



Charging and Remissions Policy

Review frequency:	2 Years
Last reviewed:	May 2023
Agreed by Trustees	22/5/23
Next review date:	May 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out what charges can and cannot be made to pupils for activities in Venture MAT schools. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with sections 449-462 of The Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academy Trusts are required, through their funding agreement, to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

Circumstances where charges cannot be made:

Education in School

- Education provided wholly or mainly during school hours
- Admission to school for children of compulsory school age
- Activities that are part of the entitlement curriculum for all pupils, or are part of a prescribed examination syllabus, or part of Religious Education
- The supply of any materials, books and instruments or other equipment that are a requirement of the entitlement curriculum.

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Academy Trust or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit, which is part of the curriculum.

Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- Supply teachers covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Music Tuition

- Children learning to play musical instruments as part of the entitlement curriculum; or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education
- Cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination.

Examination Fees

- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.

Circumstances where the School may charge Parents

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for other activities known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge may be made for providing materials, books, instruments, equipment, entry fees or additional staffing (where relevant) as follows:

Education

- Activities that take place mainly or wholly out of school time if they are not part of the curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupils are being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.
- Materials used in practical subjects and project assignments provided parents have agreed in advance that they or the pupil wish to keep the finished product e.g. ingredients or materials.

Nursery

- Nursery provision managed by the school can be charged to parents for each child's hours outside of their funded entitlement, and must be invoiced and paid for in advance.

Wraparound Care

- Optional clubs as an extension of the school day, that are managed, operated and staffed by the academy trust such as Breakfast, After School and Holiday clubs at the set hourly rate, and must be invoiced and paid for in advance.

Music Tuition

- Musical instrument tuition provided to individual pupils or to a group of not more than four pupils if the teaching of music tuition is not part of the entitlement curriculum.

Transport

- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Trust have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education).

Examination Fees

- An examination that is independent of the school curriculum, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it.

Board and Lodgings

- The cost of board and lodging for residential trips, even when taking place largely during school time. The charge must not exceed actual costs. (Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging - see Remissions section).

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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;

- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school time activities, voluntary contributions may be sought from parents for activities that supplement the normal school curriculum. Requests to parents for voluntary contributions will state that:

- there is no legal obligation to make a voluntary contribution;
- pupils will not be excluded through parents' inability or unwillingness to pay;
- pupils of parents who cannot contribute will not be treated any differently;
- where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity may be cancelled.

Requests made for voluntary contributions made in respect of individual pupils must not include any element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Remissions

Parents in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging on residential visits:

- Universal credit
- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals and Pupil Premium. The Trust may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the CEO and the Board of Trustees.

Parents who find that they are unable, for whatever reason, to meet the cost of the trip can seek to organise an alternative payment plan with the school. A meeting with the Headteacher would be required to discuss this possibility. Any alternative payment arrangements would be at the Head's discretion and would aim to ensure that children do not miss out on educational experiences unnecessarily.

Supplementary Information

Parents can be invited to equip their child with items of personal equipment intended for use solely by their child such as Uniform, P.E. Kit, Calculators, and Pens etc.

Breakages and Damage

Where a pupil's behaviour results in damage to school property or equipment, parents may be asked to pay for the necessary repair or replacement. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the school's discretion.