



Charging and Remissions Policy

2020/2021

Signed by:

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Date: 11/10/2020

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James Evans, Chair of Trustees

Date: 11/10/2020

Revision History

Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author / Reviser
September 2019	1.0	Policy reviewed & amended to comply with latest legislation and best practice. Policy now applicable to all academies in Trust. Ratified on 25/09/2019 by Trust Board then circulated to Academies	J Jones, SBM
September 2020	1.1	Reviewed and updated. NEW section on school trip refunds, including provision for refunding parental contributions in a number of circumstances. Music section made clearer. Approved on 11/10/20 following Trust Board meeting on 25/09/20, circulated to Admin Managers/Headteachers on 11/10/20 to circulate to staff and AGBs.	J Jones, ELT Primary SBM

Contents

Legal framework	3
School Hours	3
Charging for education.....	3
Optional Extras	4
Voluntary Contributions.....	5
Residential Visits.....	5
Education Partly During School Hours.....	6
Transport.....	6
Material and Ingredients	6
Music tuition	6
School Lunches	7
Swimming	7
Sports Clubs	7
Out of Hours Provision for Childcare.....	8
Damages and Losses	8
Examination Fees	8
Payments	8
Remissions	9
Refunds.....	10

Review 11

Appendix 1 - Flow chart to determine charging for activities 12

Introduction

The Education Learning Trust is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras discriminates against no child.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

Legal framework

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2019) 'Governance handbook'
- Our Funding Agreement

School Hours (Individual schools amend)

School hours are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the mid-day break:

Foundation Stage 1

Beginning of week sessions: 09.00 – 3.15 (Mon & Tues) 09.00 – 12 noon (Wed)

End of week sessions: 12.15-3.15 (Wed), 09.00 – 15.15 (Thu & Fri)

Foundation Stage 2 and KS1

08.55 – 15.15

KS2

08.55 – 15.20

Charging for education

We will not charge for;

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours

- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum*, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless 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;
- Examination re-sits, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

We may charge for the following;

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent desire them to own;
- Optional extras (see below);
- Music and vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Use of community facilities

Optional Extras

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school that we may charge to parents. These activities are known as '**optional extras**'. 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. Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) where the pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the governing board have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- Out of School Provision services offered to pupils (also known as extended day services) e.g. after school clubs and breakfast club).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to;

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra;
- The cost of buildings and accommodation;
- The cost of employing non-teaching staff;
- The cost of teaching staff, including supply teachers engaged under contracts for services purely to provide the optional extra;
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or instrumental tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. To support these activities, we may ask for voluntary contributions and if an activity cannot go ahead without funding from voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

Parents have a right to know how each individual trip is funded, school provides this information on request.

Residential Visits

We will not 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;
- 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.

We will make it clear that clear that parents who can evidence that they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision for the pupil.

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.

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

Transport

No charge can be made for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Material and Ingredients

Charges may be made for materials or ingredients required for practical subjects where parents have indicated in advance their desire to own the product.

Music tuition

The Education Learning Trust follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

No charge will be made if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil (including instrument hire, music books and exam fees).

No charge will be made for the KS2 Wider Opportunities programme, this includes instrument hire, music books or any other equipment needed. **(Individual schools amend)**

We may charge for materials, books, instruments or equipment that the parent wishes their child to keep or own (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil, or groups of any appropriate size, (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles and, in the case of tuition in playing a musical instrument, shall not exceed four pupils) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for a student who is looked after by a local authority. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

School Lunches

A charge is made for lunch to those children not eligible for free school meals or universal infant free school meals. No charge is made if the pupil is absent from school, balances of payments in advance are carried forward or refunded as appropriate.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity and we inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

Sports Clubs **(individual schools amend)**

The school offers additional coaching in various sports after school. Several qualified sports coaches, who are not members of the school staff, run and organise these sessions. We make a small charge termly for these sessions in advance and this can be split into two payments. They run from the end of the school day until 4.30pm during term time. Refunds are not normally given for non-attendance of the sports clubs.

Out of Hours Provision for Childcare (individual schools amend)

Before School - Breakfast Club

This is a non-bookable breakfast club and parents can drop off their children any morning of the week from 8am. We offer a range of breakfast items, including cereal and toast along with juice or water. Payment must be made in advance or on entry to the club, non-attendance will not be charged for and will be carried forward or refunded as appropriate.

After School – The Lodge After School Club

The Lodge After School Club is on a contract basis with set days agreed with the Cub Manager. Children must be collected by 5.55pm prompt, late collections will incur a £5 fine for each 15 minutes that they are collected late. Refunds are not normally given for non-attendance as food and staffing are arranged in advance. The club requires four weeks' notice in writing to the Club Manager. Further information can be found in the club agreement document.

Damages and Losses

Charges may be made for the cost of repairing or replacing any damaged property or item resulting from a pupil's inappropriate behaviour. Charges may be made for the cost of replacing any property or item which has been loaned or hired to a pupil and not returned.

Examination Fees

- Where a student has not been prepared for a public examination by the school, the Governing Board may make a charge for the cost of entering the student for the examination if previously agreed by the parents. Entries to non-prescribed examinations, whether or not prepared by the school, will also be charged
- If a student fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the school has paid (or is liable to pay) an entry fee, then the Governing Board may recover the fee from the parent.
- Examination re-sits(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school cannot be charged for. However, if the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

Payments (individual schools amend)

The Education Learning Trust operates a cashless payment system, payments are made using ParentMail with the exception of the KS2 tuck shop and other ad hoc collections e.g. charity or fund raising events. Please contact the school office for further information regarding ParentMail on 0161 428 6286 or email admin@meadowbank.stockport.sch.uk or visit their website <https://www.parentmail.co.uk/>.

Remissions

The discretion to remit in whole or in part any charge, which may be made by the school, has been vested in the Headteacher. Remission may be made on the grounds of educational considerations with regard to both the pupil and the school needs. Remissions may be made on a group or an individual pupil basis.

The Board of Trustees will waive the charges for the board and lodging element of a residential activity within school hours, where the parents of a student who would normally be liable but are receiving the following benefits;

- 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 State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190;
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit

Where financial support may be available towards part or the whole of the cost of an activity, parents may be asked to provide evidence of their latest statement of benefits.

For advice, or to request assistance with payments, parents should contact the School Administration Manager at the school office. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

* It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

Refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.

In the event that a school trip is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the academy governing body on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The headteacher will discuss options with the academy governing body, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the academy governing body on the matter, taking into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute (e.g. due to illness), it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the academy governing body on the matter, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. If the excess is less than £1 per pupil, this will be paid into the school's account.

Excess expenditure will be subsidised by the school's account.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the ELT Complaints Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust Board.

Appendix 1 - Flow chart to determine charging for activities

