



LIFE ACADEMIES TRUST

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Charges & Remissions

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1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

2. Introduction

The policy has been informed by DfE guidance (Charging for school activities – Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities – Oct 2014)

The Trust Board expects all activities wholly or mainly outside school session time not to incur a cost to the school budget unless the Academy Governance Committee has been consulted and decided otherwise.

The Academy Governance Committee may ask for voluntary contributions for school activities that are either wholly or mainly in the school session time and incur a cost to the school that is over and above the normal day to day expenditure.

The Trust Board confirm that no pupil with special needs or disabilities will be treated any differently than any other pupil. Individual schools will take all reasonable steps to avoid putting children with special needs at a substantial disadvantage.

3. Responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for determining the content of this policy and the Academy Principal of each School for implementation. Any determination with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Academy Principal and the Academy Governance Committee.

4. Admission

No charge can or will be made for admitting pupils of statutory school age to our schools. Education provided during school hours for these pupils will always be free. Charges may be made for Early Years admissions, as prescribed within National and Local frameworks and detailed within our Early Years policies.

5. School Meals

Each Academy Governance Committee will determine and publish annually the price to be charged for school meals.

6. Education during the School Day

Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. The school will therefore not levy compulsory charges for transport, admission costs for swimming lessons or visits

to museums, etc. during school hours. On occasion however, in order for additional activities to run, voluntary contributions may be requested (please see section below).

The only area of school curricular provision for which a charge may be made is instrumental music tuition for individual pupils or pupils in groups of up to four where that tuition does not form part of the National Curriculum.

‘School hours’ are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day.

A non-school organisation which arranges an activity to take place during the school day may charge parents who want their child to join the activity. Parents wishing their child to participate must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if applying to take their children out of school for a family holiday.

7. Charges for Out of School Activities

An activity that takes place outside school hours will not be charged for if it is an essential part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education.

Any other activity which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours, both day and residential activities, is defined as an ‘optional extra’ activity and can be charged for. Charges for “optional extras” for activities which take place “outside” school hours may include:

- Travel, board and lodging costs for pupils.
- Insurance costs.
- Materials, books and equipment.
- Staff costs – both support and teacher costs.
- Entrance fee costs.

With an ‘optional extra’:

- Parents can chose whether their children attend or not.
- No profit can be included from any charges made – it is to be based on the actual cost(s) of the activity divided by the number of pupils taking part.
- Charges on some cannot be used to subsidise others i.e. the cost will not include a share of the cost of any remissions – if further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fundraising.
- A charge cannot be made for alternative provision for any pupils not attending.

For day activities, if most of the time spent is during school hours then the activities count as taking place entirely within school hours and no charge may be made. If most of the trip is outside school hours then a charge is allowed. Only the element of travel that takes place during school hours may be counted as part of the activity.

8. Voluntary Contributions

The Trust Board has agreed that the school may ask parents for a voluntary contribution (in cash or in kind) towards the cost of:

- any activity that takes place during school hours
- school equipment
- school funds generally

The contribution must however be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against.

The following statement must be included when asking for voluntary contributions for it to be lawful:

“There will be some trips or activities which the school cannot charge for but which the school considers would be beneficial to the students. In this case the school may ask for voluntary contributions. No student will be excluded from the activity or treated differently because they do not make a contribution. If voluntary contributions are not sufficient then it may be that the planned activity or trip cannot go ahead.”

In respect of requesting voluntary contributions for materials to be used in practical lessons, such as Design Technology, the following statement must be included for it to be lawful:

“Contributions are voluntary and no student will be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to this or any other request.”

Subject leaders cannot rely on these amounts when looking at annual resources required for their subject and should budget accordingly.

9. Damage /Loss to Property

The Academy Governance Committee reserves the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is a result of a pupil’s inappropriate behaviour.

10. Remissions

Schools are permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

Where the trip takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual income assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed an income related employment and support allowance
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

Will be entitled to remission of the following charges:

- The full cost of board and lodging on residential visits in **school time**
- The full cost of board and lodging on residential visits outside school time which are covered by the following criteria:
 - where the purpose is to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
 - where the purpose is to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum imposed by Section 88 of the Education Act 2002

Parents should be made aware of these remissions when a forthcoming trip is announced.

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside school hours but is necessary as part of the National Curriculum or Religious Education.

11. Looked After Children

No charge may be made for individual music tuition provided in school hours in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)