



**SEVERN ACADEMIES
EDUCATIONAL TRUST**
Charging & Remissions Policy

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Introduction

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

The policy has been informed by DFES guidance and complements the trust's other policies.

This policy defines overarching principles for Charging and Remissions within the Trust. Individual schools and Local Governing Boards will adapt them to the circumstances of their own settings.

Responsibilities

The principal/headteacher at each school within the trust will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

The trust will review the policy annually.

Policy Statement

During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge.

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a visiting drama group or group of musicians to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents/carers, who may, if they wish, ask the headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

Voluntary Contributions

The schools can ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activity. Certain activities, school trips etc will be funded through voluntary contributions. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions and not enough voluntary contributions are made the activity/trip will be cancelled.

There is no obligation to parents to make any contribution. The child will not be excluded from any activity due to his or her parents/guardian/carer either unable or unwilling to pay.

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.

Residential Activities

A charge will be levied to cover all costs of the residential visit including but not limited to; transport, entrance fees, lodging and food except in exceptional circumstances for pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits at the discretion of the Head Teacher:

- 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 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 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Optional Activities Outside of the School Day

We may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example, football or basketball clubs. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus. Where we wish to charge we will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities, we 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:
 - Part of the National Curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- A charge will be levied for students who elect to re-sit an examination.
- A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students where the academy has prepared the student for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the student should not be entered and the student’s parent/carer wishes the student to be entered (or the student him/herself when over 18 years old).
- A charge will be levied where a student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the academy paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- Where a student or parent/carer wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials.
- In the case of Food Technology, students usually provide their own ingredients, however if the student forgets, a charge can be levied if ingredients are provided.
- A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of academy property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.
- The school will expect parents/carers to cover any costs involved in interviews at universities, work experience travelling expenses etc. Post-16 Bursary Funding may be available to assist families on low income levels with such expenses. Application for such funding will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and any such application should be made direct to the academy under the terms of the 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy.
- The Headteacher may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. copying a student’s file.

- In calculating the cost of optional extra 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.

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.

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.

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

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

Contingency Money

This may be included for emergency situations. Where, after the visit, there is a significant financial surplus, money should be shared evenly between the contributors, unless written agreement has been received to the contrary.

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 National Curriculum.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Lettings

The academies may make their facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. Letting and hire of the academies is conducted in line with the Lettings Policy for each Academy.

Extended School

For example, charges for wrap around child care and nursery are calculated based on the individual requirements at each setting.

School Meals

Charges for school meals are payable via cashless systems in conjunction with prices agreed between the contract caterer and the Trust. Eligibility for Free School Meals and Universal Infant Free School Meals will be considered.