £9.00.
- ½ Zip Fleece £12.00
- Full Zip Fleece £14.00
- PE Kit – T.B.C

Uniform can be paid for by cash or by cheque made out to Brownhill School.