



Charging and Remissions Policy

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1. Policy statement

1.1 The Trust wishes to make a broad programme of activities accessible to as many pupils/students as possible and is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils/students, regardless of financial circumstances. The Trust has established the following policy and procedure to ensure that no pupil/student is discriminated against. This policy is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of the schools' budgets. It also defines other circumstances when the schools may wish to ask for voluntary contributions.

2. Purpose/Legal Framework

2.1 This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996.
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007.
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2018) 'Charging for School Activities'.
- DfE 'Governance Handbook'.
- ESFA Academy Trust Handbook.
- The schools' Funding Agreements and the Exceed Academies Trust's Master Funding Agreement.
- DfE Guidance – Statutory Policies for Schools.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy will be used by all staff and will apply to all pupils/students regardless of age and ability.

3.2 The school day is as published in the school prospectus and/or on the official school website. The midday break does not form part of the school day.

3.3 Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Charging and Remissions Policy is the responsibility of everyone within our schools' communities.

4.2 The Local Advisory Boards/Governors have:

- Responsibility for ensuring all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Responsibility for ensuring this policy is made available to parents/carers by publishing it on the website.
- Responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

4.3 The Headteachers / Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) will:

- Ensure all school personnel, pupils/students and parents/carers are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Ensure that the policy is displayed on the website.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

4.4 School Personnel will:

- Comply with all aspects of this policy.
- Be clear, if organising activities, as to whether an activity falls within the parameters for charging or voluntary contributions.

4.5 Parents will:

- Notify school personnel or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions Policy.

5. Charging for Education

5.1 We will not charge parents/carers for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours.
- Education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a pupil/student is being prepared for by our schools, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of a pupil's/student's parents/carers.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if a pupil/student has been prepared for it at our schools.
- Examination re-sits, if a pupil/student is being prepared for the re-sits at our schools.

5.2 We may charge parents/carers for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them or where the item has been lost or damaged as a result of negligence.
- Optional extras.
- Music and vocational tuition (in certain circumstances).
- Use of community facilities.
- Catering.
- Wilful damage to school property, equipment and furniture.
- Lost or damaged text or exercise books, planners etc.

6. Optional extras

6.1 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 the school day that is not:

- Part of the national curriculum.

- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a student is being prepared for at one of our schools.
- Religious education.
- Examination entry fees where a student has not been prepared for the examinations at one of our schools.
- Transport, other than that arranged by the relevant Local Authority for a student to be provided with education.
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

6.2 When calculating the cost of optional extras, the schools will only take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra(s).
- The cost of buildings and accommodation.
- The employment of non-teaching staff.
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) under contracts for services purely to provide the optional extra(s).
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument.

6.3 The schools will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing optional extra(s) divided by the number of participating students. The schools will not charge a subsidy for any students wishing to participate but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the schools will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

6.4 Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of any optional extra(s).

7. Examination Fees

7.1 The schools may charge for examination fees if:

- An examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but a pupil/student was not prepared for it at one of our schools.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but one of our schools arranged for the pupil/student to take it.
- Peripatetic examinations that the parent requests the child to undertake.
- A pupil/student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.

8. Examination Re-sits

8.1 Where a pupil/student is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the schools will pay the fee. Payment of fees will be discussed and agreed on an individual student basis.

8.2 If a pupil/student or their parents/carers request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil/student or their parents/carers. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the schools will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/carer will have their fees refunded.

9. Voluntary Contributions

9.1 The schools may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the schools will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. The schools will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents/carers to make a contribution, and notify parents/carers whether assistance is available.

9.2 No pupil/student will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the schools cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

9.3 We will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

10. Music Tuition

10.1 The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of a pupil's/student's parents/carers.

10.2 The charges do not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

10.3 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 Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme.
- For a pupil who is looked after by the local authority.

11. Transport

11.1 The schools will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils/students to or from school premises, where the Local Authority has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils/students to other premises where the School or Local Authority has arranged for pupils/students to be educated.
- Transporting pupils/students to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination by our schools.
- Transport provided for an educational visit, however, parents/carers may be requested to make a voluntary contribution to cover costs.

12. Residential Visits

12.1 The schools will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside of school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that a pupil/student is being prepared for by our schools, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils/students on visits.
- Travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours.
- Residential activities that take place during school hours.

12.2 The schools may charge for:

- Board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- Travel costs when a residential activity takes place outside of school hours.
- Residential activities that are not essential to the National Curriculum or that fall outside of school hours.

12.3 Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can demonstrate that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income support.
- Income based Job Seekers 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 they'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 someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

13. Education Partly During School Hours

13.1 If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

13.2 If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and our schools may charge for the activity; however, they will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

13.3 Residential visits: If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, we will not charge for the activity. However, parents/carers may be asked to pay a voluntary contribution to cover costs of board and lodgings. Visits may need to be cancelled if the Visit Leader feels that the visit is not economically viable.

13.4 The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by our contingency funds.

13.5 Any charges for extended day services will be charged.

14. Damage or Loss

14.1 A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteachers may decide.

14.2 Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

15. Other Charges

15.1 The Headteachers or Local Advisory Board may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an Ofsted report.

16. School Meals

16.1 The cost of a school meal is kept as low as possible at all times. Families are notified at the earliest opportunity in advance of any increase in costs.

16.2 A cashless payment solution is used to collect payments for school meals.

16.3 The Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative means that all of the children, from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can be provided with a school meal free of charge. Some older pupils may also be eligible for Free School Meals and we regularly encourage families to check eligibility.

17. Remissions

17.1 In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. Charges will be waived for parents in receipt of certain state benefits, broadly aligned to those determining free school meals.

17.2 Families will qualify for remission or help with charges if they are in receipt of:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance.
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed threshold limits.

- Guaranteed State Pension.
- an income related employment and support allowance, introduced on October 27th, 2008.
- Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in the following circumstances:
 - specific individual circumstances that have caused temporary hardship.
 - recently moved into hardship but not yet receiving the benefits mentioned above.
 - made a specific request to the Headteacher for any other justifiable reason.

17.3 The remission is at the Headteacher's discretion in these circumstances based on any evidence provided.

18. Publicity

18.1 The Charging and Remissions Policy is publicised on the schools' websites. The policy will also be posted on to the Shared drive.

19. Concerns

19.1 If parents/carers have any concerns regarding their child's education, they should make contact in the first instance with their child's Class Teacher/Form.

20. Monitoring and Evaluation

20.1 The Senior Leadership Teams will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and provide feedback to the Trust.