



Charging and Remissions Policy

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The Principal and Governors intend that where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours it should be free of charge, except for instances such as board and lodgings during residential visits and individual instrumental lessons. (Please note: individual instrumental tuition for students taking public examinations music is subsidised).

Public examination fees will be paid by the school except where a student is resitting an examination in the same subject and set by the same board, or when the examination results require re-scrutinising, or a student fails, without good reason, to complete the examination requirements,.

Apart from the cost of board and lodging for residential trips, charges will not be made when such activities are required specifically as part of a public examination syllabus, or must be provided under the National Curriculum, or are in respect of the statutory obligations relating to Religious Education, although a voluntary contribution may be requested.

Fees for board and lodging will be waived in respect of students whose parent advises the school that they are receiving:

- 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)

However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum (optional extras) including sporting fixtures, although these charges will not exceed the total actual cost.

Voluntary Contributions

The Principal or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours including trips and visits
- school equipment:
 - Materials
 - Books
 - instruments
 - other equipment such as cooking ingredients, art supplies or design technology materials
- school funds generally

The contribution is voluntary and the students of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. The governors recognise that they will have to continue to place great

reliance on parents' voluntary contributions to ensure that these activities take place, and if insufficient voluntary contributions are received it may be necessary to cancel planned activities.

Any such requests for contributions will never exceed the actual cost. However, this excludes clothing and such items as aprons and football boots which parents will be expected to provide as part of the uniform.

Charges for damages and breakages

The academy may make a charge for breakages or damage to property, including window breakage and the cost of graffiti removal.

Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will make a refund. The school will make a refund where the surplus is greater than £20 per student.

Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, e.g. £31 not £31.45.

Where there is a refund, parents/carers will be informed by letter or email that the school is making the refund. The refund will be made to the ParentPay account that made the original payment.

Charging Rates

Trips and events

The cost of the trip/event charged to the student is the amount necessary to cover the full amount of costs incurred for the trip/event eg travel, tickets, resources etc. The school does not make any profit on trips/events that they organise.

Music Tuition

The school works with Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS) who provide music tuition to students in the school. HMS set the rates at which the lessons are charged. They raise the invoices to the parents/carers and collect the payment for the lessons. The charges are published annually to parents.

The school provides financial support to music examination students and those who are in receipt of Free School Meals.

Hire of Facilities

The school works in partnership with Schools Plus who manage lettings outside school hours. Schools Plus will set the charges for lettings in line with market forces.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. In the calculation of the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any material, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extras
- Support staff
- Staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- 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

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement may therefore be a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Where a residential or day trip is classified as an optional extra – not necessary for the exam syllabus or national curriculum - the school may allocate funds to support students where the family is in receipt of financial support as outlined above. This support will be dependant on the number of students requesting assistance and will limited to a maximum of 10% of the cost of the the trip.

Participation in an optional extra activity or trip will be on the basis of parental choice and willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement and payment will be a pre-requisite for the provision of and participation in such activities.

Payment method

All payments are made via ParentPay. The item is set up as a payment option to those who are eligible and parents make the payment online.

The school does not accept cash payments for any trips or resources; ParentPay gives both the school and the parents/carer a clear record of payment dates and amounts. It is totally secure and there is no possibility of funds being lost or mislaid.

All refunds will be made via ParentPay in order to maintain a clear audit trail. Refunds donated to the school will be transferred to a student hardship budget to support those students who are otherwise unable to participate in trips, following approval from the Principal or Business Manager.