

Charging and Remissions Policy for School Activities



ADVANTAGE
S C H O O L S

Approved by:

Trust Board (usually FAR)

Date: 24 November 2021

**Last reviewed
on:**

December 2019

**Next review due
by:**

December 2023

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Policy Responsibilities	3
3. Optional Extras.....	3
4. Purchases from School.....	3
5. Library charges	4
6. Loss and Damage.....	4
7. Examination charging policy	4
8. Hire of School Facilities	5
9. Remissions.....	5
10. Monitoring and Review	5
Appendix A: Curriculum enrichment activities	6

1. Introduction

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Policy aims to describe how the schools within the Trust will manage all charges to school age pupils. The Trust Board wishes to ensure that education in school hours is free. Any charges will only be made in the limited circumstances described below, but the Trustees and governors recognise that a contribution may be requested to help offset any costs incurred.

Advantage Schools believes that a broad and balanced curriculum is the entitlement of every pupil, regardless of their background or ability to pay. Our curriculum is at the very centre of our vision, and this includes our extended curriculum. We believe that rich and broad experiences result in young people able to join 'the community of educated citizens'. Each school will therefore endeavour to provide an appropriate level of subsidy where the pupil or their family are unable to pay the full cost of the broad range of activities that are provided by the schools.

2. Policy responsibilities

Chief Finance Officer (CFO)	Formulation and monitoring of this policy, in consultation with the FAR Committee and Trust Board.
Principals	All aspects of the policy relating to areas of responsibility i.e. school activities.
Teachers/support staff	All aspects of policy within own lessons and activities.

3. Optional Extras

- **Curriculum Enrichment**

The Trust endeavours to provide each pupil with experiences that will enrich curriculum delivery and/or enhance social development. Charges may be made for certain activities. For activities that are part of the curriculum, taking place mainly within the school day contributions may be requested (details in Appendix A).

- **Music Tuition**

Pupils who receive instrumental tuition through Music for Bedford Borough are charged the fees as charged by the provider. The Trust cannot offer any remission of fees.

Where tuition is arranged by the Trust on instruments not covered by Music for Bedford Borough, the Trust will pass on the full cost to the pupil's family, unless the pupil is covered in the paragraphs below.

Charges will 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.

Where pupils attract the pupil premium, these individuals may have subsidised individual music tuition at the discretion of the Principal or the named person the Principal delegates this decision to, but this must be balanced with other spending of the pupil premium and detailed in the school's pupil premium strategy.

No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

4. Purchases from the school

- **Uniform and PE Kit**

Other than the uniform, PE kit and specialist clothing outlined on each school's website there are no items that it is necessary for parents to purchase so that pupils may follow a programme of study or enter public examinations.

- **Meals**

The Trust offers pupils the choice of a cooked meal or pre-prepared packed lunch. These are purchased directly from the external catering provider, Innovate. Meals are individually priced. The Free School Meal (FSM) allocation is set each year to cover the cost of a full hot lunch including dessert.

- **Printing**

All secondary school pupils will be provided with printing credits at the start of the academic year, after which a small charge may be levied should the use have been judged by the school to be excessive to the requirements of the curriculum. Should pupils and parents require support, they may apply to the school via the finance office for support.

- **Out of hours clubs (Breakfast/Afterschool/Homework)**

Currently all school-run clubs at our secondary schools are free. Breakfast and Afterschool clubs at our primary school are outsourced and run by an external provider.

5. Library charges

The school library service is offered free of charge to all pupils and staff.

The Trust's library system tracks books and notes are sent home asking for books to be returned. The general loan time is a week and a pupil may be refused to borrow a new book until the last one is returned. If a book is lost, then a charge may be levied for the replacement of the book.

6. Loss and Damage

Pupils who lose or damage text books, library books, exercise books, student planners or any other materials and equipment provided by the Trust will be charged the cost of replacing them. Charges will be decided by each school.

Deliberate damage to school premises may also result in parents being charged for the cost of repairs.

