



CHARGING POLICY

March 2016
Review March 2018

Charging Policy

This Charging policy is underpinned by the UNCRC, with particular reference to article 28 '*Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available to every child*' and article 31 '*Every child has the right to relax, play and join in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*'

Section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in school maintained by local authorities in England. This policy is based on guidance from the DfE published January 2009.

Aim:

Schooling should be free.

Our aim is to include all students in as broad a range of curricular and extra curricular activities as possible.

Although no student will be prevented from taking part in any activity through inability to pay, the activity may not be able to proceed if voluntary contributions are not sufficient to cover costs.

In the case of lettings, the school's charges must reflect a level which ensures that the school does not subsidise any use of premises by the school's budget share allocated for the benefit of students in school.

1. Education during school hours

Westhoughton High School does not require that students pay for, or supply, materials, books, other equipment, instruments, and transport, for use in connection with education provided during school hours. It will however, be most helpful if parents voluntarily provide for students, so that they have in their possession each day, a pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and brief-case or similar sized bag in which to carry and protect books, files, papers and personal belongings. The governors will charge replacement cost for any item lost or deliberately defaced. They will also charge for damage such as broken windows, equipment etc. where this is due to a student's misbehaviour.

Westhoughton High School will not charge for materials and ingredients for practical subjects such as Food and Textile Technology and Craft Design and Technology. Nevertheless, we hope that parents will continue to provide materials and ingredients, on a voluntary basis, where appropriate.

If parents indicate in advance, a wish to own the finished product, the school will charge, or require the student to supply the ingredients or materials.

2. School trips

- No charges may be made for activities provided outside of school hours if the activity:
 - Is to fulfill requirements in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
 - Is specifically to fulfill duties relating to the National Curriculum
 - Is specifically to fulfill duties relating to Religious Education
- Advice for staff regarding collection of funds and trip financial management can be found on the Evolve system.

- The information includes a pro forma which has to be completed by all trip organisers, indicating planned costs and an assessment of how planned charges per students have been calculated.
- Profit should not be made from trips.
- If a residential trip is organized during school time charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances but exceptions do apply for students whose parents are receiving: Income Support; Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by The Inland Revenue, that does not exceed the IR assessed limit). As eligibility will vary, trip organisers should generally be mindful of a student's ability to pay and be sensitive in requests to students entitled to a free school meal who may be exempt from charges for residential courses.
- Letters are sent to parents requesting payment for voluntary contributions from trip organisers
- Letters sent to parents encourage payment by cheque or Parent Pay.
- Letters to parents also inform parents how payment should be delivered to school, which is normally in a sealed envelope, indicating the student's name form, trip description, date of trip and amount enclosed on the envelope and clearly state that monies should be returned to the school main office.
- All monies received for trips are paid into the school's bank account by the finance office staff after receipt onto the School Fund system.
- The Student Services Administrator is responsible for keeping adequate records of income and expenditure on a class list and will require details from trip organisers to support this function.
- All relevant receipts for income or spend should be passed to the finance office.
- The finance office prepares a final income and expenditure account for each trip which has taken place.

3. School Equipment

- To encourage learning, at the request of individual students, items may be purchased on their behalf net of VAT and the reduced cost charged to students on receipt of goods.
- The item of equipment must be necessary to the curriculum and used regularly in the classroom e.g. musical instruments.
- Sales of educational equipment to students may be made net of VAT where the following conditions are met:
 - The items in question are for regular use in class as part of the agreed curriculum.
 - No profit is made, i.e. sales are at net cost or less.
 - Items do not include sports equipment or any form of clothing.
 - The goods are ordered and paid for through the school account.

- Any dispute concerning educational advantage is subject to the head teacher's discretion
- Purchases of this nature should be clearly communicated to the Finance Office to ensure invoice arrangements can be made
- Invoices will be raised by the Finance Office

Note:- The above applies only to sales to students. Sales to members of staff must include VAT even where the equipment is to be used for school purposes unless supplied as part of a wider scheme such as the Home Computers Initiative.

4. Public examinations

Westhoughton High School will not charge entry fees for prescribed public examinations. Charges will not be made for re-sit(s) if the student is prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

A student will be entered for each examination for which she/he has been prepared unless the governors decide otherwise, and notify the parent that on educational grounds the student will not be entered.

Charges will be made for entry to examinations for which the student has not been prepared by the school or for entry to an examination which is not on a list to be determined by the Secretary of State.

Westhoughton High School will take steps to recover from parents, wasted public examination fees if a student fails without good reason, either to complete coursework requirements, or to attend for a final examination.

5. Contribution for willful damage/vandalism

Westhoughton High School will take steps to recover from students costs associated with any acts of wilful damage or vandalism. Each incident will be assessed by school staff with the final decision lying with the Headteacher.

6. Letting of school facilities

- All lettings are subject to a letting agreement, setting out the terms and conditions of the school letting, including the agreed charge.
- The governing body, on the recommendation of the finance committee, approves letting rates.
- When a letting is booked the hirer completes a hire form including an indemnity form and provides evidence of insurance arrangements ensuring that liability covers minimum required levels.
- the Finance Manager retains this record
- the Finance Manager raises the appropriate invoices

7. Music Lessons arranged by the school with Bolton Music Service

- Music Lessons arranged on behalf of students with Bolton Music Service will be subject to a charge

- Levels of annual charges applied to lessons will be agreed jointly by school and the Music Service
- Terms will be agreed with parents by receiving a signed contractual arrangement from each parent/guardian
- Parents will be requested to submit payment as agreed independently with Bolton Music Service
- Charges and terms and conditions will be reviewed annually in line with SLA arrangements by school governors. Review of charges will include an assessment of an agreed annual subsidy and payment for lessons taken by students entitled to a FSM.