



Charging & Remissions Policy

Owner: Annette Brushett

Date Ratified: October 2019

Signed:

Date to be reviewed: October 2020

Dartford Science & Technology College's Governing Body has produced a Charging and Remissions Policy in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

The Governing Body believe that this policy is in line with legislation and recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including College visits, after College clubs and residential experiences, can make towards a student's personal and social education.

DSTC aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

1. General Principle

The general principle within the Act is that no charge will be made for any books, materials, instruments or equipment for use in connection with education if the education is:

- Within College hours (but excluding the mid-day break);
- Required for the National Curriculum but out of College hours;
- For statutory religious education;
- For a prescribed public examination prepared for by the College.

However there are exceptions where the College can make charges.

2. Exceptions

Charges are permitted under the Act to meet the costs of the following:

- Board and lodging on residential educational trips;
- Non educational trips;
- Music tuition and the attendant hiring of musical instruments where the tuition does not form part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination;
- Materials/ingredients required to produce a finished product made in College (e.g. in art, design, food or technology lessons), where parents have agreed in advance that the finished article should be owned by the parent/carer or the pupil;

- Entering a student for a public examination which is not prescribed in regulations, and for preparing the student for such an examination out of College hours;
- Entering a student for a public examination against the wishes of the College;
- Entering a student for a public examination where the student fails to attend and cannot provide medical evidence for this;
- Re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested by the parent or student but not recommended by the College;
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the College;
- The non-return of, or damage to, library books or text books;
- Voluntary optional extras provided outside of College hours (or mainly outside College hours).

In cases where a permitted charge is made, parents will be told the amount in advance wherever possible. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. The College will actively seek to collect any amount owed to it through the Small Claims Court, once all other avenues for collection have been exhausted.

3. Voluntary contributions

The Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific visit and/or activity either inside or outside of College time. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents will be told the amount in advance.

The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However the visit or activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

4. Other charges

To actively engage in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g. pens, pencils, rulers, calculators. Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents to provide these items, the College actively encourages parents and students to purchase them. Students can purchase basic stationery items in the College Library for convenience.

Some optional items of equipment may on occasion be offered for sale by the College e.g. calculators, revision guides etc.

Photocopying and/or printing which is not required by a member of staff may be charged for.

DSTC will seek payment from parents for damage to or loss of College property, caused wilfully or negligently by their child.

5. Refunds

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of trips or activities by the College or tour operator;
- The College deciding that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made;
- Wherever a student, having entered for a public examination against the college's wishes, achieves a pass grade in that examination;
- In the event that an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (the reimbursement of fees will be made by the examination board).

In other circumstances, refunds will be made at the discretion of the Principal.

6. Support Fund

Where charges are to be made to parents, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity.

Requests for help from parents on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits include:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;

- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of less than £16,190);
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit);
- Universal Credit (where your household income is less than £7,400 a year after tax and not including benefits).

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit, the College will nonetheless consider requests for assistance in the phasing of contributions, provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.