

1 STATEMENT OF INTENT

Each Academy within the Trust wishes to make a broad programme of activities accessible to as many students as possible, as they recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, out of school trips and residential can make towards pupils' all round educational experience and their personal and social development.

This policy applies to all students within the Trust, whatever their age, and is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of each Academy's budget. It also defines other circumstances when the Academies may wish to ask for voluntary contributions, how these charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs.

This policy has been written to comply with the 'Charging for School Activities' guidance produced by the Department for Education.

2 AIMS

Each Academy within the Trust aims to ensure that activities offered in school time are available to all pupils regardless of their parents'/carers' ability or willingness to meet the cost.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of our charging and remissions policy are:

- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied;
- To determine which charges will be remitted for parents/carers experiencing hardship;
- To invite voluntary contributions in support of any activity organised by an academy, either in or out of school hours;
- To ensure that the responsibilities for the charging and remissions policy are clearly and appropriately allocated; and
- To ensure the regular review of operations of the charging and remissions policy.

4 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

4.1 Charging

No student should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges. However, each Academy reserves the right to levy a charge in any circumstances permissible under statute as detailed in the following pages.

When charges are to be made each Academy reserves the absolute right to determine whether the activity has to be cancelled if an insufficient number of families are prepared to pay for the activity to take place.

Parents may apply to the Academy for special consideration regarding financial support.

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4.2 What Can and Cannot be Charged for

The Academy **will not** charge for:

- admission to the Academy;
- 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 [1], 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- 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[2];
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the academy or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

The Academy **may** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wish to own them (e.g. ingredients for items produced during Food Technology lessons);
- education provided outside of the academy day that is not:
 - part of the national curriculum;
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy; or
 - part of religious education
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (i.e. charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition);
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to the academy or to other premises where the local authority/academy have 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 (e.g. breakfast club, after-school club, tea and supervised homework sessions);
- additional examination subjects which were not supported by the Academy;
- acts of vandalism and negligence: the academy trust reserves the right to recover part, or the whole cost, of damage to buildings or equipment which is the result of vandalism or negligence by a pupil.

[1]It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

[2]However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

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4.3 Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents an academy from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of an Academy or any Academy activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Academy will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Academy will also make it clear to parents that there is **no obligation** to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it may be cancelled. The Academy will make sure that this is made clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

4.4 Remissions

Residential

No charge will be made for board and lodging in respect of students whose parents are receiving:

- 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 (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £16,190);
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit.

Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria.

The Academy may remit charges for other chargeable activities in full or in part to other parents/carers after considering specific hardship cases. The Academy invites parents/carers to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. If appropriate and funds allow, the Academy may pay a proportion of the costs in order to support a visit.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Academy Trust in conjunction with the Governing Body of each academy is responsible for determining the content of the policy and each Principal is responsible for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents/carers will be considered jointly by the Principal and Governors.

6 EQUALITY

The Academy Trust believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

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7 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed and amended by a small group comprising of officers and the Principal from each Academy. The recommendations of this group will be submitted to the Academy Trust Board and each Board of Governors for consideration and, where applicable, approval.

The Academy Trust will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy Trust.

Date: March 2016

Date for next review: March 2018

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