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Charging & Remissions Policy

1. Introduction

The Department for Education states that there are certain activities which schools may and may not charge for, these are listed below as published on the DfE website.

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any maintained school;
- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school – (see point 3 Charges)

Schools **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below)
- music and vocal tuition.

Optional Extras - charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras".

Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- 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 that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the school has

- arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs and tea).

In 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;
- support staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

2. Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example field trips and other visits outside school. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution. (If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities).

From time to time the school may invite non-school based organisations for curricular activities such as visiting theatre companies, lecturers etc. to arrange an activity during the school day. If such organisations levy a charge, parents/carers may be asked to make a voluntary contribution. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution (if insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to cancel the activity).

3. Charges

The Academy Trust reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

- The board and lodging element of approved residential activities, deemed to take place during the school day.
- The full cost to each pupil of all approved activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside the school day.
- The cost to the pupil for providing any instrumental tuition not part of normal Local Authority peripatetic provision.
- In subjects such as Design & Technology, Food Technology, Science, Art when the parent/carer is to receive the finished product, a charge will be made for the cost of materials and ingredients.
- Examination Re-Sits - where the re-sit is at the request of the pupil and they will be studying for the exam in their own time. (In special circumstances, such as financial hardship, the school may cover the cost of the re-sit at the discretion of the Headteacher).

4. Calculating Charges

Before a trip is approved, detailed costing shall be produced by the trip / activity organiser to ensure that there will not be an excessive surplus or deficit on the trip / activity.

When charges are made for an activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they shall be based on:

- Actual costs incurred
- Supply cover incurred (where required)
- Support staff costs incurred

These costs shall be divided by the total number of pupils participating.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

5. Hardship Support

Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions, pupil Premium funding, and in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Parents/Carers who qualify for support are those in receipt of eligible state benefits (listed below).

Wherever possible, leaders of trips and activities shall indicate the availability of support funding for parents and carers in receipt of these benefits.

All claims of support will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

6. Remissions

Where the parents/carers of a pupil are in receipt of eligible state benefits (listed below) the Academy Trust will offer to remit in full the cost of full board and lodging for any compulsory residential activity which is deemed to take place during the school day and/or where it forms part of the syllabus for the National Curriculum.

7. Eligible State Benefits – as per Free School Meal eligibility

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent/carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and where income has been assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs as being below the current threshold specified by HMRC.
- Guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- 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. Refunds

Refunds shall only be available in the following circumstances:

- If a pupil is not able to take part in an activity due to a clash of activities, planned by the school, e.g. a music lesson taking place on the same day as a school trip.
- If a pupil is unable to take part in an activity and gives sufficient notice to the school, any refund of costs obtained by the school will be passed to the pupil. This would not include, in the case of a school visit, transport costs as this is generally purchased collectively.
- If voluntary contributions exceed the final costs of any activity, refunds will be made to individual pupils, if the amount is equal to or exceeds £20.00 per head. Any surplus funds of less than £20.00 per head will be paid into a central fund to support future trips and activities.
- In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The Academy Trust reserves the right NOT to refund costs where a pupil is withdrawn from an activity by the school on the basis of the pupil's unacceptable behaviour.