



# Charging Policy

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This policy applies to charges made to parents/students, for facilities used by private individuals and third party organisations that use Trust facilities or premises.

This policy sets out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions may be requested from parents/carers.

For SPTA academies, the Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## **2.0 Suggested Audience**

All administration, teaching and support staff and parents/carers. As part of their Academy induction and professional development, relevant members of staff will participate in training which will enable them to apply the procedures and principles defined in this policy.

## **3.0 Aim**

As a Trust we aim :

- To make activities accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not placing additional unexpected burdens on an Academy's budget

For the purposes of this document, 'Parent' is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student.

## **4.0 Activities for which charges cannot be made**

SPTA recognises that legislation prohibits charges for the following in respect of registered students at SPTA academies:

- Education provided during Academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Education provided outside Academy hours, if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education.
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments, if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the Academy.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the Academy.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during Academy hours that is part of the National Curriculum or an examination course.

- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover those teachers who are absent from the Academy accompanying students on National Curriculum or examination courses.
- Transporting registered students to or from the Academy premises, where in the past, the local education authority has had a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the Education Advisory Body or in the past, the Local Education Authority, has arranged for students to be educated.
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the Academy.

No charge shall be made in respect of admission to the academy unless it is for the purpose of:

- Part time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Full time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Teacher training.

## **5.0 Activities for which charges may be made**

The Principal may invite parents and others from time-to-time to make a voluntary contribution to the Academy's work, to allow the offer of activities or experiences which otherwise might not be possible.

In any request for voluntary payments it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- There is no obligation to make a contribution
- That students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed to the planned activity
- That if there are insufficient contributions received to cover the cost of including all students who wish to participate, the activity will not go ahead.

- Where an activity takes place outside of academy hours and does not form part of the Curriculum or examination syllabus, this is classed as an optional extra and parents can be asked to meet the full cost of these activities.

The Principal may ask parents/carers to meet the costs of the activities detailed in the table below.

The charges will:

- be made after consultation with parents/carers;
- not exceed the cost of the provision;
- be set after an assessment of the profitability of any new activity and to ensure the recovery of overheads; and
- be proportional for each student.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all information defines costs and activities as simply and clearly as possible and is communicated well in advance, to enable families to plan for any charges.

Lessons / activities will not be confirmed until parental/carer agreement has been received. This must be by return of a signed reply slip.

Activity	Note
Board and lodging on residential trips	Information about activities and costs to be distributed to parents/carers well in advance of any trip, to enable financial planning by the family to take place
<p>The proportionate costs for any student on activities wholly or mainly outside Academy hours ('Optional extras') to meet the costs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Materials and equipment</li> <li>• Non-teaching staff costs</li> <li>• Entrance fees</li> <li>• Insurance costs</li> </ul>	Information about activities and costs to be distributed to parents/carers well in advance of any trip, to enable financial planning by the family to take place
Vocal and musical instrumental tuition	Charges to cover additional costs incurred by the Academy, beyond any element covered by public funding
Re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the Academy	
Examination fees where a student fails without good reason to sit an exam	After consultation with parents/carers
Any other education, transport or examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the academy	
Any other education, transport or examinations fee unless charges are specifically prohibited	
Breakages, repairs and replacements as a result of damage caused wilfully or negligently by the student	Charges may be made after consultation with parents/carers and will not exceed total replacement /repair costs
Extra-curricular activities and clubs	Charges to cover the additional costs incurred by the academy, beyond any element covered by public funding
Any extended Academy activity	Charges to cover the additional costs incurred by the academy, beyond any element covered by public funding
Damage/ vandalism / loss to and of Academy property or services	Charges may be made after consultation with parents/carers and will not exceed total replacement /repair costs
Replacement of any damaged parts caused by students setting off fire alarms for a prank	A charge may be made to a student who deliberately triggers the fire alarm knowing there to be no fire.

## **6.0 Remissions**

As far as resources allow, the Academy will support students and their families to participate in the full range of activities which will be offered as part of the curricular and extra-curricular provision. This applies particularly to those students whose families receive support payments, such as those detailed below. While each case for support will be reviewed sympathetically, and in full confidence, the Academy itself has only limited resources at its disposal, and will seek to use these resources prudently to affect the greatest number of its students.

Students whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free Academy lunch entitlement, also be entitled to apply to the Academy for some remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential and other Academy trips.

The relevant support payments are:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1998
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent/carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed the relevant threshold.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

All letters to parents/carers regarding activities which request a parental/carer contribution will include a statement inviting those parents/carers receiving any of the benefits above to contact the Academy in confidence if they would like their child / children to participate, giving details of the relevant benefit, so if necessary the Academy can confirm this.

### **6.1 REFUNDING OF CHARGES**

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that all letters to parents in respect of educational visits make clear the elements of any payments requested from parents that are non-refundable and the terms and conditions that apply to any payments to be made to third party organisations.

Charges and contributions are set to cover the anticipated costs. If the income from an activity exceeds the actual costs, the Academy will refund any surplus of £5 or more per student who contributed to the activity.

Any surpluses will be used to support access to optional activities for those pupils whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

## **7.0 Voluntary Contributions**

The Principal may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution to support Academy activities.

The terms of any request made to parents/carers will specify that it is a voluntary contribution and in no way represents a charge. In addition the following will be made clear to parents/carers:

- a) That the contribution is voluntary and a parent/carer is under no obligation to pay.
- b) That students at the Academy will not be treated differently whether or not their parents/carers have made any contribution in response to the request.
- c) The activity may not take place if insufficient contributions are made.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution will be delegated to the Academy's Finance Officer, under the direction of the Principal.

The sponsor has a Foundation Fund which the Academy may access, to support its voluntary activities. The money available in the Foundation Fund is raised by staff and parents within the member schools and academies as well as via various Trust wide events.

## **8.0 Lettings**

The Academy may make its facilities available to outside users and the community at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Principal. For users connected to the Academy, the charge will be based on the site staff overtime costs. Please refer to the Academy's Lettings Policy for further detail.

All potential Academy users will be made aware on application that they will be expected to use the Academy in accordance with the ethos of the sponsor, partners and the Academy.

Charges will be levied for the use of the Trust's facilities by private individuals or external organisations at a rate to be determined annually by each Academy. Facilities will only be let where they are not needed for the purpose of education during that time and under no circumstances will lettings be subsidised from resources provided for the education of students.

Hirers will need to demonstrate that they have adequate insurance or provision for compensating the Trust for any damage they cause. They must also leave the facilities in a clean and tidy state, otherwise an additional fee for cleaning may be charged.

## **9.0 Other charges**

The Principal, SPTA, the Academy Finance Committee or Education Advisory Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report or for responding to Freedom of Information requests.

## **10.0 Academy Meals**

The Education Advisory Body will determine and publish annually the price to be charged for Academy meals.

## **11.0 Monitoring and Review**

SPTA's Executive Leadership Team will review this policy at least every three years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. A summary report of charges made under the policy will be provided to the Academy's Finance and Resources Committee on an annual basis.