



Charging and Remissions Policy

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Please note that this policy supersedes and replaces any equivalent policies or sections of policies. This policy is non contractual and can therefore be amended without consultation. Before you use this policy, please check you have the latest version using the footer reference and Learn-AT Policy Index.

This policy applies to all Learn Academies Trust schools and should be read in conjunction with the latest associated guidance issued by Learn-AT.

1. Aims

- 1.1. Our school aims to:
 - 1.1.1 Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
 - 1.2.1 Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of 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. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

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

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The governing board

- 1.1.4 The Trust board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.
- 1.2.4 The Trust board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- 1.3.4 Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Local Governing Committee
- 1.4.4 Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Local Governing Committee

4.2. Headteachers

The Exec Headteacher or headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3. Staff

3.1.4 Staff are responsible for:

3.2.4 Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently

3.3.4 Notifying the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

3.4.4 The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4. Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Voluntary contributions

5.1. Each academy may seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the academy or support academy activity. However all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that children of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary.

5.2. There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to academy activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise children from low income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers. The Law says that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because the parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

6. Education Provided Within Academy Hours

6.1. Education provided by any academy for its registered children should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during academy hours, academy hours being those hours when an academy is actually in session and not including the break in the middle of the day. This means that neither the child nor his or her parents or guardian may be required to pay for, or to supply, any materials, books, instruments or other equipment for use in connection with education provided during academy hours.

7. Education Provided Out of Academy Hours

- 7.1. Where education is provided out of academy hours, charging is permitted, except where the education is provided:
- to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed Public examination; or
 - specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum;
 - to fulfil duties relating to Religious Education.
- 7.2. In these cases the only charge that may be made is for board and lodging or for residential trips.

8. Music Tuition

- 8.1. **Can be charged** for where the provision of tuition in singing or playing a musical instrument during school hours (whether provided individually or to a group of any size) is made at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges cannot exceed the cost of the provision. See the above on playing a musical instrument outside of school hours.
- 8.2. Cannot be charged for when:
- Tuition is provided following a duty imposed by section 88 of the Education Act 2002 (implementation of National Curriculum for England);
 - Education provided to a class of pupils in Key Stage 2, which follows the DfE's policy "Instrumental and Vocal Tuition at KS2" (to enable pupils to decide if they wish to receive further music tuition); or
 - See also in respect of Looked After Children (below).

9. Remissions

9.1. A: Parents on Benefits

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming residential visit, it must make clear that parents who are in receipt of certain benefits are exempt from paying the cost of boarding and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>. 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.

9.2. B: General Remission

The cost of individual instrumental music tuition will also be remitted in all cases where the individual tuition is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. There may be occasions where two or three students receive additional music lessons together at a reduced cost.

9.3. C: Looked After Children

No charge may be made for individual music tuition provided in school hours in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

10. Activities run by a Third Party

- 10.1. The Act permits an organisation other than the Governing Body to levy a charge directly on parents for activities organised in academy hours by a non-academy organisation.
- 10.2. Where children are granted leave of absence to attend these activities it would be for parents and any staff members similarly released to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements made by the third party to secure the safety and welfare of the children.

11. Charging Policy

- 11.1. If a charge is made for each child it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds are needed for additional costs e.g. to help hardship cases this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.

12. Board and Lodging on Residential Visits

- 12.1. Board & lodging on residential visits may be charged for whether or not the visit takes place within academy time and whether or not the activity is provided to fulfil the requirements of:
 - the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or
 - of the National Curriculum; or
 - to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education.
- 12.2. Charges for board and lodging must not exceed the actual cost to the pupil. They must not, for example, include any element representing a share of the costs of staff accompanying the visit. (This may, however, be covered by voluntary contributions.)
- 12.3. Governors will, as a statutory minimum, remit any charges for board and lodging in the case of children whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit where the activity is deemed to take place in academy hours. Governors may wish to consider whether to remit charges in other circumstances.

13. School Meals

- 13.1. Parents will be charged for school meals at the current rate agreed by the Local Governing Committee with the exception of those children receiving Free School Meals.
- 13.2. All school meals should be paid for in advance.

14. 'Optional extra' Activities

- 14.1. 'Optional extra' activities are those which take place wholly or mainly outside academy hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.
- 14.2. Participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. Any charge made in respect of individual children may include an appropriate element for the following: a child's travel costs; a child's board and lodging; materials, books, instruments and other equipment; non-teaching staff costs; entrance fees to museums, theatres etc.; insurance costs.
- 14.3. It should be noted that any charge for an 'optional extra' activity, as distinct from a request for a voluntary contribution, should not exceed the actual cost of providing that activity, divided equally by the number of children willing to participate. It may not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other children wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- 14.4. The costs of teaching staff involved in optional extra activities may only be passed on through charges if:-
- they are engaged specifically by the Trust for the purpose of providing the activity;
 - they are employed by the Trust to provide instrumental music tuition; or
 - they are teachers already employed by the Trust, who have been engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra.

15. Charging in Kind

- 15.1. The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as craft or food technology, must be budgeted for and borne by the academy. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash or kind can however be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis.
- 15.2. Children must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents. The governors' charging policy should make their policy on this clear. It should be recognised that much of the practical work in craft or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a "finished product"; however, this is an essential part of the learning process.

16. Breakages and Fines

- 16.1. There is nothing to prevent academies from asking parents to pay for the cost of replacing a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost textbook where this is the result of a child's behaviour. Parents cannot, however, be taken to court for this money.

17. Monitoring arrangements

- 17.1. The Business Manager and Headteachers/Executive Headteacher monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.
- 17.2. This policy will be reviewed by the Finance Committee every 3 years.