

Charging and Remissions Policy

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1. Introduction

Future Academies' aim is to make high quality education available to all its students, regardless of their ability to pay. To that end activities are provided free wherever possible.

No charge is made for activities that are a compulsory part of the curriculum or that take place during the school day.

Legislation restricts the types of activity schools are allowed to charge parents for. Future Academies' policy applies to charges made to parents/students, for facilities used by private individuals and third party organisations that rent Trust premises.

As a Trust we try:

- To make activities accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not placing additional unexpected burdens on an Academy's budget.

For the purposes of this document, 'Parent' is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student.

2. Legislation

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, Future Academies must have a policy on charging students to participate in Academy activities.

Education provided during academy hours must be free. The definition of education includes materials, equipment and transport provided in academy hours by the Trust to carry students between the academy and an activity. By law, students may not be charged for activities that form part of the normal academy day, but the Trust may invite parents and others, from time-to-time, to make a voluntary contribution to the Trust's work, to allow us to offer activities or experiences

which otherwise might not be possible. This might include a voluntary contribution to activities taking place in academy time or activities which form part of the Curriculum or an examination syllabus. However, the child of any parent who is unable to contribute will not be prevented from participating in an activity which takes place during academy time if the activity goes ahead.

In any request for voluntary payments it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- There is no obligation to make a contribution
- That students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed to the planned activity
- That if there are insufficient contributions received to cover the cost of including all students who wish to participate, the activity will not go ahead.

Where an activity takes place outside of academy hours and does not form part of the Curriculum or examination syllabus, this is classed as an optional extra and parents can be asked to meet the full cost of these activities.

3. Details of Charges

3.1 Admissions

No charge shall be made in respect of admission to the academy unless it is for the purpose of:

- Part time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Full time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Teacher training

3.2 Provision of education

No charge shall be made in relation to the education of registered students where education is provided during academy hours. Where education is provided outside of academy hours, no charge shall be made provided it is required as part of the syllabus/curriculum. The Trust may charge individuals who are not registered students of one of its academies for education provided or facilities used by them belonging to the Trust.

3.3 Uniform and stationery

Uniform and stationery supplies are sold at cost price, with no contribution towards staff time or overheads.

3.4 Musical instrument tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. There may be a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. These extracurricular music lessons are charged at a price that is significantly less than cost to the school. Students eligible for Free School Meals are entitled to a subsidy. Tuition will be provided free of charge where it is considered to be an essential part of either the Curriculum or a public examination syllabus. Students who wish to loan an instrument belonging to an academy will be able to do this free of charge.

3.5 Primary after-school clubs

Clubs are subject to a charge to pay for the cost of tuition and materials. Potential club members are notified through start of the year welcome meetings, newsletters and the school notice board.

Families must pay in advance for the number of weeks the club is running. Refunds are not available if the child voluntarily withdraws from the club.

3.6 Millbank Academy Play Centre

During term time. Potential members are notified via start of the year welcome meetings, newsletters and the school notice board. Payment must be made in advance and refunds are not available for voluntary withdrawal.

3.7 Visits during the academy day

No charge is made for activities that are a compulsory part of the curriculum or that take place during the school day.

Where activities are part of the curriculum or occur during the school day and school funding is limited, a contribution may be requested from parents. This applies particularly to trips or visits by specialists to the school. Such activities would not be able to take place without the additional funding from parental contributions. The maximum amount requested will be not more than the additional cost of the activity for each student. This does not include any contribution for staff time or to cover the costs of students who do not make a contribution.

Communication with parents requesting a contribution will make clear that it is voluntary and that there will be no disadvantage for a student who does not make a contribution.

3.8 Residential visits

Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal academy time, where the trip involves an overnight stay or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip is classed as optional and parents can be expected to meet the full cost of residential courses in academy time. If the visit is deemed to have taken place during the academy day, or is part of the required curriculum, or is preparation for a public examination, then only the cost of board and lodging can be passed onto parents and this cannot exceed the actual cost.

Any charge in respect of an optional extra requires parental agreement and willingness to meet the charges. Parents should be aware that the activity may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

If a student is unable to go on a trip after the initial deposit has been paid (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be required), parents may still be required to meet the full cost of the trip, unless another student can be found to take up the place.

3.9 Extra-curricular Trips

Extra-curricular trips may be charged and that charge is compulsory for any student attending. The cost to parents is only the actual cost of the trip to the school with no contribution towards staff time. Students who are eligible for Free School Meals and registered with the school as such will be entitled to a percentage discount of the cost of

one trip per academic year. The number of such discounted places is limited to a specific percentage of the total number of students on the trip.

3.10 Public examinations

No charge will be made in respect of the entry of a registered student at an academy for an examination for which the academy agrees the student should be entered. Charges will be applied for the entry of a student for an examination for which s/he has not been prepared by an academy, or for entry to an examination against the advice of that academy. Entries for re-sits of examinations where the academy has not provided additional tuition are also subject to charge. Parents seeking to have an examination paper re-marked will be required to pay the re-mark fee; however, if the new grade exceeds the original then this fee will be refunded.

Where a student fails to attend for an examination for which they have been entered (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be required), parents may be asked to meet the cost of the examination entry.

3.11 Loss or damage

Parents will be expected to meet the cost of repairing or replacing any Trust property damaged or destroyed by a student, or any fines to be paid by the Trust as a result of the actions of a student. A charge will also apply for loss or damage of Trust property (including books or equipment) placed under the care of the student.

3.12 Fundraising and sponsorship

General fundraising and sponsorship from a variety of sources may be used to allow additional activities to take place. Any fundraising activity will make the purpose of the fundraising clear to those who may wish to contribute.

4. Refunding of charges

4.1 Trips and activities

Charges and contributions are set to cover the anticipated costs. If the income from an activity exceeds the actual costs, the Academy will refund any surplus.

4.2 Remission of charges

The Trust believes that all students should have the opportunity to gain fully from the experiences the Trust has to offer and recognises the real and persistent difficulties faced by families on low incomes in meeting the cost of educational activities for their children. Where parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (providing Working Tax Credit is not also received), the Trust will observe its statutory duty to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity deemed to take place within academy hours.

Parents who find themselves in financial difficulties and who have students at one of our academies in receipt of Free School Meals may apply in confidence to that Academy for

financial support with optional activities. Remission of charges in part or in full will be authorised by the Headteacher in discussion with the Finance Department.

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