7. Examination Charging Policy (Secondary Schools)

A pupil will be entered for each examination in a public examination syllabus for which each school has prepared the pupil, unless there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil. No charge can be made for this.

The school may charge to parents an examination fee if:

- the pupil is entered for an exam at the request of the pupil or parents, where the examination is not one that the school has prepared the pupil for via the standard curriculum.
- the pupil fails to fulfil the examination requirements without good reason.
- the pupil resits an examination in order to improve the mark/grade.

Each school may also charge a fee for reviews of marking following external examination results. These are at the request of the pupil or parent, and the school is not bound to agree to such a review.

8. Hire of school facilities

Each school offers a variety of facilities to hire to external parties. Full details of the facilities, conditions of hire and charges can be found in the lettings and charging policy. Please direct enquiries to the relevant school.

9. Remissions

Each school will endeavour to support pupils who are unable to meet the requested charges, as set out in the Trust's Pupil Premium and Educational Resources Fund Policy. The schools will always keep costs as low as possible, and will make clear the criteria and eligibility for financial support for each activity.

Supporting pupils accessing the wider curriculum is a valid use of pupil premium money for all pupils where it is judged that they are unable to pay.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Resources committee on a two-yearly basis. The implementation of this policy will be overseen by the Chief Financial Officer via the Principals.

Appendix A – Curriculum enrichment activities

Although a small contingency may be built in where relevant, any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. Any surplus generated by an activity of greater than £10 per pupil will be refunded to parents/carers of the participating pupils.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

The range of activities offered at our schools is divided into five types:

Type 1 (charges will always be requested for these activities)

An activity outside of the normal school year, for example:

- ski trips offered to pupils
- sporting activities during school holidays
- enrichment residential trips during school holidays notwithstanding note 1 below

Type 2 (contributions will be requested for these activities, though the activity may be subsidised by the school; subsidies will always be applied to those who attract the pupil premium)

An activity within the normal school year that lasts for more than one day, for example,

- Field trips linked to examination courses
- Foreign trips notwithstanding note 1 below
- Music or Drama production tours
- Enrichment clubs/activities which may involve consumables such as cookery or specific craft. These may stay on site for display in school.

Type 3 (contributions will usually be requested for these activities, but the school will endeavour to ensure that all pupils participate and will support this however it is possible; subsidies will always be applied to those who attract the pupil premium, and will include the option of full remission)

Single day trips or special activities that involve bringing outside professionals into school, for example,

- whole year group activities
- subject specific curricular enrichment trips
- elective programme activities
- trips that are intended to enhance the quality of religious education at the school
- trips that are primarily intended to enhance the school's understanding of, and place in, the local community, including to develop pupils social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness

For all activities listed above parents will be sent a letter which explains:

- the proposed activity
- the value of the activity in education terms (especially enrichment of the curriculum)
- the contribution anticipated from parents in respect of each pupil if the activity is to take place

It will be made clear when a charge is being made for boarding and lodging or an optional extra activity, and when the activity is dependent upon financial support in the form of a contribution to run.

- where voluntary contributions are being sought, it is suggested the following sentence should be included in all letters to parents:

“Whilst there is no obligation on the part of parents to contribute to the cost of this activity, and pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make a contribution, the activity will unfortunately not take place if there are insufficient parental contributions”.

Type 4 (contributions will usually be requested for these activities, but the school will ensure no pupil is unable to participate as a result of being unable to pay; automatic majority remission for those who attract the pupil premium)

In-school activities as a result of which pupils/parents may keep the final product, for example,

- Design Technology projects
- Arts projects
- Text books pupils wish to annotate and/or keep after their course is completed

A contribution can be sought for the supply of materials used in the teaching of practical subjects. However, if a charge is made parents must have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Type 5 (the school will pay the whole cost of these activities, but may request subsidy, fundraise, or ask for donations. No-one will be excluded)

Any activity that represents education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of the religious education curriculum.

Note 1 – Residential trips: When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies are:

- 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 Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family’s annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family’s income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)