

## Rationale:

The 1996 Education Act requires schools to have a policy on charging and remissions. The October 2014 Department for Education publication 'Charging for School Activities' clarifies those activities which may or may not be charged for, requests for voluntary contributions and the financial support available from schools for certain groups of parents and carers.

At Litherland High School we recognise the valuable contribution that additional activities including clubs, visits, residential trips and experiences of other cultures and environments can make towards our students' all round educational experience and their personal and social development. We want all our students to have equal opportunities to benefit from curricular and extra-curricular activities, both on and off site. This Policy describes how we will try to ensure a broad range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities we seek to provide.

## Aims:

- To ensure all staff and parents know which activities the school will and will not charge for;
- To outline the legal situation regarding voluntary contributions towards the cost of proposed activities.
- To make the programme of activities as accessible to as many students as possible by clarifying information relating to the financial support available from school.

## I. Litherland High School will not charge for:

- a) Admission to the school;
- b) Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- c) Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for at school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- d) Entry for a public examination the student is being prepared for at school;\*
- e) Examination re-sit if the student is being prepared for the re-sit at school;\*
- f) Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours (see section 2);
- g) Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours (see section 2)
  - if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
  - part of a syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for at school, or
  - part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- hj) Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

\* If a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirements expected by the school, a charge may be made.

## **2. Litherland High School will charge for:**

### a) Activities outside school hours:

Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed in Section 1) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours). (See Section 3)

### b) Residential visits during school hours:

The board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. Students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see section 7) will be exempt from paying the total cost of board and lodging.

### c) Music tuition:

Music tuition for individuals or groups of students to play a musical instrument which is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus.

When a trip is arranged, parents will be notified of the procedure for allocating places. This should ensure that parents who may not be able to pay quickly have the opportunity to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

## **3. Is a school visit in or out of school time?**

If the number of school sessions on a school 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 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

## **4. Optional Extras:**

Charges may be made by schools for some activities that are known as ‘optional extras’. Where an optional extra is being provided, Litherland High School may make charges for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally between the number of students participating. A student’s involvement in such an activity will be on the basis of parental choice. Optional extras include:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  1. a part of the National Curriculum;
  2. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at school; or
  3. a part of the school’s religious education provision;
- Examination entry fees if the student has not been prepared for the examination at school;
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;

- Transport other than that required to take the student to school or another place arranged for his or her education;
- Extended day provision such as breakfast club or after school clubs.

## **5. Voluntary Contributions:**

In addition to charging for certain activities, Litherland High School may seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wider variety of experiences to students. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and students whose parents are unwilling or unable to make such contributions will be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity.

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be made clear to parents from the outset and if insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

## **6. Additional considerations:**

Litherland High School recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead;
- We will provide a system for parents to pay in instalments;
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice, we will ensure it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip;
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection and will use a lottery system if necessary.

## **7. Remissions:**

In order to remove financial barriers from students and to ensure equality of opportunity, some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or at a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. Remission or help with charges will be available to those families whose children qualify for Free School Meals

The school may remit charges in full or part to other parents and carers after considering special requests involving hardship.

Parents and carers are invited to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or full using Appendix A.

The opportunity to take part in trips, visits and additional activities is an essential component to a young person's education. It allows the development of new ideas, an appreciation of culture and a broader

understanding of the world we live in. Litherland High School is determined that all of its young people should have equal access to the opportunities it provides and is committed to providing help and support wherever it is possible.