



# Charging and Remissions Policy

## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

The Academy conforms to the LEA's charging policy, the DES Circular 2/89 and the Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. However due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The Governing Body will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

## **SECTION 2 CHARGING FOR VISITS**

### **a) All Visits**

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- The total cost of the visit;
- How much of the cost will come from school (as in the case of field trips);
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit;
- How much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- Use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits?

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food, etc.

### **b) During Normal School Hours**

In all schools, except Independent Schools, visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit (or more to allow for those parents who cannot or will not contribute) and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled - parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

The Governing Body may offer to remit the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which:

- Takes place during school hours or;
- Is not an optional extra (see following section for definition).

The decision to offer to remit board and lodging costs, as above, is subject to the parents of a pupil being in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance;
- Family Credit;
- Disability Working Allowance.

Parental permission should be obtained in one of two ways:

i) **Sample Parental Declaration.** Parents sign a declaration which contains e.g.

I understand:

- That current legislation permits the Academy to ask for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved;
- That no pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay;
- That if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit may have to be cancelled.

ii) **Signed Slip received back from parents:**

A letter about the visit is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

"All pupils will need to take a packed lunch with them. Pupils who receive free School meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No pupil will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £\_\_\_ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed."

**c) Outside Of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras**

The Principal can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- Falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a residential trip during the school holidays an optional extra.
- Does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education.

The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for pupils whose families do not meet the full charge.

Parental permission should be obtained as follows:

- i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains e.g.
- I understand:
- That current legislation permits the Academy to ask for the full cost of the visit;
  - That current legislation does not require the Academy to arrange subsidies for the visit;
  - That if insufficient numbers of pupils opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
  - That my child cannot attend this 'optional extra' visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.

### **SECTION 3 TRANSPORT IN A MINIBUS**

If any payment is requested/made towards the cost of passengers being carried in a minibus then a public service vehicle (PSV) licence is required by the Schools. A licence is required if the school owns or rents the minibus. There are two types of PSV:

- Restricted (for up to two vehicles);
- Standard national (more than two vehicles).

### **SECTION 4 INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)**

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'.

This is particularly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for Design & Technology.

### **SECTION 5 BROKEN EQUIPMENT (REPLACEMENT)**

The Governors will allow the Principal to ask pupils and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the pupil's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief pupils thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the pupils.

Failure to receive payment from the appropriate person would result in the case being taken to our Solicitors; following this debt recovery action will be taken on behalf of the school for payment in respect of the loss suffered by the school to put right the damage to the property. The process would be a letter from the legal department requesting the amount owed; failure to do so would lead to a county court summons to a small claims court where a judgement would be enforced.

## **SECTION 7                      REMISSIONS**

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Principal in consultation with the Chair of Governors.