

Charging & Remissions Policy

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1 Policy at a glance

- 1.1 This policy outlines the Trust's approach to charging for school activities, adhering to the Education Act 1996 and DfE guidance. The Trust aims for transparent processes, clearly defining chargeable and non-chargeable activities to minimise financial barriers for pupils.
- 1.2 Charges cannot be made for education during school hours, curriculum-related activities outside school hours, religious education, and transport where the local authority has a statutory duty. Charges are permissible for optional extras like some out-of-school clubs, individual music tuition requested by parents, materials pupils wish to own, and board and lodging on residential trips.
- 1.3 Voluntary contributions may be requested for activities like trips and clubs, but no child will be excluded for non-payment, and pressure on parents is prohibited. The Trust may cancel activities if insufficient voluntary funds are raised.
- 1.4 Remission of charges is available for parents/carers receiving specific benefits, who can apply confidentially through the school office. The Headteacher and CFO authorise remissions. The policy is reviewed annually.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.
- 2.2 Our Trust aims to:
 - Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions;
 - Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made;
 - Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

3 Roles & Responsibilities

- The Trust Board is responsible for approving this policy and monitoring its effectiveness;
- The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy;
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently;
- Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

4 Definitions

- **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities;
- **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

5 Where charges cannot be made

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The National Curriculum;
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school;
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Trust or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The National Curriculum;
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

6 Where charges can be made

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them;
- Optional extras (see section 6.2);
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3);
- Certain early years provision;
- Community facilities;
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus;
- Examination fees where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

6.2 Optional extras

6.2.1 We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum;
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
 - 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 LA or Trust has 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 (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and supervised homework sessions).

6.2.2 When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- The cost of buildings and accommodation;
- Non-teaching staff;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra);
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

6.2.3 Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

6.2.4 Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

6.2.5 In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

6.2.6 Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7 Voluntary Contributions

- 7.1 As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would not otherwise be possible.
- 7.2 Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:
- school trips;
 - sports activities;
 - recreational clubs.
- 7.3 There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressured into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.
- 7.4 If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it may be cancelled.

8 Remission of charges

- 8.1 In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 of this policy.
- 8.2 Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits may be exempt from paying the cost of certain activities:
- Income Support;
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
 - Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190;
 - Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit;
 - Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get);
- 8.3 When arranging a chargeable activity, eligible parents/carers may apply in confidence to the school for remission of charges in full or part. This can be done via the school office.
- 8.4 The Headteacher in consultation with the CFO will be authorised to grant remission of charges.

10 Review of policy

The Charging & Remissions policy will be reviewed annually and be amended to agree with guidance by the DfE.