



## Charging, Refunds and Remissions Policy

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<b>Other related policies</b>	Complaints Policy Whistleblowing Policy

## **Charging Policy**

### **School Meals**

The charge for a school meal will be set annually by the Board of Trustees following consideration of the Catering Business Plan as part of the annual budget setting process.

All meals taken by pupils who are not eligible for free school meals will be chargeable, parents/carers are expected to make prompt payment. Where payments are not made in advance of the meal being taken, parents/carers will be reminded of their debt by email/letter.

The school reserves the right to not provide meals for families whose debt exceeds a total of £26 per child. The school also reserves the right to not provide meals for families whose debt is lower than £26 but has been outstanding for longer than 20 school days.

There is no charge for pupils who are entitled to free school meals or universal infant free school meals.

### **Educational visits/experiences/opportunities**

The academy:

- Will seek voluntary contributions from parents/carers where applicable;
- Will not exclude a child from participating in an activity during the school day on financial grounds.

Where 20% or more of parents decline to make the requested voluntary contribution (their identity will remain confidential), or the contributions shortfall makes the trip not feasible, then the visit or activity may not take place.

### **Residential activities**

The costs of residential activities can be high and such activities may only continue to be available if sufficient costs are recovered.

Charges that apply:

- Travel costs – transport to and from the residential activity;
- Board and lodging;
- Costs of supply staff engaged to cover the staff accompanying pupils on a residential trip where the trip takes place during term time;
- Full cost recovery for residential activities that take place outside of school hours.

The academy will subsidise the cost of any residential trip for children of families claiming free school meals. This figure will be determined by the Headteacher.

No charge applies:

- Where parents / carers in receipt of certain benefits may claim exemption in accordance with the Remissions guidance below;
- For education costs incurred on any visit during school hours;
- For education costs incurred on any visit outside school hours if it is part of the academy's curriculum.

## **Music Tuition**

Instrumental tuition or singing lessons do not form part of the curriculum but are an additional activity arranged by the academy and delivered by specialist tutors either on an individual basis or as part of a group, following parental request. The cost of such lessons is dependent on the charges applied by the tutors, the size of the group, the duration and frequency of each lesson.

The academy operates on full cost recovery basis. However, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, charges for music tuition within school hours for pupils eligible for free school meals or children in care will be considered for remission in accordance with this policy (see remissions section).

## **Examination fees**

No charge when:

- An exam is part of the curriculum;
- An exam is on the academy's set examinations list;
- The pupil has been prepared for that exam by the academy,
- The exam is not on the set list, but has been arranged by the academy.

Charges do apply when:

- The pupil has not been prepared for the exam by the academy;
- The pupil wishes to re-sit an exam.

## **Extra-curricular activities**

### **Curriculum related clubs**

Where these activities run outside of normal school hours, (i.e. sports clubs, homework club, art club) a charge may be made to cover costs of equipment, teaching or non-teaching staff, specialist staff /coaches, transport to events such as sports fixtures, or materials used. The total charge will not exceed the actual costs incurred in the provision of the activity and will be set by the Headteacher.

Parents/carers will be advised of any such costs before their child is allowed to undertake any such activity and participation will be on the basis of the parent's willingness to pay the charges.

Parents/carers are able to claim remission from such charges in accordance with the guidance below.

### **Breakfast Club**

Charges apply in accordance with the rules laid down in the academy's separate Breakfast Club agreement, which must be signed by parents/carers before their child is left in the care of breakfast club staff.

The school reserves the right to not provide breakfast club for families whose debt exceeds a total of £30 per child. The school also reserves the right to not provide breakfast club for families whose debt is lower than £30 but has been outstanding for longer than 20 school days.

## **After School Club**

Charges apply in accordance with the rules laid down in the academy's separate After School Club agreement which must be signed by parents/carers before their child is left in the care of after school club staff.

The school reserves the right to not provide after school club for families whose debt exceeds a total of £60 per child. The school also reserves the right to not provide after school club for families whose debt is lower than £60 but has been outstanding for longer than 20 school days.

## **Nursery**

Parents who qualify for either the 15 or 30 hours free child care provision can apply to purchase additional sessions. There will be a charge for these sessions. Parents and carers will be informed of the cost of additional sessions before they book them.

The school reserves the right to not provide after school club for families whose debt exceeds a total of £250 per child. The school also reserves the right to not provide after school club for families whose debt is lower than £250 but has been outstanding for longer than 30 school days.

Parents may be asked for a voluntary contribution towards additional consumables, such as drinks, meals or nappies, or additional services, such as baby yoga, music lessons and school trips.

In some circumstances, parents may be asked to supply their own consumables such as nappies and other intimate care items.

Parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of lunch. This cost will cover the cost of the food and the cost of the adult supervision.

## Other areas

Charges apply:

- Books and materials belonging to the academy that a pupil has lost;
- Books and materials that a parent wishes a pupil to keep after having been advised of the cost;
- Activities taking place outside school hours that are not:
  - i. Part of the academy's curriculum
  - ii. Part of a syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academy
  - iii. Part of the academy's basic religious education
- Property damage – each individual case to be decided upon by the Headteacher
  - i. Full repair costs incurred as a result of wilful or reckless damage to academy property by a pupil or parent/carer
  - ii. Full recovery of costs incurred by the academy as a result of damage caused by a pupil to third party property

No charge applies:

- For activities taking place during school hours except any of those listed above;
- For transport during school hours for school-organised activities except for educational visits as detailed above;
- For activities outside school hours that are part of the:
  - i. Set curriculum including sports matches against other academies / schools
  - ii. Syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academy
  - iii. Academy's basic religious education syllabus
- For admissions.

