Charging and Remissions Policy

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Charging and Remissions Policy

Contents

1. Purpose 1
2. Introduction 1
3. Activities Without Charge 1
4. Voluntary Contributions for Educational Activities 2
5. Permitted Charges 2
6. Remissions 4
7. Roles and Responsibilities 4
8. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy 5

Charging and Remissions Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The aim of the policy is to provide clarity around what is provided free of charge and the circumstances where a financial contribution is requested.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Directors of ACE Derbyshire recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities can make towards a pupil's education. The Board of Directors aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the Trust and as additional optional activities.

2.2 There are two types of financial contributions for which parents and carers can be asked to support in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

2.3 In addition, the Trust and its academies may make a charge to external organisations, including schools and academies and community groups for educational services, consultancy, hire of premises or other activity permitted within its funding agreement. The Trust will charge reasonable overhead costs to ensure that all costs incurred in the provision of such services are covered and are not detrimental to the running of the Trust.

3. Activities Without Charge

3.1 There will be no charge for the following activities (this is in line with government guidance): -

- Education provided wholly or mostly during school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments, other equipment and also transport provided in school hours to carry pupils to and from school or to an activity;
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or our core offer;
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent or carer; and
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at a Trust academy.

4. Voluntary Contributions for Educational Activities

4.1 Nothing in legislation prevents an Academy Trust from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Trust or any Trust activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Trust or Headteacher should make this clear to parents and carers at the outset. The Headteacher **must** also make it clear to parents and carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

4.2 It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents or carers are unwilling or unable to pay. The Trust and/or its academies must make sure that they make this clear to parents and carers. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The Trust and /or its academies should make it clear to parents and carers at the outset what their policy for allocating places on each visit will be. Additional charges **will not** be levied to those parents and carers who do pay to subsidise any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents and carers/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

4.3 When making requests for voluntary contributions to the Trust funds, parents and carers must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. The Trust and its academies should avoid sending letters to parents and carers via pupils reminding them that they have not paid. The Trust and its academies should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents and carers when requesting for contributions.

5. Permitted Charges

5.1 Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a Trust activity or visit. Whilst no charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break), a charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit.

Materials & Textbooks

5.2 Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. Textbooks are provided free of charge.

Music Tuition

5.3 Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music tuition is an exception to this rule within the state education sector.

5.4 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

5.5 Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical

principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. **Charges may only 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), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).**

Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours

5.6 If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents and carers cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents and carers of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

5.7 *When is an activity held in school hours?*

If the number of academy sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

5.8 Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

5.9 Pupils are away from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

5.10 **Breakfast/After School Clubs**

The Trust and its academies may levy a fee for breakfast and after school clubs. The charge made is intended to cover the cost of staffing the club, any food and drinks provided, and premises related costs such as heating, lighting, water and cleaning.

Damage/Loss to Property

5.11 A charge may be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of Trust property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

Other charges

5.12 The Directors, Executive Team or Headteachers may charge other organisations for miscellaneous services for the cost of providing such services including reasonable overheads e.g., for providing consultancy services, hire of premises or other activities

permitted within the funding agreement.

5.13 For requests of copies of documents, the Trust will levy a charge of 10p per sheet for a copy of any document which exceeds 10 pages in length.

6. Remissions

6.1 Remission is the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable. In some circumstances the Trust may not charge for items or activities set out above. The trust and the academy will apply the statutory minimum remissions to any charges that they make. However, no pupil shall be placed at an educational disadvantage because of a parent's unwillingness or inability to contribute. In the case of need, remission outside these parameters will be at the absolute discretion of the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the Local Governing Body. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

Government guidance providing details of the benefits which exempt parents and carers from being charged can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities

6.2 Where charges are to be made by the Trust for optional extras, parents and carers may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 **Role of the Directors**

The Board of Directors have overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy but can delegate this to a committee. The Board of Directors also have the overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

7.2 **Role of the Headteacher - The Headteacher will:**

- Ensure all academy personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

7.3 **Role of Academy Personnel**

- Academy personnel will comply with all aspects of this policy;
- Organisers of activities should be clear as to whether an activity falls within the parameters for charging or voluntary contributions.

8. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

8.1 Annually the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed, or when the need arises, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Board.

Signature CEO/DCEO/CFO:	
Signature Chair of Trust Board/Committee:	
Date:	