

# Charging & Remissions Policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	Cumbria Education Trust – Audit & Risk Committee
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<b>Proposed review date:</b>	Annually
<b>Owner:</b>	Director of Business Leadership

## REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
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## **Charging & Remissions Policy**

The Trust is committed to the general principle of free education and recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including academy visits and residential experiences, can make towards all aspects of pupils/students' education. It also aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils/students and as additional optional enrichment activities.

The Trust believes that all our pupils/students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from academy activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parent's financial means. To ensure transparency in setting charges and also to ensure all young people are able to access all of the provision we offer, this policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions.

Where this policy refers to parents we mean any person with parental responsibility for a child or young person.

Some Trust academies provide recreation and leisure opportunities to the wider community, e.g. hire of facilities, use of fitness centre and sports facilities. Charges for these facilities are not covered by this policy, nor does the policy cover charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the academy premises.

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible the academies will publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the academy year so that parents can plan ahead
- we have established systems within our academies for parents to pay in installments
- when an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice the academy may be able to arrange for parents to pay by installments beyond the date of the trip
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils/students from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

The policy identifies activities for which:

- voluntary contributions may be requested
- charges will be made
- charges will not be made
- charges may be waived.

## VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Trust academies will seek voluntary contributions to help fund the range of opportunities we offer. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils/students of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

No young person will be excluded from an activity on the basis of a parent's inability or unwillingness to pay this contribution. Trust academies reserve the right, however, to cancel an activity in its entirety if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.

### ***The Law states:***

- if an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Headteacher will make this clear to parents from the outset.
- no child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.
- if insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- if a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will still be given an equal chance to partake.

## CHARGES WILL BE MADE

The Trust academies reserve the right to make a charge for the following activities which may from time to time include: -

- **activities outside academy hours** - the academies will endeavour to provide a range of such activities from time to time. These will sometimes include day and residential experiences, and are known generally as 'optional extras'. Charges may be made for these activities EXCEPT where they are provided to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus of a prescribed public examination or are required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education in which case they are not regarded as optional extras as such and charges cannot be made. (Board and lodging charges may still however be made for any residential activities subject to the remission arrangements described below). Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during academy hours.
- **residential activities held during academy hours** - charges may be made for the board, lodging and travel elements of residential activities held during academy hours. Parents will be notified in advance of any such activities which the academy proposes to organise and the estimated cost. Parental consent will be obtained for their children's participation in any such activities for which a charge may be made. However, pupils/students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.
- **music tuition** – instrumental music tuition for individuals or groups of pupils/students, including tuition provided during academy hours.
- **home to academy student transport** - costs incurred by the academies in providing home to academy transport for students/pupils who live outside of the academies designated catchment area.
- **damage to property** - academies will attempt to recover some or all of the costs incurred repairing wilful damage or breakage of any academy property, or of any property belonging to a third party where the academy has been charged. The actual amount will be determined by the Headteacher.

Parents will be notified in advance of any 'optional extras' which the academies proposes to organise and the estimated cost. Parental consent will be obtained if their children are to participate in any activities for which a charge may be made.

Any charge for a particular activity will be dependent upon the type of activity and its cost and the number of participants. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils/students willing to participate. The cost of other pupils/students participating in the visit will not be included in the charge. The charge may however include an appropriate element for such things as:

- the pupil/students travel costs
- the pupil/students board and lodging costs
- materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- non-teaching staff costs
- entrance fees to museums, castles, theatres, etc.
- insurance costs
- the expenses only of participating teachers engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the 'optional extra'.

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

#### CHARGES WILL NOT BE MADE

Charges will not be made for the following:

- an admission application.
- education provided during academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- 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/students is being prepared for at the academies, or part of the academies basic curriculum for religious education.
- tuition for pupils/students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academies, or part of religious education.
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil/student has been prepared for it at the academies.
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil/student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academies. However, if a pupil/student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge will be made.
- education provided on any trip that takes place during academy hours.
- education provided on any trip that takes place outside academy hours, is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the academies, or part of the academy's basic curriculum for religious education.
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from academy accompanying pupils/students on a residential trip.
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

## REMISSIONS

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils/students, the Trust has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which such charges will be waived.

Families will qualify for remission or help with charges if household income (including benefits, tax credits and allowances) is less than £16,190, or the family is in receipt of:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Employment and Support Allowance
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed State Pension

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in the following circumstances:

- specific individual circumstances that have caused temporary hardship.
- recently moved into hardship but not yet receiving the benefits mentioned above.
- made a specific request to the Headteacher for any other justifiable reason. The remission is at the Headteacher's discretion in these circumstances based on any evidence provided.