Belfast Royal Academy

per vias sapientiae

Charging Policy 26-27

Effective From 6th February 2027

Title	Charging Policy
Summary	This Policy is required to outline relevant charges made within the Grammar School and the educational services for which no charge is made, in line with legislative requirements.
Purpose	To provide information to parents on the services provided in the school for which no charges apply and those for which charges must be made. Information is also provided on the Parental Contribution requested from parents and the current rates which apply.
Operational Date	February 2027
Next Review Date	June 2028
Author	Head of Finance and Corporate Services

To be posted on School website	Yes

1. This statement, issued in conformity with the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, outlines the Policy of the Board of Governors, relative to services for which no charges are made and for which charges must be made. It is the policy of the Board of Governors:

1.1 to make no charge for books, materials, equipment, instruments or incidental transport provided in connection with education during school hours, or within the School's curriculum (except for example in Home Economics, Art and Technology where parents have indicated in advance their wish to purchase the product) or for statutory religious education. It remains however for parents to provide personal items such as pens, pencils or sports equipment, which are the property of the individual pupil.

1.2 to make no charge for public examination entries, except where:

a. the School has not prepared the pupil for that examination
b. a pupil is resitting an examination for which the School has provided no further preparation
c. a pupil is resitting a public examination (at GCSE or A/AS level) to seek to improve the grade obtained
d. a pupil has failed, for no valid reason, to attend for the examination or to complete its requirements.

It will be for parents to meet the cost of any request on their part to have a pupil's examination result scrutinised.

1.3 to make the annual Compulsory Capital Charge at the limit fixed by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland, at present £140. This charge is essential, to enable the school to fund its proportion of capital projects undertaken. As recommended by DE, in certain circumstances the Board of Governors will consider waiving the Capital Fee. These circumstances are set out in (Circular 2008/19) on the DE website. Any application for waiver should be made in writing to the Warden of the Board of Governors.

1.4 to make a charge to parents for board and lodging where a curricular activity involves pupils spending one or more nights away from home, and there is no statutory remission.

1.5 to make a charge for the full transport, residential, electronic payment processing fees (e.g., card transaction charges), and other costs relating to tours, excursions or holiday trips etc. that are outside the statutory requirements and where parents elect that their children should participate.

1.6 to require payment from parents for damage or loss of School property by their children, where this is not accidentally caused.

1.7 to require a deposit payment of £10 for any lift passes borrowed from the school. This will be refunded in full when the lift pass has been returned in a good condition. If the lift pass is not returned, or is damaged, there will be no refund issued.

1.8 to make a charge for the tuition and other costs of pupils not entitled to a non-fee-paying place.

1.9 to leave to the Principal's decision

(a) the proportion of costs of an activity which should be charged to public or non-public funds

(b) the determination of the action to be taken in any individual case arising from the implementation of this policy.

1.10 to ensure that for all non-statutory activities, the school operates on a full cost recovery basis. This means the total cost requested will include all direct third-party expenses, including but not limited to insurance premiums, VAT where applicable, and bank or platform transaction fees, to ensure core educational grants are not diverted from the classroom.

2. A charge will be made by music tutors for individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument or in training of the voice, where parents have agreed the arrangements in advance with music tutors.

3. Nothing in the 1989 Order prohibits the Board of Governors from inviting contributions for the benefit of the School or any School activities.

3.1 As the amount of grant from the Department of Education has been insufficient for many years to maintain the excellent facilities and the wide range of curricular options available, it is necessary to request a voluntary contribution to the Voluntary Contribution Fund. These contributions are vital to maintain the School's independence in providing a range of facilities and extra-curricular options that exceed the core provision funded by the Department of Education.

The fund is an indispensable element of the School's Finances on which the School is reliant, and the majority of parents support the School in this way. The current rate is £35 per pupil per month, payable by direct debit over a ten-month period (£49 including the capital fee). Along with the capital fee, this equates to £1.34 per day over the course of the year. The Board of Governors hopes that all parents will assist us in this way.

3.2 Unless parents continue to support us financially in this way, the school may in time have to reduce the wide range of extra-curricular activities and the variety of clubs currently available. Alternatively, the Board of Governors may have to consider charging parents for each extra-curricular activity engaged in by their children. This would not be our preferred option, and we would therefore encourage parents to continue to support us financially in this way by paying the parental contribution and thereby supporting the Academy Fund.

3.3 We appreciate that there may be exceptional circumstances which may make it difficult for parents/carers to make the full parental contribution for a period of time. Such parents/carers should notify the School of their circumstances, with the assurance that their child will not thereby be placed at a disadvantage. However, it must be recognised that the continuance of certain activities depends on a sufficient level of funding from parents/carers.

4. This policy statement will not be repeated on each occasion that a charge is made, or a contribution requested, but reference to this policy will be included in all payment requests issued via the School Gateway or other electronic platforms.

5. Capital fees are payable either in full by 30 September, or via ten equal monthly Direct Debit instalments from September to June. For those paying by instalment, the due date is the final day of each month. Any fees remaining unpaid after these respective due dates will be considered in arrears

6. Pupils with outstanding capital fees or in arrears will not normally be permitted to participate in a non-statutory school trip.

5th November 2026