

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY



This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly cycle

Person responsible for the Policy:	
Approved by/ date:	Jan 2023
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Our Statement of Intent

Revoe Learning Academy (RLA) is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

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

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents, on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits, of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of school visits.

Please note that while this policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, we have ensured it meets the requirements of the law.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- 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
- ESFA (2021) 'Academy trust handbook 2021'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
- SVT's Scheme of Delegation
- Finance Policy

Charging for Education

RLA will not charge for:

- ✓ Admission applications.
- ✓ Education provided during school hours (including supply of materials, books or other equipment).
- ✓ 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 RLA, or part of RE.
- ✓ Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, 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 RLA.
- ✓ Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at RLA.

RLA may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.
- Optional extras, including certain early years provision.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).

- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

RLA will make it clear that, in the following circumstances, it will propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to RLA:

RLA proposes to remit (wholly or partly) any charge, which would otherwise be payable to RLA in accordance with this policy, where a family's circumstances are such that payment cannot be made without significantly affecting the family's well-being. Such rare cases are scrutinised on an individual basis. RLA reserves the right to request evidence to support the consideration of remitting a charge (wholly or partly).

Optional Extras

RLA may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public exam that the pupil is being prepared for at RLA
 - Part of RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at RLA
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to RLA or to other premises where the Trust board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff (including TAs)
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

RLA will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate 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, RLA will not charge for the cost of: alternative provision for those not participating; nor for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

Examination Fees and Resits

RLA may charge for exam fees if:

- The exam is on the set list (including SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at RLA.
- The exam is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.

- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, RLA will pay the fee. Once pupils have left RLA, resits must be taken at the school.

If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the pupil's best interests to request that an exam is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, RLA will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded.

Voluntary Contributions

RLA may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or its activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, RLA will make this clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil 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.

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

Music Tuition

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum nor if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are Our Children (LAC).

Transport

RLA will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

Education Partly During School Hours

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.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. 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 the school may charge for the activity; however, RLA 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 RE.

Remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of RLA. These costs will be borne by RLA.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

Residential Visits

RLA 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

RLA may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for the activity.

Damaged or Lost Items

RLA may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents.

Remissions

The school has set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact the Business Lead: admin@revoe.blackpool.sch.uk.

School Trip 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 RLA has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than RLA due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at RLA's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at RLA's discretion as to whether a refund is given. RLA will consider the reason for cancellation, whether RLA will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, RLA has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at RLA's discretion as to whether a refund is given. RLA will take 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.

If a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at RLA's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. RLA will consider its options, 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 the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at RLA's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. RLA will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

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.

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

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

Income Generation

In line with the ESFA's '[Academy trust handbook](#)', the Trust will set fees for chargeable services at full cost, and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

RLA's Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.