



IRONSTONE ACADEMY TRUST

Refunds Policy

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Trust Policy on refunds to parents and carers

Background: Voluntary Contributions

In order to assist with the funding of some activities, the Trustees have agreed that the Head teacher or governing bodies of individual schools may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours
- any activity that takes place outside of school hours
- school equipment
- school funds generally

The pupils of the parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against at Ironstone Schools, and other sources of funding may be sought to support such pupils.

As there is no legal reason why a school should not invite parents and carers to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of providing activities within and outside school hours, this may be done periodically. Typically this relates to educational visits.

School journeys and day trips etc, therefore only operate if parents and carers provide the voluntary contributions suggested by the school.

If only some were to do this and it was considered that insufficient funds were available to make the proposed activity viable, then in the interest of fairness amongst all the children, the school journey, day trip or visit may be cancelled.

Refunds

- Monies paid in advance are non-refundable where the school has committed funds to pay for the activity and no refund would be payable to the school. Refunds in other circumstances over the value of £10 will only be given at the Governors' discretion for exceptional circumstances. Parents and carers should be aware that the planning of a visit is based on the educational outcomes identified by staff in advance. Specific activities may vary from those originally planned due to weather conditions, availability of a venue changing, suitability of an activity being reviewed or other factors outside of the schools control
- If a child is unable to attend a trip due to bad behaviour, no refund will be made if funds have been committed by the school for the trip
- A refund will be offered to parents when a visit is concluded with a surplus balance

Residential Trips

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

The school will advise Pupil Premium Indicated families they are exempt from paying the full cost of the board and lodging and will make provision of a variation in charges for others based on the Head Teacher's assessment of need. This assessment will be conducted in an informal face to face discussion with families.

Evidence will be required from parents in order to be exempt as per the current Pupil Premium Indicators and this may include:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; and
- An income-related employment and support allowance, as introduced in October 2008.

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours but is a necessary part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the pupil to sit, or the syllabus is religious education.

Instrumental Music Tuition

A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition that is not required by the National Curriculum for individuals and small groups, unless the tuition forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination. Refunds are not normally payable as this is an externally provided service.

Charges for "finished products"

We may make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where the parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product. Refunds are not normally payable as this is an externally purchased item.

Clothing

Although no charge can be made for "equipment" for use in school in connection with education provided during school hours, clothing is specifically excluded from the definition of equipment. Parents can therefore be asked to provide their children with such things as PE kit, protective aprons and sports kit and School Uniform. If school purchases these items refunds are not normally payable as this is an externally provided service.

Information on charging and remissions policy

Parents are entitled to information about a school's charging and remissions policy, and the governing body ensures that this is available on the school website and may be requested in hard copy during school hours, for which a small charge may be made, in line with policy.