



## **CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY 2023 - 2027**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Academy recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, out of Academy trips, residential visits and other experiences, can make towards pupils' personal and social education.
- 1.2. It is our aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils and as additional optional activities.
- 1.3. The law states that education provided during Academy hours must be free. This definition includes materials, equipment and transport (including public transport, where necessary, to other offsite education provision) provided in Academy hours. No pupil may be left out of an activity because their parents/carers cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.
- 1.4. If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity a parent/carers may ask the Academy how the charge has been worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free).
- 1.5. The remissions policy must set aside any circumstances in which the Academy proposes to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy.

## 2. AIMS

2.1. The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the charging policy.
- To make the programme of trips and activities accessible to as many pupils as possible regardless of family income.
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents/carers and pupils and which acknowledges the cost of such activities to the Academy's budget.

2.2. The Academy must ensure that it informs parents on low incomes and in respect of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of Academy visits.

## 3. STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY

3.1. The legislation governing the charging for Academy activities is set out in the Education Act 1996: Section 449 – 462 and the Academy Funding Agreement Section 34. It covers what the Board of Trustees may and may not charge for when activities take place, either during or outside of Academy hours, including residential activities. The need to have charging and remissions policies and requests for voluntary contributions are also incorporated.

## 4. CHARGES

4.1. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the Academy:

- **Academy trips and residentials in Academy time:** the board and lodging element of the residential experience and approved activities deemed to be optional extras that are not a necessary part of the Academy's curriculum; the charge must not exceed the actual cost.
- **Activities outside Academy hours:** the full cost for each student of journeys, trips and overnight stays in the United Kingdom and abroad which take place at weekends and during holidays, which are deemed to be optional extras.
- **Materials:** the cost of materials, books, instruments, equipment, food ingredients or for specified projects, if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the final product.
- **Acts of vandalism and negligence:** the Board of Trustees reserves the right to recover part, or the whole cost, of damage to buildings or equipment which is the result of vandalism or negligence by a pupil.

- **Music tuition:** charges will be made for either an individual pupil or group to play a musical instrument or to sing if the teaching is not as essential part of either the National Curriculum. This includes resources and exam fees. The Academy requires a half term's written notice or a half term's fee in lieu of such notice to cancel instrumental music tuition. Non-payment of fees will result in the pupil being withdrawn from further music tuition lessons.
- **School meals:** charges will be made to supply an individual pupil a school meal if requested by the pupil or parent. This excludes pupils who are eligible to receive a free school meal.

## 5. OPTIONAL EXTRAS

5.1. The Academy may charge for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of Academy time that is not:
  - Part of the National Curriculum.
  - Part of Religious Education.
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to Academy or to other premises where the Local Authority/Board of Trustees have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

5.2. 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 pre requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## 6. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

6.1. The Academy may ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of any Academy activity which takes place during school hours, school equipment and Academy funds generally.

6.2. The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against.

6.3. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Academy will make this clear to parents at the outset. Parents are under no obligation to make any contributions.

6.4. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make an activity possible, and it is not possible to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

## **7. WHAT THE ACADEMY CANNOT CHARGE FOR**

7.1. The Academy cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any Academy Trust.
- Education provided during Academy hours (including supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Education provided outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of Religious Education.
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum or part of Religious Education.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during Academy hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of Religious Education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from Academy accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transporting pupils to or from the Academy premises, where the Local Authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting pupils to other premises where the Board of Trustees or Local Authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel for a charge in a school's minibus and only where a permit has been issued under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. This permit is not required where no charge (in cash or kind) is made. Any charge made may cover the costs of running the vehicle,

- No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in Regulations. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:
  - The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
  - The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
  - A pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Body or LEA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in Regulations.

## **8. REMISSION**

- 8.1. Where the parent/carer of a pupil is in receipt of qualifying state benefit(s), the Academy will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that is organised for the pupil and which takes place within Academy time.
- 8.2. The Academy may remit charges in full or in part to other parents after considering other specific hardship cases. The Academy invites parents to apply in writing, in the strictest confidence to the Academy office manager, for the remission of charges in part or in full. The Academy office manager will authorise remission in consultation with the Headteacher.
- 8.3. An application for remission of instrumental music tuition can be made to Hertfordshire County Council at [www.hertsdirect.org](http://www.hertsdirect.org) Dependent on parent/carer financial circumstances; they may receive 50% remission of music fees or be charged £20 per term for a pupil to participate in music tuition.
- 8.4. The Academy requires a half term's written notice or a half term's fee in lieu of such notice to cancel instrumental music tuition. Non-payment of fees will result in the pupil being withdrawn from further music tuition lessons.

## **9. INSURANCE**

9.1. Any insurance costs will be included in charges made for trips and activities.

## **10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 10.1. The Board of Trustees has delegated to the Resources Committee the responsibility for ensuring that the Academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and any related procedures and action plans are implemented.
- 10.2. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, for providing them with appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action.
- 10.3. The Academy office manager is responsible for the day to day co-ordination and implementing this policy.
- 10.4. All staff/others are expected to complete a Risk Assessment and Costing Form in line with this policy.

## **11. REFUNDS**

- 11.1. Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. The Academy will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person

Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only e.g. £3.00 not £3.29.

- 11.2. Where a refund is offered, an accompanying letter will indicate the amount refundable and the parent/carers will be given two weeks to notify the school that they wish to take advantage of the refund. If the school is not contacted within this time scale, it will assume the refund has been donated to the Academy funds.
- 11.3. All refunds will be made in cheque format in order to maintain a clear audit trail. Refunds donated to the school will be transferred to an appropriate budget heading, following approval from the Academy office manager.

## **12. POLICY REVIEW**

12.1. This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Resources Committee.

