

Charging and Remissions Policy

Review frequency: Governing body free to determine.

Approval: Governing body free to delegate to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the Headteacher.

Policy Statement

Introduction

This statement sets out the legal framework, the definitions and our policy expectations.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly when Academies may or may not make a charge, and that they must inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of Academy visits.

The responsibility for implementation of the policy rests with the Head Teacher.

Legal Framework

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for Academy activities.

Sections 451 and 454 of the Education Act 1996 prohibits academies from charging for education and the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment (including tablets) during Academy hours. However, there is no prohibition of asking parents/carers to make financial contributions. There is a specific exception in the legislation which enables academies to charge for materials where the parent/carer wishes the pupil to own the materials.

Guidance from the Department of Education is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_Academy_activities_-_October_2014.pdf

Paragraph 1.9(n) of the 'Schools Admission Code 2012' rules out requests from admission authorities for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process.

Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 sets out the circumstances in which a charge can be made. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20081203030132/opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/uksi_20072239_en_1

Section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989 states no charge can be made for music tuition for looked-after children.

Since April 2003, the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with Free Schools Meals eligibility criteria.

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No charge is made for:

- education within Academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) [Academy hours do not include the midday break.]
- an admission application
- education provided outside Academy 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 Academy, or part of religious education

A charge can be made for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own
- 'Optional extras': transport (other than to and from Academy); board and lodging on a residential visit; extended day services e.g. breakfast club, after-Academy clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions. Parental agreement (to the child's participation and to paying the charges) is therefore a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances i.e. when the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parent/carer or is in addition to that offered as part of the Academy's core curriculum.
- Community facilities
- Costs of repairing damage to property etc caused by children or parents or replacing items stolen by children or parents.

Voluntary Contributions

On occasion, academies may request voluntary contributions from parents to support the delivery of enhanced provision beyond the core legal entitlement.

Nothing in legislation prevents an Academy from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Academy or any Academy activities. However, if an activity cannot take place without voluntary contributions, the Head Teacher must make this clear to parents. The Head Teacher must also make it clear that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

Parents/carers will be made aware from the outset of any possible cancellation of the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.