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## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Trustees

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Responsible Officer: Finance Director

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## 1. Aims

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 be made

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents/carers.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 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 Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body of each school within the Academy Trust is responsible for determining the content of this policy and the Head Teacher for implementation. Any determination with respect to individual parents/carers will be considered jointly by the Head Teacher and Local Governing Body. While the responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provision rests with the Head Teacher, on an operational basis, the management, responsibility and evaluation of this policy is undertaken by the School Office /Finance Managers

### 4.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

### 4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the head teacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The senior leadership team 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 head teacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

### **5. Where charges cannot be made**

Below we set out **what the Trust cannot charge for**:

#### **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
- 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 has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has 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 to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

## 6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out **what the school could charge for**.

### 6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

### 6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, the school 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 local authority/governing board 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, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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

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.

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

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.

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

### 6.3 Music tuition

The school 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.

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. Activities for which charges are made by this Trust

The Local Governing Body and Head Teacher consider asking parents/carers to meet the costs of the activities detailed in the following table. The charges will be made after consultation with parents/carers, will not exceed the cost of the provision and will be proportional for each student. Lessons / activities will not be confirmed until parental/carer agreement has been received, ideally by return of a signed reply slip.

Activity	Note
Board and lodging on residential trips	Information about activities and costs to be distributed to parents/carers well in advance of any trip, to enable financial planning by the family to take place
Materials or equipment if parents/carers indicate in advance that they want the child to bring it home.	

<p>The proportionate costs for any student on activities wholly or mainly outside School hours ('Optional extras') to meet the costs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Materials and equipment</li> <li>• Non teaching staff costs and costs of staff specifically engaged for the activity</li> <li>• Entrance fees</li> <li>• Insurance costs</li> </ul>	
Vocal and musical instrumental tuition	Charges to cover the additional costs incurred by the School, beyond any element covered by public funding
Re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the School	
Examination fees where a student fails without good reason to sit an exam	After consultation with parents/carers
Any other education, transport or examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the School	
Any other education, transport or examinations fee	
unless charges are specifically prohibited	
Breakages, repairs and replacements as a result of damage caused wilfully or negligently by the student	Charges will be made after consultation with parents/carers and will not exceed total replacement /repair costs
Extra-curricular activities and clubs	Charges to cover the additional costs incurred by the School, beyond any element covered by public funding
Any extended Academy activity	Charges to cover the additional costs incurred by the School, beyond any element covered by public funding

Vision Schools will make every effort to ensure that all information lays out costs and activities as simply and clearly as possible and is communicated well in advance, to enable families to plan for these charges.

## 8. Voluntary contributions

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 to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

*school trips & sports activities.*

**There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.** If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

## 9. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

### 9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances
- 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 £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

## 10. Lettings

The School will make its facilities available to outside users and the community at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance & Resources Committee who will delegate this responsibility to each school to consider a separate lettings policy for any significant level of lettings/income.

## 11. Academy Meals

The Local Governing Body of Trust schools will determine and publish annually the price to be charged for School Meals.



## 12. Monitoring arrangements

The Director of Finance monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Finance every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Finance & resources committee.