Charging and Remissions Policy

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CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents / carers.

The Directors of the Trent Academies Group are committed to providing the best education for all and will endeavour within reason and as funding resources allow, ensuring that all activities offered wholly or mainly during the academy day are available to all students, regardless of their respective parent's/carer's ability to pay. However, Directors reserve the right to request voluntary contributions from parents/carers and in the event of insufficient funding, to cancel an activity.

Responsibilities

The Board of Directors are responsible for determining the content of this policy and the Academy Head teacher for implementation. Any determination with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Head teacher and Local Governing Body.

Instances where charges cannot be made by the academy

The Board of Directors recognise that legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- 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 pupil is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the academy
- Examination resits if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit at the academy
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during academy hours
- Education provided on any visit 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 pupil is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from academy accompanying pupils on an residential visit

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the academy premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil 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

Instances where charges may be made by the academy

Trips, Visits and Activities

- Trent Academies Group charge for all visits (see above for exclusions) unless they are local and with no costs.
- The Trip/Visit/Activity Leader will be responsible for costing of the Trip, Visit or Activity and calculation of the charge per pupil. This charge must not exceed the actual cost of the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not include an element of subsidy for pupils wishing to participate whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Where contributions exceed cost by £15 per pupil a reimbursement will be offered. Smaller surpluses and deficits are expected to offset each other.
- The proportionate costs for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside academy hours ('optional extras') to meet the costs for:
    - Board and lodging/accommodation on residential visits
    - Travel
    - Materials and equipment
    - Non-teaching staff costs
    - Entrance fees
    - Insurance & Finance costs
    - Extra-curricular activities and academy clubs
    - Any extended academy activity

Instrumental Music Tuition

Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided at the request of pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the staff who provide the tuition.

Examinations

- Re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the academy
- Examination fees where a pupil fails without good reason to sit the exam
- Any other education, transport or examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the academy
- Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically Prohibited

Property and Equipment

- Breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by pupils. This includes the costs of replacing any books and or equipment provided by an Academy.
- Damage/vandalism/loss to and of Academy property.
- Books or materials where parents/carers wish the student to own the goods (such as folders to carry art or technology work; calculators and so forth)

Materials and Ingredients

- The Academy reserves the right to charge for items produced by pupils from materials provided by the Academy, which are therefore the property of the Academy. These may include, for example, certain items made in Art, Design Technology, Textiles, and Food lessons, amongst others. A charge will only be made where parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product
- Alternatively parents or guardians may, in these circumstances, be asked to volunteer to provide ingredients and materials prior to the activity taking place
- The Academy may at its discretion permit items produced by pupils from materials provided by the academy to be given free of charge to the pupils if the items are not required for examination moderation purposes and if their retention by the academy would present storage or safety difficulties

Remission

Clothing

The Trent Academies Group clothing assistance scheme provides for assistance to be given towards the cost of a pupil's clothing, including sports clothing, where the pupil's parents are eligible for certain benefits. Only pupils who live in the Academy catchment area are entitled to assistance under this scheme. Pupils eligible to FSM will, on request, be provided with a blazer and tie.

Board and lodging for residential trips

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income (as assessed by Inland Revenue) does not exceed the threshold set by the Treasury
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

any charges for board and lodging for a residential trip, within the terms of the schemes outlined above, will be fully remitted by the Academy, provided that the activity:

i. Takes place during academy hours,
   Or

ii. Forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or fulfils statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or religious education, irrespective of whether the activity takes place within or outside academy hours.

Board & lodging is paid for FSM pupils if it is deemed essential for educational or social development.

Instrumental Music Tuition - The Trent Academies Group will extend the remission to include eligible pupils taught by staff directly employed by the academy.

Any other remission arrangements for a particular activity or pupil will be entirely at the discretion of the Academy Local Governing Body. Any subsidy provided by the Local Governing Body shall be met from funds at its disposal.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents will be invited to make a voluntary contribution for any activities or provision organised for the benefit of students where it is inappropriate to make a charge. The terms of any request made to parents 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:

- That the contribution is genuinely voluntary and a parent/carer is under no obligation to pay
- That registered pupils at the academy will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parent/carer has made any contribution in response to the request
- Initial letters will explain the nature of the proposed activity and its likely value in educational terms
- The letter will indicate the contribution per student which would be required for the activity to take place
- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions then this will be made clear at the outset
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the activity then it may be cancelled
- The responsibility for determine the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Head teacher.

Free School Meals

All pupils eligible for FSM will be given support to participate in all appropriate educational works. If you are the parent, foster parent, network family carer or guardian of children at academy and you are on a low income, you could get free school meals and a school clothing allowance.

Your children may be entitled to FSM if you receive:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State 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

Individual Cases of Financial Difficulty

Requests for financial assistance should be made in writing to the Head teacher upon receipt of the letter outlining the details of the activity, or as soon as parents/carers are aware that an activity is to take place.

- The Head teacher may be able to agree flexible, extended payment terms
- Parents in receipt of the above benefits will be considered as first priority for assistance
- In most cases, parents will be asked to bear a proportion of the cost which is usually 50%.
- All cases will be treated individually and in confidence