



# Charging Policy

Date	Amendment	Approval
5.7.17	Review – checked against gov.uk advice; no new updates since Oct 2014 therefore no changes.	FGB

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies (including free schools, studio schools and UTCs) are required through their funding agreement to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

### **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

### **Responsibilities**

The Governing Body of the Academy is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

### **Publication of Information**

This policy will be included on the Academy website and will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents.

### **Prohibition of Charges**

The Governing Body of the Academy recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- an admission application to any state funded school- paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is 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; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

### **Charges**

Although the Academy actively seeks funding to support extra-curricular activities, charges may be made for the following

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances;
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities.

## **Optional Extras**

Charges may be made 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 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) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

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

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

## **Remissions**

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free Academy lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential Academy trips. The relevant support payments are:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008;

Parents who are not charged for such activities will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards transport.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school/academy or any school activities.

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The head teacher will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.

The terms of any request made to parents will specify that the request is for a voluntary contribution and in no way represents a charge. In addition the following will be made clear to parents:

- a) that the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent is under no obligation to pay; and
- b) that registered pupils at the Academy will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Headteacher.