CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

Sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

Charging Policy

Tonbridge Grammar School's Charging and Remission Policy is in accordance with statutory guidance and guidance issued by the Department for Education "Charging for School Activities" May 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities

Education

Tonbridge Grammar School **does not charge** for:

- 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 part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at school, or part of religious education
- Group or individual instrumental or vocal tuition, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent or carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the student has been prepared for it at school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Tonbridge Grammar School **does charge** for:

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

- The replacement or repair cost of any materials, books, instruments or equipment issued on a loaned or temporary basis that are not returned when requested, or are returned damaged beyond reasonable wear and tear
- Individual and group instrumental and vocal tuition provided at the request of the student's parent or carer
- Optional extras (see below)
- Community facilities
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- If a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student's parent or carer

Optional Extras

Tonbridge Grammar School provides a wide range of activities which are charged for as optional extras. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school hours that is **not**:
  - part of the required curriculum
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the student is being prepared at school
  - part of religious education
- examination entry costs and fee(s) if the student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at school
- the cost of examination board reviews of marking and appeals and reviews requested under the internal appeals procedure (JCQ requirement)
- transport, other than transport required to take the student to school or other premises where the Trust Board has arranged for the student to be provided with education
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- extended day services offered to students (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- the costs of buildings and accommodation

- non-teaching staff
- teaching staff engaged under contracts of service purely to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, of teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra
- the charges levied by the payment services agent

Tonbridge Grammar School does not charge more than the actual cost of providing an optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parent or carer is unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate.

Student participation in an optional extra activity is on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Where the number of students who can participate in an optional extra activity is limited, Tonbridge Grammar School will make it clear to parents or carers at the outset what the policy for allocating places will be.

Music Tuition and Instrument Hire

Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition and instrument hire provided, either individually or in groups, where the tuition or hire is provided at the request of a parent or carer. Charges will not be made where tuition forms part of the National Curriculum or is required by an examination syllabus.

Residential Visits

Tonbridge Grammar School does not 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 required curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at school, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Tonbridge Grammar School does charge for board and lodging, not exceeding the actual cost.

Voluntary Contributions

Tonbridge Grammar School may request voluntary contributions from parents or carers of students:

- for the benefit of the whole school. Donors are able to make gift aid declarations which increase the value of the gift to the school;
- towards school or residential activities which cannot be funded without voluntary contributions such as school trips. It will be made clear to parents or carers at the outset if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contribution and that there is no obligation to make any contribution.
- towards materials for Visual Art and Design Technology in Years 7 – 13.

No student will be excluded from an activity because parents or carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If voluntary contributions are insufficient to fund a visit or the school cannot fund it from some other source, the visit will be cancelled.

Financial Support and Inclusion

The School is committed to ensuring that no student is disadvantaged from participating in curriculum or enrichment activities because of financial hardship. Assistance may be available through pupil premium, bursary, hardship or other funding sources.

Remissions Policy

In the case of residential visits, parents and carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals.
https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

The School will consider the use of Pupil Premium and other available hardship funding to support eligible students to meet any payments detailed in this policy who would otherwise be unable to participate. In other circumstances parents and carers are invited to apply to the Head Teacher in complete confidence for financial assistance.

Refunds

Where an activity is cancelled or a surplus arises on an activity, Tonbridge Grammar School will refund payments subject to the following:

- Refunds may be made net of charges incurred by the school including payment services provider charges and insurance costs
- Requests for refunds for trips should be made via email to the finance team (finance@tgs.kent.sch.uk) and will be considered on an individual basis. A charge for administering a refund may be deducted by the school prior to the remaining refund being issued.
- In the event that the school is unable to recoup some, or all, of the costs involved (e.g. if a parent or carer withdraws a student from a trip for any reason not covered under the terms of the insurance policy), the refund request may be rejected, or only a partial refund provided.
- If the written trip information sent to parents or carers has specified that a deposit is non-refundable, then it will not be refunded.
- The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a student is withdrawn from a trip or activity by the school because of a student's breach of the school's behaviour policy.
- In circumstances where a school trip or activity has ended with a surplus of funds, these will be refunded to the parent or carer who paid for the activity, usually via the original payment method, if the value of the refund is £30 or higher. Surplus funds below this amount will be used by the school for the benefit of all students.