



**LIFE ACADEMIES TRUST**

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# Charges & Remissions Policy

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## 1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to make a broad programme of trips and activities accessible to as many pupils as possible and to establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the budgets of the academy.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

The policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) guidance on Charging for school activities (Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities – May 2018) and the Education Act 1996 sections 449 – 462. The Academy Principal and Trustees endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have their access to the curriculum limited by charges.

## 3. Practice

In cases where charges are to be levied, parents will be advised in advance and monies will be collected prior to the activity taking place.

Activities which are wholly within academy hours will not normally be chargeable with the exception of trips, visits off site and productions by external providers.

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 will be made for Early Years unfunded sessions as detailed in our current Early Years unfunded fees payment terms.

## 4. Key Principles

Charges are to recover as a minimum the full cost of providing the goods or services.

All expenses, including any set up costs will be deducted from any surplus generated.

Charges will not be made for any activities which are in fulfilment of National Curriculum requirements.

## 5. Trips

All trips will be charged under a voluntary contribution arrangement. If the level of voluntary contribution is insufficient to support the trip, then it will be cancelled and parents will be advised of this.

Voluntary contributions will be sought for trips which take place mainly within academy hours. No child may be excluded because of inability to pay but the academy is entitled to cancel the trip if the level of contributions does not meet its budgetary requirements.

All trips are chargeable, subject to any remissions.

All trips must have an approved full and detailed financial plan prepared by the trip organiser.

Any surplus will then be adjusted for any costs not already charged e.g. online payment charges, administration time.

### 6. Breakages, damage and lost items

Parents will be expected to pay for all breakages or damages caused by their child's irresponsible or careless behaviour or deliberate vandalism. They will also be expected to pay for replacement text/library books entrusted to their child if lost, damaged or defaced.

### 7. Residential Trips

Special rules apply for residential trips. A residential trip counts as taking place during academy hours if the number of academy sessions (of which there are two in a day) missed by the pupils on the trip amounts to at least half of the number of half days taken up by the trip. In every other case a residential trip would count as taking place outside academy hours. If the residential trip counts as taking place during academy hours a charge will be made for board and lodgings on the trip. Those pupils whose parents or carers are receiving any of the following benefits at the time of the trip will be able to request a contribution of 30% of the cost, up to a maximum contribution of £100 per pupil per academic year through the Hardship Fund Policy:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

### 8. Remissions

Those pupils whose parents or carers are receiving any of the following benefits at the time of the trip will be able to request a contribution of 30% of the cost, up to a maximum contribution of £100 per pupil per academic year through the Hardship Fund Policy (Appendix 1).

### 9. Refunds

#### General position

- No refund issued once a place booked and payment made unless covered by the exceptions below

### **Cancellation of trip by the academy**

- A full refund will be made

### **Pupil withdrawn from trip by Parent/Carer for any reason other than those covered by the Trip Insurance\***

- If a replacement pupil is found to take the place - full refund of sums paid less any administration fee and any extra costs charged to the academy as a result of the change
- If a replacement pupil is not found - no refund will be made

(\*Circumstances covered by Trip Insurance include death in the family, illness or injury)

### **Pupil excluded from the trip because of behaviour or other issues**

- No refund will be made