

CHARGING POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

Under Sections 449 to 465 of the Education Act 1996 each LEA and governing body is required to draw up and keep under review its own policies in respect of charges and remission arrangements. This document sets out Islington LEA's policy on charging for school activities.

Islington's Approach

The legislation sets out the framework for charging within which Islington LEA must operate. In general, charging for "core" educational activities and incidental costs at maintained is prohibited by law. Charging for "optional extras" is permitted but the LEA may have a policy not to charge at all or to remit charges for pupils from low income families. The funding formula for schools takes account of the LEA's charging policy by allocating to schools sufficient funds to provide free services to pupils. Additional funding is also provided via the AEN sub formula to meet the costs of pupils who have greater needs and/or might not be able to pay for certain activities (e.g. pupils with English as an additional language and those entitled to free school meals).

It is in the spirit of the Code of Practice on LEA/School Relations and Fair Funding that governing bodies have the powers to adopt the LEA's charging policy or draw up their own. The table below states Islington's charging policy in respect of different activities and indicates the scope of discretion for governing bodies.

Activity	Islington's Policy	For Governors' Decisions?
Admission	No charge may be made for admission to a maintained school	No
Provision of Education	No charge may be made for provision of education during school hours. No charge may be made for costs incidental to the provision of education e.g. books, arts materials. Governors have discretion in respect of "optional extras" e.g. tuition in playing a musical instrument, activities outside school hours, school journeys, etc (see below).	No
Materials, Books, etc	No charge may be made to parents or pupils for materials used as part of the national curriculum or for public examinations for which the pupil has been prepared at the school.	No

Activity	Islington's Policy	For Governors' Decisions?
	Charges may be made if parents want the product to be owned by the pupil.	Yes
	<p>Ingredients/materials for practical subjects where parents indicate in advance that they or the child wishes to own finished product.</p> <p>Recommendation: invite contributions where article is to be retained</p>	Yes
Journeys	No charges for educational activities/journeys that take place wholly or mainly during school hours or for educational activities/journeys that take places wholly or mainly outside school hours but are part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus for a public examination.	No
	Charges may be made if the journey takes place wholly or mainly outside of school hours and is not part of the requirements of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus.	Yes
	Charges may be made for board and lodging if the pupil has to spend one or more nights away from home, except where pupils are entitled to remission.	No
	Pupils are entitled to remission if parents are in receipt of income support, family credit, an income-based job seeker's allowance, disability working allowance.	No
	Refund any <u>excess</u> costs over normal daily travel on pupils' travel direct from home to work experience	No
Music	No charge for music tuition required as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination which is a syllabus for which the pupil is being prepared at the school.	No
	No charge for tuition provided in pursuance of duties relevant to the national curriculum or religious education in schools' basic curriculum.	No

Activity	Islington's Policy	For Governors' Decisions?
	No charge for core curriculum tuition at Centre for Young Musicians (CYM) for new or existing pupils under the age of sixteen on 31/08/98.	No
	No charge for core curriculum. (excludes instrumental tuition).at CYM for existing pupils who are sixteen or over on 31/08/98.	No
	No charge for core curriculum and a 30 minute individual lesson at CYM for new or existing pupils who are sixteen or over on 31/08/98, and on Income Support, Family Tax Credit, Job Seekers Allowance.	No
Public Examinations	No charge may be made in respect of the entry of a registered pupil at a maintained school for a prescribed public examination in any syllabus for that examination for which the pupil has been prepared at the school.	No
	Prescribed public exams – entry fees where pupil not prepared by school Recommendation: no charge where school supports educational value of examination	Yes
	Prescribed public exams – recovery of fees wasted 'without good reason' Recommendation: charge to parents at school's discretion	Yes
	Prescribed public exams – rechecks of results where requested by parents Recommendation: no charge where school supports case for recheck	Yes
Other exams	Entry fees/Preparation costs Recommendation: no charge where school supports educational value of exam	Yes

School Meals	No charge for pupils entitled to free school meals as notified by the LEA	No
	No charge for pupils deemed to be 'in need' by the Social Services Department, as notified by the LEA.	No
Activities Outside School Hours	No charges may be made if the education is either part of the school's duty to implement the national curriculum or a necessary part of preparation for an examination	No
	Schools may ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards these costs	Yes
Grant Income	No charges for activities which do not fall into the above categories. If charges are to be made, they should be remitted for pupils from low income families.	Yes
	No charge for any activity or curriculum based tuition funded by specific grants.	No

Charges and Remission Policies

Under section 457 of the Education Act 1996, governing bodies may not make charges unless they have an agreed charging policy and remissions policy.

Limits on Charges

Charges to parents of pupils may not exceed the cost of provision of the "optional extra" or the board and lodging in question.

Voluntary Contributions

Governing bodies can request or invite voluntary contributions from parents for the school or for school activities provided they explain that:

- the contribution is not obligatory
- pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed