



Charging and Remission Policy

Star Academy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 It is the right of every pupil to receive a free education. Activities offered wholly or mainly¹ during normal teaching time must be made available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- 1.2 Whilst recognising that legislation provides academies with the discretion to charge for optional extras provided wholly or mainly¹ out of academy hours and to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the academy or in support of any activity organised by the academy, whether during or outside academy hours, the academy will always take particular account of pupils whose families are suffering financial hardship. Decisions will be made on educational grounds and the academy will endeavour to ensure that any activities which are deemed to take place mainly¹ or wholly in academy hours do not disrupt pupils' education.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 A charge may be made for optional extras provided wholly or mainly¹ outside academy hours except where such activities are provided:

To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum
Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.

- 2.2 Participation in optional extras will be on the basis of parental choice and prior confirmation in writing is required from the parents that they are willing to pay charges.
- 2.3 The charge per head cannot exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra, divided equally by the number of participating pupils and may include elements for:

A pupil's travel costs
A pupil's board and lodging costs
Entrance fees to museums, castle, theatres etc.
Insurance costs.

- 2.4 The Trust 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 the academy will try, where possible, to:

publish a list of visits, and where possible their approximate cost, at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
establish a system for parents to pay in instalments
avoid offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis as this may discriminate against pupils from families on lower incomes.

¹ Over 50% of the time allocated for the activity including travel time.

3 Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

- 3.1 In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in receipt of:

Income Support

Income-based Job Seekers Allowance

Child Tax Credit (**without Working Tax Credit**) and an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed the sum given in the Revenues and Customs rules

Supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit

28 day Working Tax Credit run on

Invalidity Benefit

Widow's Pension.

- 3.2 Other exceptional cases not falling within the criteria listed above will also be considered.

4 Charging and Remissions

- 4.1 The Trust's policy on specific matters relating to charging and remissions is as follows:

4.1.1 Practical Subjects

Where parents have indicated in writing that they wish to own a finished product, the academy may make a charge. The charge shall not exceed the cost of the materials used by the pupil.

4.1.2 Board and Lodging

A charge may be made for board and lodging in connection with residential activities. The charge cannot exceed the actual cost of providing board and lodging and prior written confirmation from the parent is required that he/she is willing to pay the charge

Where a residential activity is deemed to take place in academy hours or take place outside academy hours but is covered by the criteria shown in Section 2 of this policy statement, no charge for board and lodging will be made in respect of pupils whose families meet the qualifying criteria in Section 3. Where such activities are organised by the academy, the academy shall bear the cost of board and lodging for these pupils.

4.1.3 Transport

Where a pupil travels directly from home to a place of work experience and vice versa, parents can be asked to meet the cost of such travel, except that no charge should be made in respect of pupils whose families meet the qualifying criteria in Section 3. Where activities of this sort are organised by the academy, the academy will be expected to meet the travelling costs of these pupils.

4.1.4 Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument

Current legislation allows pupils to be charged for instrumental music tuition (whether inside or outside academy hours) so long as a teaching group does not exceed 4 pupils. A charge may not be levied where the tuition is provided as part of a recognised external examination course within the academy's curriculum.

Prior written confirmation must be obtained by the academy from the parents that they are willing to pay the charge. The charge will include the cost of the teacher (based on a pro-rata calculation of their salary) and, where appropriate, the cost of sheet music and hire and insurance of the instrument.

4.1.5 Public Examinations

Where a pupil has not been prepared for a public examination by the academy (including GCSE resits) but has been allowed by the Academy to sit the examination at the academy as an examination centre, the academy may make a charge for the examination entry fee. Prior written confirmation from the parent is required that he/she is willing to pay the charge. Where an academy prepares a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, even outside academy hours, a charge should not be made for teaching costs or for the examination entry fee.

Where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which he has been entered and a fee paid, the academy may recover the fee from the parents regardless of whether the examination is prescribed.

4.1.6 Breakages

Parents can be asked to pay for the cost of replacing broken windows or damaged books etc. where this is a result of pupils' behaviour.

4.1.7 Private Use of Academy Facilities

Responsibility for determining charges for the private use of academy facilities by members of staff, for example, private telephone calls, reprographics and faxes are delegated to the Principal.

4.1.8 Voluntary contributions

There are some activities which parents will be asked about their willingness to pay a voluntary contribution towards the costs e.g. theatre visits, swimming instruction, day trips etc. This charge will be determined by the number of pupils in the year group and the total cost divided equally between each child

The academy has the right to cancel an activity or visit out of school if insufficient voluntary contributions are made.

4.1.9 Further Remissions

Other remissions may be offered from time to time subject to financial viability and authorisation from The Trust.