



The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including school visits, residential experiences and clubs, can make towards all aspects of pupils' education. The Governing Body would accordingly wish to promote and provide as far as possible such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the benefit of pupils of the school. This policy complies with the advice given in the document "Charging for school activities" issued by the Department for Education in November 2013.

The Academy, subject to the limited exceptions referred to in this advice, does not charge for education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

The Academy will ensure that parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed in this document are informed of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Charges

The Academy will not charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School

Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;

- 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 curriculum¹, 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

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the following:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see below);
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities.
- breakages or damage to school property.

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 (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied in advance for the cost of the materials used. In the case of Food Technology, pupils usually provide their own ingredients, but if the pupil forgets, the school may provide the ingredients and may make a charge.

Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching 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 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 exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

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

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, or the school cannot fund it from some other source then it will be cancelled. The Academy will ensure 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. The Academy will make clear to parents at the outset what the policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body 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. Parents or carers who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will qualify for remissions:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- 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 (Financial Year 2013/14)
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

The Principal, Finance Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

Additional categories of parents may apply for help with some costs in some circumstances in order that no pupil will be unfairly disadvantaged. Applications will be considered and support may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

Eligible students will have all or part of the cost of trips and other optional extras paid from the Pupil Premium Grant while funding permits.

Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following:

A list of visits (and their approximate cost) will be published at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead;

A system will be provided for parents to pay in instalments in advance of school trips taking place;

When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip;

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We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection;

At the end of each journey or visit, the surplus or deficit will be calculated and confirmed against the ledger records. If the journey or visit makes a surplus, then parents and guardians will be offered a refund where surplus is 5% or more of the contribution per head and the refund value is £5 or greater. Refunds for students withdrawing from activities are only guaranteed for confirmed medical reasons. Other withdrawals are considered on a case by case basis.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

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.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Charging and Remissions Policies

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy. The governing body’s policy may be more or less generous than the LA’s, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

Residential Visits

We reserve the right to refuse places on residential visits on the grounds of student behaviour.

Schools cannot charge for:

- 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, 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; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools can charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the Academy informs parents about a forthcoming visit, it will make clear that parents who qualify for Remissions may make an application.

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be promoted and published throughout the Academy.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee will review the policy and evaluate its effectiveness every year.