## **Voluntary contributions**

The academy may, from time to time, ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions to the academy's general funds in order to assist with the provision of resources to enhance their children's education. There will be no pressure exerted and any contribution will be gratefully received.

Where the voluntary contribution applies to an educational visit or extra-curricular activity, if the sufficient level of contributions is not achieved, that activity will be cancelled; any monies already collected will be refunded to the relevant parents/carers.

## **DBS checks**

The academy will cover the cost of DBS checks for all employed staff and volunteers.

## **Refunds Policy**

### **School meals**

Where payment for a school meal is received in advance and the pupil is absent due to illness, the funds will be retained to be used for future meals.

If the academy has to cancel meal provision for a short time, the income received in advance will be recorded against each individual pupil to be used to cover future meals; where that amount exceeds £26 (equivalent of 10 meals) for any one pupil, the parent/carer may request a refund.



When a pupil leaves the academy and income has been received but meals not taken, the parent is entitled to request a refund where the figure exceeds £10, lesser amounts will be retained in academy funds.

### **Educational visits/experiences/opportunities**

When a pupil is absent due to illness and does not attend an educational visit, the transport/entrance cost will not be refunded, where already committed. However, where possible, the academy will endeavour to recover costs related to that activity and, if successful, will then refund the parent/carer.

If a trip has to be cancelled by the academy, parental contributions will be refunded.

Where contributions for an activity exceed the final total cost by more than £5 per pupil, a refund will be given. Excess income less than £5 per pupil will be retained in academy funds. Excess expenditure will be paid from academy funds.

### **Residential activities**

If a pupil does not attend a residential activity due to illness, the academy will endeavour to recover costs, through the trip insurance and, if successful, will then pass this refund onto the parent/carer; please note that initial deposits may be retained by the travel company.

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the travel company, the academy will endeavour to recover full refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto the parents/carers.

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the academy, parental contributions already received will be refunded.

## **Music Tuition**

Where Instrumental or singing lessons are cancelled by the tutor or the academy, and payment has already been received, the academy will transfer the funds to cover future lessons taken by the relevant pupil. If lessons are not being continued in the following term, the parent/carer may request a refund.

Where a pupil fails to attend a pre-booked lesson, refunds do not apply.

## **Extra-curricular activities**

If a pupil does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where curriculum related clubs are cancelled by the academy, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where pupils are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.

Outside of school hours activities - not part of the curriculum, or public examination syllabus or part of the academy's basic religious education

If a pupil does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where the activity is cancelled by the academy, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where pupils are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.

Where the activity is arranged by the academy but has been cancelled by external organisers/tutors/sports coaches, the academy will endeavour to obtain refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto the parents/carers.

Where an activity arranged by external organisers directly with parents/carers is cancelled, the parents/carers must contact the organisers to obtain a refund in accordance with the separate booking agreement.

### **Breakfast and After School Clubs**

Where payment for Breakfast or After School Club is received in advance and the pupil is absent due to illness, the funds will be retained to be used for future sessions.

If the academy has to cancel the wraparound provision for a short time, the income received in advance will be recorded against each individual pupil to be used to cover future sessions; where that amount exceeds £50 for any one pupil, the parent/carer may request a refund.

When a pupil leaves the academy and income has been received, the parent is entitled to request a refund where the figure exceeds £10, lesser amounts will be retained in academy funds.

### **Nursery**

Where payment for additional nursery sessions has been received in advance and the pupil is absent due to illness, the funds will be retained to be used for future sessions.

If the academy has to cancel the nursery provision for a short time, the income received in advance will be recorded against each individual pupil to be used to cover future sessions; where that amount exceeds £50 for any one pupil, the parent/carer may request a refund.

When a pupil leaves the academy and income has been received, the parent is entitled to request a refund where the figure exceeds £10, lesser amounts will be retained in academy funds.

## Debts

Parents are communicated through either telephone, letter, text or e-mail to advise them of the debt. Support is offered to families to find a speedy resolution to any debt situation.

The school reserves the right to refuse a family the right to access any other chargeable services. The table below shows the threshold for each of the chargeable services:

	Meals	Breakfast Club	Afterschool Club	Nursery sessions
Limit of unpaid services per child	£26	£30	£60	£250
Age of debt	20	20	20	30

If there are any outstanding debts which amount to a significant figure associated to the family, the school reserves the right to refuse a family the right to access any other chargeable services, breakfast club or afterschool's club for example until the balance is paid or a suitable payment plan is in place. Any ban on service must be approved by the Head Teacher and one other, i.e. Business Manager or Chair of Governors.

To prevent possible bad debt, children in their final year at the school will be required to pay for wraparound care in advance. Credit that has not been used by the time the child leaves will be refunded to the family.

Recovery of sums payable by parents – Any sums payable by parents – for breakfast and afterschool club session, to which they have agreed are recoverable as a civil debt. Schools may decide to chase any debt through licenced debt recovery organisations and the courts.

The school governors are informed on a monthly basis of all debtors and actions that have been taken.

## **Remissions Policy**

The Headteacher and Chair of Trustees will authorise the remission of charges in all cases.

The academy will consider the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the relevant support payments (in accordance with the current DfE listing) which make their child/children eligible for free school meals and for children in care.

All claims for remission of charges should be addressed to the Headteacher and will be dealt with confidentially.

The academy may decide to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils; each event or case will be considered individually by the Headteacher and the Board of Trustees.