



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

This Policy was adopted by:

The Directors of Ventrus Multi Academy Trust

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Signed by of Directors

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Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items that the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge.

The policy has been informed by the LA policy and Department for Education guidance.

Definition

The school day is defined as the hours during which teaching and learning usually take place. The lunchtime break does not form part of the school day.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

The Directors will review the body of the policy every two years and the local governors of each school will review the applicable appendix to the policy on annual basis.

Policy statement

During the school day all activities that are part of the school's prescribed curriculum will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the school curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge.

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day that attract additional costs.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. However, if insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.

From time to time a school may invite a non-school based organisation to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents/carers, who may, if they wish, ask the Head Teacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated, by request.

Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits.

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the school incurs additional expenses that would not have been incurred in the course of day-to-day operation. In such cases parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated, by request.

Optional activities outside of the school day

The school may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day that are not part of the school's curriculum nor part of an examination syllabus. Where the school wishes to charge it will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities the school will subsidise the charge to the extent permitted by the funding.

Optional Extras

Charges will be made for some activities known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a. Part of the school's curriculum;
 - b. Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c. Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the school have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- Non-teaching staff;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not include a subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. A charge will not be added for the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental/guardian/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental/guardian/carer agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

The school can make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

Malicious Damage

Where it can be proved that a child or group of children have caused damage to school property or resources, a charge will be made to parents in order to replace/mend the damage that has been caused.

Minibus

The following applies if the school has a permit issued by the LA under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. Only pupils of the school, school staff or parents/carers may be charged for travel in the minibus. Charges made will cover the cost of running, maintaining and insuring the minibus. However, the service should not make a profit for the school.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of the school's curriculum.

In cases of hardship the Head Teacher will consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils who they consider will benefit from such tuition.

Eligible benefits as at June 2018

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- 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)
- Working Tax Credit run-on- paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit-if you apply on or after 1st April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get paid)

POLICY HISTORY

June 2018 Revised to reflect the Trust's Leadership Structure
By: L Hyland
Implementation: June 2018
Next review date: Summer 2020

Note: This policy has been updated in line with the Department for Education publication: Charging for School Activities, May 2018 which includes a helpful FAQ section and embedded here for ease of reference.

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