

## Charging and Remissions Policy

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### Purpose

The Trustee Board aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional 'optional extras'. This policy covers circumstances in which a charge or remission may be made and also notes general principles with regard to voluntary contributions.

### Legislation and guidance

The Trust's Funding Agreement requires the school to comply with the law on charging for school activities. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities; sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 and complements the information given in section 6.7.5 of the Governance Handbook (2020).

The Academy Trust cannot charge for admission to the school and for education and examinations provided in accordance with the National Curriculum delivered during normal school hours. The Trustee Board recognises the valuable contribution that the wider range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' education and reserves the right to charge parents in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996.

## **Charging and Remissions Policy (cont'd)**

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### **Definitions**

**Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities

**Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

### **Activities that take place during school hours (not including the breaks in the school day)**

There is no charge for activities during school hours except for music tuition (see section 5). There is no charge for transport during school hours to school organised activities.

The school may charge for the following activities.

- materials, books, instruments or equipment, that the parent wishes their child to keep or own (the cost will be made clear to parents before charge)
- Optional extras see section 2
- Music and vocal tuition requested by the parent whether in or out of school hours (section 5)
- Where a parent asks for a prescribed public examination result to be scrutinised or re-marked, any charge made by the examining board for this service will be passed to parents.

### **Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)**

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum, including sports matches against other schools
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

The school will charge for optional extras where:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - a. the national curriculum
  - b. a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - c. religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport that is not taking the student to school

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- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

### **The cost of optional extras**

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities and the level of charges will be set annually by the Headteacher. Any charge made in respect of individual student will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. In no circumstances, will there be an element of subsidy required for any student wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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

- any materials, entrance fees, travel costs, insurance costs, administration costs, pupils' board & lodging costs, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- teaching and non teaching staff engaged to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **Activities that take place partly during school hours either on or off site**

Where most of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 1. Travelling time is included in time spent on activity if the travel itself occurs during school hours.

In cases where most of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit. The charging of this activity will be the same as outlines in section 2.

### **Residential activities**

The school will **not** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place 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 religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours

## **Charging and Remissions Policy (cont'd)**

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- residential activities that take place during school hours.

The school **will charge** for:

- **Board and lodging:** When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The school will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost (see section 11 for more guidance on remissions)
- **Travel:** charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per student. These charges may not apply to those students entitled to remissions, but no other students will be charged extra to cover those costs.
- **Activities:** The school may charge for residential activities that fall outside of school hours.

### **Voluntary contributions**

The School may ask for voluntary contributions in respect of school activities that enrich the student's education which would not otherwise be possible, such as educational visits, field trips and materials. In any case, where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled, all monies paid will be returned to parents. There is no obligation for a parent/carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to contribute.

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as food technology, art or design technology must be budgeted or for and borne by the school. Parents who are willing to contribute can do so on a voluntary basis.

The school may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents/carers have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product. The school will obtain written confirmation from parents that they wish to supply or pay for materials on this basis. It should be recognised that much of the practical work in art or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a "finished product", however this is an essential part of the learning process.

### **Inability or unwillingness to pay**

Robert May's School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all its students, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents/carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled. The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

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### **Music tuition within school hours**

The school will charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees. There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for a student who is 'looked after' child of the local authority. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

### **Damage to property and breakages**

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent, the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a student, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all the cost to those responsible. Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and will be dependent on the situation.

### **Refunds**

The school aims to run cost-neutral trips and visits. At the end of each trip or visit, the surplus or deficit will be calculated. If the trip or visit makes a surplus, where the sums involved per student exceeds £10 or more of the contribution (or proportionate amount where full per head costs are not paid), parents/carers will be offered a refund. The school may ask for parental permission in advance of each school trip or visit to treat any surplus as a contribution to the school fund where this would exceed £10.

Any refunds will be made as soon as possible after the visit, either to students or parents by cheque or cash against signed receipts; alternatively if payment was made online an online refund will be given.

The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a student is withdrawn from an activity by the school because of a student's breach of the schools behaviour policy. In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made in writing to the headteacher. Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

## **Charging and Remissions Policy (cont'd)**

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### **Remissions**

The Headteacher will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents/carers who receive the following support payments:

Universal Credit  
Income Support,  
Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;  
Support under part VI of the Immigrations and Asylum Act 1999;  
Child Tax Credit (where the person is not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190);  
The guaranteed Element of Pension Credit;  
Income related Employment/Support allowance;  
Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

In cases of family hardship, parents may apply, in confidence, to the Head teacher for financial support and/or remission. The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities, and this will be determined by the Headteacher.

### **Complaints**

Complaints about the implementation of this policy or any decisions taken in line with the policy will be considered as part of the school's complaints procedures.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Headteacher and the Chief Financial Officer monitor charges and remissions and ensure these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed by the Resources Committee biennially. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trustee Board.

<b>Approved by:</b>	Trustee Board	13 July 2021
<b>Last reviewed by:</b>	Resources Committee	17Mar 2021
<b>Next review due by:</b>	Resources Committee	Mar 2023