

Busy Governance Guide to Raising Additional Funds

1. Schools under financial pressure are considering ways to raise funds in addition to their delegated budget. Charging parents for activities or resources may or may not be legal. Schools need to consider carefully the advice from the Department for Education that states “*School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, cannot charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment*” ([Charging for school activities 2018](#))

2. Whilst many fundraising ideas may be novel and creative, governors and trustees need to remember to refer to their existing school policies. Two key policies that provide guidance for schools, namely Charging and Remissions Policy (revised by DCC 2017) and Lettings Policy (also revised by DCC 2017) should be read and understood by governors and the senior leadership team. What does your charging and remissions policy say your school can charge parents for? If you don't have a Charging and Remissions Policy then you can't make a charge.

3. Voluntary contributions. Schools can ask for voluntary contributions which benefit the school or school activities, provided it is made clear to parents that there is no obligation for them to make any contribution. Where an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this must be made clear from the outset and no child should be excluded from participating in an activity because their parents are unable/unwilling to pay. Voluntary contributions can be on an ad hoc basis or a fundraising button on a school website or a regular direct debit contribution.

4. Hiring out the school premises. This will be subject to the school's lettings policy and may require consent from the landowner depending on the nature and type of the school. Restrictions may exist for trust schools and the trust would need to advise the school. Also consider whether planning permission may be required if a school is offering itself as a car park or landing strip for helicopters.

5. Charging for books. Schools are not allowed to charge parents for education provided during school hours including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment: If it is linked to the national curriculum then schools cannot charge for it. If however, it is linked to 'optional extras' provided outside of school time then schools might be able to charge. It is also possible to charge for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them.

6. Optional Extras: Schools can charge for 'optional extras' such as:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not: a) part of the national curriculum; b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or c) part of religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

7. School Visits: Schools can charge for board and lodging relating to residential trips but governors need to ensure that they inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

8. Music: This area is more complicated. Where the music tuition falls under the requirements of the national curriculum schools cannot charge parents. If the music tuition is vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent schools may charge. However, charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

9. Transport for an Educational Visit: transport provided in connection with an educational visit cannot be charged to parents.

10. Admissions: Schools cannot raise charges around an admission application to any state funded school, the 'School Admissions Code' rules out requests for financial contributions and clearly states that schools must not *"as any part of the admissions process give priority to children on the basis of any practical or financial support parents may give to the school or any associated organisation, including any religious authority"*.

11. Not collecting children on time: Some schools have considered charging parents when parents have repeatedly been late collecting their children. There does not appear to be any lawful basis for making such charges.

12. Asking parents to fund teaching or support staff: The Department for Education guidance in (1) above clearly states that schools cannot charge for education provided during school hours. There is however, evidence nationally that some schools are funding staff from voluntary contributions. Governors and trustees need to carefully consider these approaches in terms of the latest legal advice and Department of Education and Local Authority guidance on what is a desirable extra and what is essential to teaching and learning.