



## Charging and Remissions Policy

### Tees Valley Trust Education

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## **2 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Tees Valley Education is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of academy trips, activities and educational extras. The guidance set out in this policy is solely advisory, the policy itself is a statutory requirement and, whilst it may be more or less generous than that of the local authority, must meet the requirements of the law. In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for academy activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during academy hours
- To inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions

A summary of this policy will be included in the Academy Prospectus which will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents/carers.

## **3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for Academy Activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance Handbook'
- The Trust's funding agreement
- The Academy Trust Handbook 2023

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Complaints policy
- Debt recovery policy
- Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
- Trust's Scheme of Delegation
- Finance Policy

## **4 CHARGING FOR EDUCATION**

The academy will not charge for:

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academy, or part of religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents/carers
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the academy
- Examination re-sits, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sits at the academy

The academy may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music and vocal tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Certain early years provision
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

## **5 OPTIONAL EXTRAS**

The academy may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of academy time that is not:
  - Part of the national curriculum.
  - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy.
  - Religious education.
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the academy
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Trust Board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff (including teaching assistants)
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

The academy will not charge:

- In excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils
- A subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge
- In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

The participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and willingness to meet the charges, therefore parental agreement is a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents/carers will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

## **6 EXAMINATION FEES**

We may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the academy
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the academy arranged for the pupil to take it
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Academy or Local Authority originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.

## **7 EXAMINATION RE-SITS**

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, we will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the academy, re-sits must be taken at the academy.

If a pupil or their parents/carers consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parents/carers. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the academy will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/carer/pupil will have their fees refunded.

## **8 VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

The academy may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the academy or academy activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the academy will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. There is no obligation for parents/carers to make a contribution and parents/carers will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

The academy will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

## **9 MUSIC TUITION**

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents/carers. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

## **10 TRANSPORT**

We will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the academy premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the academy or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the academy
- Transport provided for an educational visit

## **11 RESIDENTIAL VISITS**

The academy will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during academy hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside academy hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits

The academy may charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for the activity.

## **12 EDUCATION PARTLY DURING ACADEMY HOURS**

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during academy hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during academy hours), it is deemed to take place during academy hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. Academy hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during academy hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside academy hours and we may charge for the activity; however, we will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the academy. These costs will be borne by the academy.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

### 13 DAMAGED OR LOST ITEMS

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents/carers.

### 14 REMISSIONS

The school has set aside a fund to enable parents/carers in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents/carers in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s 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 that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Each academy offers a free, online free schools meal service, which will allow parents/carers to directly check their eligibility or you can ask the academy office staff to assist you by logging onto [www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims](http://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims) To request assistance, parents/carers should contact the academy business manager.

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| Brambles Primary Academy    | Email: <a href="mailto:brambles@tved.org.uk">brambles@tved.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01642 210704   |
| Discovery Special Academy   | Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@discoveryspecialacademy.org.uk">enquiries@discoveryspecialacademy.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01642 248333 |
| Dormanstown Primary Academy | Email: <a href="mailto:Dormanstown@tved.org.uk">Dormanstown@tved.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01642 483696                                   |
| Pennyman Primary Academy    | Email: <a href="mailto:Pennyman@tved.org.uk">Pennyman@tved.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01642 314750   |
| Wilton Primary Academy      | Email: <a href="mailto:tvewilton@tved.org.uk">tvewilton@tved.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01642 453374                                       |

## **15 ACADEMY TRIP REFUNDS**

All initial deposits for academy trips will be non-refundable. Parents/carers will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the academy has to cancel a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the academy due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the academy's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents/carers.

In the event that a pupil or their parents/carers cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the academy's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The academy will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the academy will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents/carers have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the academy's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The academy will take into account whether the academy will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that an academy trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the academy's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The academy will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents/carers.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the academy's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The academy will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents/carers.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

The academy will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent/carer wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## **16 INCOME GENERATION**

In line with the ESFA's '[Academy Trust Handbook](#)', the trust will set fees for chargeable services at full cost, and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

## **17 FREEDOME OF INFORMATION POLICY AND PUBLICATION SCHEME**

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.



## **18 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board.