

## Charging & Remission Policy

**Last amended 01.12.15 by Heather Watson**

**Reviewed by Chris Stafford 15.10.15**

**Ratified by Trustees' Resources Committee 21.10.15**

**Next review date October 2017**

*This policy has been reviewed in line with the 8 principles set out in the Single Equality Policy and an initial screening Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.*

Within this policy the term Headteacher refers to the Headteacher of the school, apart from Twynham School, where the term refers to the Associate Headteacher. The term Executive Headteacher refers to the Executive Headteacher of the Trust.

The governors of the Academy Trust (AT) are charity trustees and company directors and for the purpose of this policy these terms are interchangeable.

## **1) INTRODUCTION**

The governors recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' education. The AT aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities. However due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the governors reserve the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the Trust's schools. The governors will, from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

## **2) CHARGING FOR VISITS**

### **a) All Visits**

The group leader should ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- the total cost of the visit;
- how much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit;
- how much spending/pocket money students will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits?

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food etc.

### **b) During Normal School Hours:**

In all schools, except Independent Schools, visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled – parents must be notified of this contingency. Students whose parents do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

The governors may offer to remit the full cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which:

- takes place during school hours or;
- is not an optional extra (see following section for definition).

The decision to offer to remit board and lodging costs, as above, is subject to the parents of a student being in receipt of free school meals.

A letter about the visit is sent out to parents containing a reply slip (with space for parents' signature). Permission is obtained by the return of the signed slip. There will also be a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

*"All students will need to take a packed lunch with them. Students who receive free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £\_\_\_\_\_ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed".*

### **c) Outside of Normal School Hours/Optional Extras**

The Headteacher can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a skiing holiday during the school holidays is an optional extra;
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination – if an 'A' level Biology syllabus mentions fieldwork as a requirement then this in itself does not necessitate a residential fieldtrip to another part of the country as local facilities may suffice. However, if the syllabus mentions that pupils need to know about the ecology of rocky shores and they live in a city a long way from the coast then the fieldtrip would not be classed as an 'optional extra'.

The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for pupils whose families do not meet the full charge. Permission should be obtained from parents as follows:

Sample Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g:

I understand:

- that current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- that current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit;
- that if insufficient numbers of pupils opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled;
- that my child cannot attend this 'optional extra' visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves unless alternative funding is sourced.

### **3) TRAVEL**

If the trip is classified as being within school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs although a voluntary contribution may be sought.

Where the trip is classified as being out of school hours a charge will be made to cover the unit cost per student other than those entitled to remissions. No paying student will be required to cover the cost of non-paying students.

#### **4) INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TUITION**

No charge will be made if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charges will be made for instrumental and vocal tuition requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors within school hours, whether offered to an individual or group of students. Charges will be determined by the Resources Committee and reviewed annually.

Where charges are made for instrumental and vocal tuition they will be remitted for students who receive free school meals. At Key Stage Three group lessons will be funded for Pupil Premium students who wish to take extra music lessons. At Key Stage Four individual lessons will be funded for Pupil Premium students as long as they are studying Music as one of their GCSE options.

#### **5) INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)**

The AT reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials, or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'.

This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: DT, Science, Art/Craft.

#### **6) BROKEN EQUIPMENT (REPLACEMENT)**

The AT will allow all departments to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where they were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students.

#### **7) REMISSIONS**

The AT may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher.

## Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Record

1. What policy is being reviewed?	Charging & Remission Policy
2. Upon whom will this impact?	The Academy Trust community

3. How would the work impact upon groups; are they included and considered?

<b>The Equality Strands</b>	Negative impact	Positive impact	No impact
Minority ethnic groups			√
Gender			√
Disability			√
Religion, faith or belief			√
Sexual orientation			√
Transgender			√
Age <small>(N/A to pre-school and school children)</small>			√
Rurality			√

4. Does data inform this work, research and/or consultation, and has it been broken down by the equality strands?

	NO	YES	Uncertain
Minority ethnic groups	√		
Gender	√		
Disability	√		
Religion, Faith or belief	√		
Sexual Orientation	√		
Transgender	√		
Age	√		
Rurality	√		

Does the initial screening highlight potential issues that may be illegal? NO

Further comments:-

Do you consider that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required? NO

Initial screening carried out by Chris Stafford, Resource Manager, 28/11/12

Comment by Headteacher: