Policy Information Sheet

Name of Policy:	**Charging and Remissions Policy**
Delegated Authority	☐ Trust Board ☒ Nominated Committee – Audit & Risk committee ☐ CEO ☐ CFO ☐Other _____
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1.0			
2.0	Wendy Pattison	Move to Audit Committee for scrutiny	15.12.2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legislation restricts the types of activity schools are allowed to charge parents for. Make it Different Trust's policy applies to charges made to parents/students; and for facilities used by private individuals and third-party organisations that rent Trust premises.

1.2 As a Trust we try:

- To make activities accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not placing additional unexpected burdens on an Academy's budget.

1.3 For the purposes of this document, 'Parent' is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student.

2. LEGISLATION

2.1 This policy has due regard to all the relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following (and all updates to the documents below):

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- The trust's
- Funding Agreement
- Academy trust handbook.

2.2 Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the Make it Different Trust must have a policy on charging students to participate in academy activities.

2.3 Education provided during academy hours must be free – the definition of education includes materials, equipment and transport provided in academy hours by the Trust to carry students between the academy and an activity. By law, students may not be charged for activities that form part of the normal academy day curriculum based activity, but the Trust may invite parents and others from time to time to make a voluntary contribution to the Trust's work, to allow us to offer activities or experiences which otherwise might not be possible. This might include a voluntary contribution to activities taking place in academy time, activities which form part of the Curriculum or an examination syllabus, or those which form part of each Academy's religious education curriculum. However, the child of any parent who is unable to contribute will not be prevented from participating in an activity which takes place during academy time if the

activity goes ahead.

2.4 In any request for voluntary payments, it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- There is no obligation to make a contribution
- That students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed to the planned activity
- That if there are insufficient contributions received to cover the cost of including all students who wish to participate, the activity will not go ahead.
- Where an activity takes place outside of academy hours and does not form part of the Curriculum or examination syllabus, this is classed as an optional extra and parents can be asked to meet the full cost of these activities.

3. DETAIL OF CHARGES

3.1 Admissions

No charge shall be made in respect of admission to the academy unless it is for the purpose of:

- Part time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Full time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Teacher training.

3.2 Provision of education

The Trust will not charge for education provided wholly or mainly during academy hours.
No charge shall be made in relation to the education of registered students where education is provided during academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment). Where education is provided outside of academy hours, no charge shall be made provided it is required as part of the syllabus/curriculum. The Trust may charge individuals who are not registered students of one of its academies for education provided or facilities used by them belonging to the Trust. Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.

3.3 Practical subject charge

Voluntary contributions may be requested to cover the cost of materials and ingredients provided by an academy for practical subjects where parents indicate that they wish to receive the finished articles.

3.4 Visits during the academy day

A voluntary charge will be made to cover the cost of educational visits and other activities. However, charges cannot be enforced where this forms part of the curriculum. Where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable, consideration will be given to cancellation.

3.5 Residential visits

The Trust will always aim to source alternative funding for residential visits in the first instance. This may be through fundraising organised by staff and students or paid through the student reward budget.

If alternative funding has not been sourced and at least half of the time away from home is not normal academy time, where the trip involves an overnight stay or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip is classed as optional and parents can be expected to meet the full cost of residential courses in academy time. If the visit is deemed to have taken place during the academy day, or is part of the required curriculum, or is preparation for a public examination, then only the cost of board and lodging can be passed onto parents, and this cannot exceed the actual cost.

In practice this means:

If within school hours / part of curriculum - only board & lodging can be charged
If optional extra - full cost can be charged.

3.6 Any charge in respect of an optional extra requires parental agreement and willingness to meet the charges. Parents should be aware that the activity may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

3.7 If a student is unable to go on a trip after the initial deposit has been paid (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be required), parents may be liable for costs already incurred by the Trust where these cannot be recovered, unless the place can be filled by another student.

3.8 Freedom of Information

The Trust may charge for provision of information within the scope of freedom of information. The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

4. PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

4.1 No charge will be made in respect of the entry of a registered student at an academy for an examination for which the academy agrees the student should be entered. Charges will be applied for the entry of a student for an examination for which they have not been prepared by an academy, or for entry to an examination against the advice of that academy.

4.2 Entries for re-sits of examinations where the academy has not provided additional tuition are also subject to charge. Parents seeking to have an examination paper remarked will be required to pay the re-mark fee; however, if the new grade exceeds the original then this fee will be refunded.

4.3 Where a student fails to attend for an examination for which they have been entered (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be

required), parents may be expected to meet the cost of the examination entry.

5. OPTIONAL EXTRA VISITS

5.1 Visits that take place outside the academy day or as part of an extra-curricular activity can be charged for, and parents are expected to meet the full cost of the trip.

6. LOSS OR DAMAGE

6.1 The Trust may seek to cover the cost from parents/carers of repairing or replacing any Trust property damaged or destroyed by a student or a parent, or any fines to be paid by the Trust as a result of the actions of a student or parent. A charge will also apply for loss or damage of Trust property (including books or equipment) placed under the care of the student.

6.2 Students may be asked to undertake reparation tasks for damage. This could include cleaning or repairing damage. For high cost items, students may be asked to complete voluntary work as reparation in lieu of parental payment of costs.

7. FUNDRAISING AND SPONSORSHIP

7.1 General fundraising and sponsorship from a variety of sources may be used to allow additional activities to take place. Any fundraising activity will make the purpose of the fundraising clear to those who may wish to contribute.

8. LETTINGS OF THE TRUST'S BUILDINGS

8.1 Charges will be levied for the use of the Trust's facilities by private individuals or external organisations at a rate to be determined or reviewed annually. Facilities will only be let where they are not needed for the purpose of education during that time and under no circumstances will lettings be subsidised from resources provided for the education of students.

8.2 Hirers will need to demonstrate that they have adequate insurance or provision for compensating the Trust for any damage they cause. They must also leave the facilities in a clean and tidy state, otherwise an additional fee for cleaning will be charged.

9. REFUNDING OF CHARGES

9.1 Trips and activities

Charges and contributions are set to cover the anticipated costs. If the income from an activity exceeds the actual costs, the Academy will refund any surplus of £5 or more per student who contributed to the activity. Any amount below this will be transferred to a discretionary subsidy fund.

9.2 Arrangements for surpluses not refunded

Any surpluses not refunded will be transferred to a discretionary subsidy fund

and used to support access to optional activities for those pupils whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

9.3 REMISSION OF CHARGES

The Trust believes that all students should have the opportunity to gain fully from the experiences the Trust has to offer and recognises the real and persistent difficulties faced by families on low incomes in meeting the cost of educational activities for their children.

9.4 Where parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits (including, but not limited to, Income Support, Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance, support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or Child Tax Credit where Working Tax Credit is not also received), or meet equivalent eligibility criteria, the Trust will comply with its statutory duty to remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that takes place wholly or mainly during the academy day.

9.5 Parents who are experiencing financial difficulty, including those whose children are eligible for Free School Meals or meet equivalent eligibility criteria, may apply in confidence to the Academy for financial support with optional activities. Remission of charges in part or in full will be authorised by the Principal in discussion with the Finance Department.