

## COLCHESTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

### POLICY STATEMENT ON CHARGING FOR ACTIVITIES CONNECTED WITH SCHOOL

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets 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. This statement has been prepared as a requirement of this Act and follows DofE Guidance.

Colchester County High School for Girls is committed to the provision of free education for all registered students if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours. The exception to this will be made in respect of music tuition unless it is provided to fulfil the requirements of a syllabus for a prescribed examination. There may be times when the school will ask for voluntary contributions for visits and other activities, or for such items as materials, ingredients and equipment for a practical subject. It must be emphasised that such contributions are genuinely voluntary, and a student at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not parents have made a contribution in response to a request. If some parents do not do so, however, this may affect the provision of certain activities.

The Act allows for Governing Bodies to charge for certain defined activities and charges may be made as follows:

- **residential visits:** board and lodging may be charged where the visit takes place outside school hours and is a necessary part of the National Curriculum, part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the student to sit, or the syllabus is religious education. Other visits outside school hours are classified as “other activities” (see below). For this purpose, the time away is divided into half-day 'sessions', i.e. periods of (up to) 12 hours ending with noon or midnight; 'outside school hours' means less than 50% of the 'sessions' are within school hours.

- **other activities:** in the case of activities taking place outside school hours, charges may be made, including for transport, entrance fees, board & lodging, materials, books & other equipment, non-teaching staff costs and supply costs. For this purpose, 'outside school hours' means less than 50% of the time spent (including travel) is within school hours.

- **music tuition:** costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours (unless provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required by the National Curriculum).

- **public examinations:** charges may be made for entering students for public examinations (including re-sits) where

(a) the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared at the school,

(b) the examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the student to take it,

(c) a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing body originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Charges may also be made for tuition and other costs if a student is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set in regulations.

- **clothing:** clothing is specifically excluded from the Act's definition of equipment and parents can be asked to provide their daughters with such items as PE kit, protective aprons and sports kit.

The Governors are concerned that as far as possible no student should be denied the opportunity to take part in school activities because of cost. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the Governors' Policy on Remission of Charges for Activities connected with the School which will enable

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students from families in receipt of certain means-tested benefits to take part without cost in residential field study visits, and to have individual music tuition.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be 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.

### **The School Fund**

Parents are invited to subscribe annually to the School Fund which is used to subsidise many school visits using the school minibus. It is also used to provide facilities and resources for the benefit of students which would not be possible through the school's delegated budget. These include purchase of newspapers and magazines for the library, maintaining the heated swimming pool and maintenance of the school minibus. Any student from a low income family may request help with costs of visits and after school activities.

DfE Guidance: Charging for School Activities Oct 2014

Reviewed January 2016

Approved by the Governing Body February 2016

This policy is to be reviewed within the next five years.