

DUDLEY ACADEMIESTRUST

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Aims

The Trust aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions.
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged and when charges will be made.

It is the right of every learner to receive free school education. Activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be made available to all learners regardless of their parent's/carers ability or willingness to help meet the cost. Whilst recognising that legislation provides academies with the discretion to charge for optional extras provided wholly or mainly out of academy hours. It also allows academies to invite voluntary contributions in support of any activity organised by the academy, whether during or outside school hours.

The Trust and its academies will always take particular account of learners whose families are suffering financial hardship. Decisions will be made on educational grounds and each academy will endeavour to ensure that any activities are deemed appropriate and necessary for the education of the learner.

Legislation and Guidance

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.

Definitions

- **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities.
- **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Principal. The trust board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Principals

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently.
- Notifying the Principal of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

The academy will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the Principal of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

Where Charges Cannot Be Made

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum.
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the learner is being prepared for at the academy.
 - Religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for learners learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the learner's parent/carer.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the learner has been prepared for it at the academy.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the learner is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academy.

Transport

- Transporting registered learners to or from the academy premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered learners to other premises where the Trust or local authority has arranged for learners to be educated.
- Transport that enables a learner to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the academy.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Residential Visits

- 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.
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the learner is being prepared for at the academy.
 - Religious education.
 - Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying learners on a residential visit.

Where Charges Can Be Made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the learners parent/carer wishes him or her to own them.
- Optional extras (see below).
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances. A charge may also be made for the hire of an instrument via Dudley Performing Arts.
- Community facilities.
- Replacement of learner planners. At the beginning of the new academic year each learner will be given a learner planner free of charge. If a learner loses their planner it can be replaced at a cost of £5.00.
- Replacement of learner ties. If a learner loses their tie it can be replaced at a cost of £5.00 per tie.

Optional Extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum.
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the learner is being prepared for at the academy.
 - Religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered learner has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the academy.
- Revision guides are occasionally available to buy at a reduced cost.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the learner to school or to other premises where the local authority or the Trust has arranged for the learner to be provided with education).
- Board and lodging for a learner on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to learners (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

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

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- The cost of buildings and accommodation.
- Non-teaching staff.
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra).
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual learners will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of learners participating.

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

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those learners who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

Music Tuition

Academies can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of learners, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the learners parents/carers.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.
- For a learner who is looked after by a local authority.

Residential Visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Voluntary Contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out above, where the academy cannot levy charges and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the academy, the academy may request or invite parents/carers to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip or activity.

Some activities for which the academy may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Educational trips.
- Sports activities.

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no learner will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the academy is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

Activities We Charge For

The academy will charge for the following activities:

School Meals

Charges are made for school meals unless a learner is entitled to free school meals, in which case the Academy will ensure that parents and carers are given advice on how to apply for free meals.

Examination Fees

Charges may be made for examination in the following circumstances:

- The learner has not regularly attended the lessons for a particular examination subject, refundable if the learner attends for examination.
- The learner fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of the examination (e.g. coursework).
- The learner fails, without good reason, to attend the examination.
- Examination re-sits to improve grades (unless at the recommendation of the Academy).
- Examination entries where there is a request from the parent/carer for additional subject entries to be made which are not supported by the Academy.

Photographs

Individual and class photographs taken by the academy's appointed photographer or by the academy are offered for sale from time to time.

Loss of or Damage to Academy Property

Loss of, damage to or breakage of academy property e.g. books, windows, furniture, scientific equipment etc. will be charged for if caused by carelessness, negligence or a deliberate act. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Principal may decide.

Private Use of Academy Facilities

The Board of Trustees delegate the responsibility for determining charges for the private use of academy facilities to each of its academies, for example, private telephone calls, reprographics and faxes. Charges for these services will be made at the current rate applicable for the provision of those services. Any exemptions will be determined on a needs basis at the discretion of the Principal of the academy or the Chief Executive Officer for Trust activities.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Board of Trustees and reviewed each year. Parents/carers will be informed of the charges for each coming year.

Remissions

In some circumstances the academy may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Principal and will depend on the activity in question.

Remissions for Residential Visits

Parents/Carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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).