



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Reviewed by:	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee
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Introduction

Campfire Education Trust schools recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a child's education. Each school's Local Governing Board ('LGB') aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of the school and as additional optional activities.

1. Aims

Our Trust aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions for educational activities.
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

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 which set out the law on charging for school activities in England, and takes into account the Academy Trust Handbook, published by the Department for Education (DfE), which outlines financial management and governance requirements for academy trusts. Trust schools must ensure that any charges levied are consistent with the principles of regularity, propriety, and value for money.

Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements and articles of association. It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

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 Trust Board

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions Policy.

4.2 The LGB

The LGB has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy at school level.

4.3 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff in their school are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.4 Staff

Staff in Trust schools are responsible for:

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

Trust schools will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.5 Parents

Parents may notify staff or the headteacher of their school of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions Policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **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 child is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for children learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is

provided at the request of the child's parent

- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the child has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the child is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered children to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered children to other premises where the Trust, or local authority has arranged for children to be educated
- Transport that enables a child 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 child is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying children on a residential visit
- If the number of school sessions (two per school day) 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. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes her or him to own them
- 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, schools 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 child is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered child has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the child to school or to other premises where the local authority or LGB has arranged for the child to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a child on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to children (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 children will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of children participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other children 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 children 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

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of children, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the child'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 child 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. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, Trust schools are legally permitted to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which Trust schools may ask parents for voluntary contributions include: school trips, external providers of workshops and sporting 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. It is good practice for headteachers to make this clear to parents.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, then it will be cancelled and it is advisable that the headteacher makes this clear to parents at the outset.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used for the benefit of children. Thus, voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise the children of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying staff.

8. Activities and other matters we charge for

8.1 Activities

Trust schools may charge for the following types of activities: early morning, after school and sports clubs. Parents may request in writing from the Business Manager/Office manager of the relevant Trust School an explanation of how the charge is calculated.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Headteacher and reviewed in July each year. Parents will be informed (where possible) of the charges for the coming year in September each year.

8.2 Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of willful 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 headteacher may decide.

8.3 Lettings

Trust schools may make their facilities available to outside users but at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Headteacher and approved in the letting policy by LGB.

8.4 Other Charges

The headteacher may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g., for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

8.5 Freedom of Information Requests

Trust schools may levy a charge for providing information requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, in accordance with the Trust's FOI Publication Scheme. Charges will reflect the actual cost of retrieval, reproduction, and postage, and will be communicated to the requester prior to processing.

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 Headteacher and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

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

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's 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 that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Business Manager/Office Manager responsible for a Trust school monitors charges and remissions in their school and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Central Team every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.