

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY JULY 2025

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Introduction

The Trust Board recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards students' education. The Trust 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 activities. However, due to the limited funds in the delegated budget the Trust Board reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by Academies in the school. The Trust Board will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Policy

All School Visits

The group leader should always ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- The total cost of the visit
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit
- How much spending/pocket money students will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element).

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food, etc.

Prohibition of Charges

The Trust Board recognises that the legislation laid down in the Education Act 1996 prohibits charges for the following:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, 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 school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school;
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school. (However), if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, then the fee can be recovered from the student's parents.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any trip 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 student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when it has been prepared for that examination at the school;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Charges

- a) The Trust Board may make a charge that does not exceed the actual costs for the following: meals and accommodation on residential visits;
- b) the proportionate costs for an individual child of activities mainly or wholly outside school hours (“optional extras”) to meet the costs for:
 - a. travel
 - b. materials and equipment
 - c. non-teaching staff costs
 - d. entrance fees
 - e. insurance costs;
- c) individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument provided that the tuition is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the student is being prepared for at the school;
- d) re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided for the school;
- e) a fee for the examination service if a Sixth Form student chooses to re-sit an examination or requests a re-mark;
- f) a fee if a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Trust Board originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee;
- g) a fee if a student sits an examination that is on the prescribed list, but the student was not prepared for it at the school;
- h) costs of non-prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school;
- i) any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child’s parent wishes him/her to own them;
- j) breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by students.

Remissions

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of up to 100% depending on the individual circumstances, of the charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips. The relevant support payments are:

- (a) Income support;
- (b) Income based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- (c) Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- (d) Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190
- (e) Guaranteed State Pension Credit.

Voluntary Contributions

There is nothing in legislation that prevents Spark Education Trust from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or any school activities.

The Trust Board have decided that parents may be invited to make voluntary contributions towards specific activities. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher of trust schools on behalf of the school Governors will make this clear at the outset.

The terms of any request made to parents will specify that the request for a voluntary contribution in no way represents a charge and that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

The Trust wish to also make it clear that registered students at the school will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated from the Trust Board to the Headteacher.

It is essential that parents are informed that the nature of any visit/exchange/activity depends upon voluntary contributions being forthcoming. The format of any letter should be such as to make it clear that confirmation of the activity taking place will depend upon there being sufficient funds available.

Ingredients/Materials/Equipment (In Kind)

The Trust Board reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: Design and Technology and Art.

Broken Equipment (Replacement) / Damage to Property

The Trust will allow all departments to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. This does not in any way detract from a member of staff's duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students.

The Trust reserves the right to report criminal damage to the appropriate authorities with a view to recouping costs incurred.

Deposits

Where a charge may incur an element that is non-refundable this will be made clear to parents / carers before they pay.

Specific Charges

Individual schools will maintain a schedule of charges for specific items that the routinely charge for. This may include items such as room lettings, clubs, wrap around care and additional nursery fees.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually

Monitored: *Trust Board*

Monitored By: *Schools:*

Reports from staff leading trips.

Calls on Educational Visits Budget

Chief Financial and Operations Officer

Headteacher (who is responsible for visits)

Appendix 1 Schedule of Charges (School specific)

Category	Item/Service	Fee (£)
Room Lettings	Classroom Hire	
	Hall Hire	
	Sports Field	
Clubs	After-School Club	
	Breakfast Club	
	Holiday Club	
Wraparound Care	Early Drop-Off	
	Late Pick-Up	
Nursery Fees	Morning Session	
	Afternoon Session	
Other Charges	School Meals	
	Music Lessons	
	Educational Trips	