



# GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

## Charging and Remissions Policy

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# Table of Contents

- Introduction.....3
- 1. Education .....3
- 2. Optional Extras.....3
- 3. Voluntary Contributions.....4
- 4. Residential Visits.....4
- 5. Remissions/Exemptions.....5
- 6. Music Tuition .....5
- 7. Transport.....5
- 8. Vandalism/Wilful Damage .....5
- 9. Approving Trips .....5
- 10. Residential Recreational/Non-Curricular Trips .....6

  

- Appendix 1** Examples of Trips .....7

## Introduction

This policy is compliant with sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996 which set out the law on charging for Academy activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. The same provisions apply to Academies by virtue of their Funding Agreement with the DfE.

The Academy will ensure that it informs parents and carers on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of Academy visits.

This policy applies to all Academies within the Greenwood Academies Trust.

### 1. Education

Charges cannot and will not be made for:

- An admission application to the Academy.
- Education provided during Academy hours (Academy hours are defined as 50%, or more of the time spent on the activity), 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.
- Tuition for pupils 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 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 re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the Academy.

Where a pupil fails to meet any examination requirement and does not have good reason for the failure to comply with the requirement, the Academy is entitled to recover the full cost of the examination fee from the pupil or their parents, as appropriate. This will include (but is not limited to) the scenario where a pupil fails to attend an examination or a resit of that examination. In accordance with legislation, it will be for the Academy to determine whether the pupil had good reason for the failure.

### 2. 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. **Optional extras are:**

- Education provided outside of Academy time that is:
  - a) **not** part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) **not** part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the Academy;
  - c) **not** part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the Academy.
- Transport other than that which is required to take the pupil to the Academy or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

The cost of optional extras may include:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- Non-teaching staff.
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the 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.

It is the expectation that normally parents will contribute at least 75% of the costs which are deemed 'optional extras' excluding any recommended subsistence costs.

Normally parents will be expected to provide any food and drinks for pupils on a day trip. The Academy should make suitable arrangements for those pupils entitled to a free school meal.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during Academy hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the Academy accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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

The Chief Executive will recommend any remissions to the Optional Extras policy based on any exceptional case.

### **3. Voluntary Contributions**

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents in respect of school activities including non-curricular off-site visits. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. It will also be made clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The Academy will make it clear to parents at the outset the policy for allocating places on Academy visits.

### **4. Residential Visits**

The Academy will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during Academy hours (if the number of sessions taken up by the visit is equal or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit it is deemed to be 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 a residential visit.

The Academy will charge for:

- Board and lodging and the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

## **5. Remissions/Exemptions**

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support (IS).
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the amount specified in the guidance.
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- Income related employment and support allowance.

## **6. Music Tuition**

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

## **7. Transport**

Parents will not be charged for the cost of:

- 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 has been prepared for that examination at the Academy.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit and which is incidental to education provided for which the Academy is not entitled to charge.

## **8. Vandalism/Wilful Damage**

An act of vandalism or wilful damage carried out by any pupil whilst attending a school trip will be dealt with under the Trust's behaviour policy and normally the cost of the damage will be pursued against the pupil.

## **9. Approving Trips**

It is the Principal's responsibility to approve any trips.

However, in the following circumstances the Principal must discuss proposed trips with their Senior Education Advisor and secure their approval:

- any trip involving foreign travel
- any trip costing the Academy in excess of £5,000
- any trip requiring a parental contribution exceeding £100
- any trip requiring an Academy contribution exceeding £100 per student

- any non-curricular trip where at least 75% of the total cost, not including recommended subsistence, is **not** met by parental contribution
- any trip which is likely to lead to public interest

If in doubt, the Senior Education Advisor should refer to their line manager.

If the Trust chooses to cancel a school trip, due to HMG/FCO advice or other unforeseen circumstances, then parents will be refunded for any payments made. This may not include non-refundable deposits.

If parents choose to remove their child from a school trip that they have previously committed to, then the Academy will not be required to make such refunds.

#### **10. Residential Recreational/Non-Curricular Trips**

The Academy will not normally offer any residential trips which can be viewed as leisure/recreational during term time.

This does not affect day trips or residential trips (for example, ski trips) during the school holidays.

Outward Bounds trips (and similar) are not viewed as recreational trips.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Examples of Trips and how the Charging and Remissions Policy should be interpreted**

#### **An evening trip to watch a local theatre performance linked to a GCSE course**

*This is a curricular trip and usually there should be no charge.*

*There may be situations where the trip is not fundamental to the course where it is appropriate to request a contribution as an 'optional extra'.*

#### **An event organised at the Academy for pupils in relation to the curriculum, for example a theatre company visiting the Academy to work with pupils**

This is part of the curriculum and therefore the Academy should expect to pay for this.

#### **A Year 9-day trip in term time to visit various London cultural attractions not directly related to a course**

*We would normally expect parents to pay for at least 75% of the total cost of such a trip.*

*No child should be excluded simply because his/her parents were unwilling or unable to pay.*

#### **A residential geography field trip at the weekend**

*The Academy should expect to pay for this.*

*This is a curricular trip required for the course. Therefore, the only charge which may be made is for board and lodgings. Some students will be exempt.*

#### **A Post-16 cultural trip to Paris during the Easter holidays**

*This is not a curricular trip and it is not in term time. Therefore, it is appropriate to make a charge. Students who are exempt are required to pay for board and lodgings too as this is a non-curricular trip taking place outside of Academy hours.*

#### **A Post-16 curricular day trip to Edinburgh in term time**

*This is curricular trip in term time. You must not charge.*

#### **A year 7 visit to a local national park in term time**

*We would normally expect the Academy to pay for the cost of such a trip which can be viewed as contributing in a cost effective way to the pupils' wider education.*

*However, a request for a voluntary contribution could be made for this 'optional extra' to pay for transport.*

*No child should be excluded simply because his/her parents were unwilling or unable to pay.*

#### **Residential Outward Bounds trips during term time**

We believe these trips can be very beneficial for pupils. Therefore, we are committed to making such opportunities affordable.

We may charge for Outward Bounds trips, subject to the guidance in this policy.

**Care must be taken to ensure that there are no charges for board and lodging for parents who demonstrate that they are exempt.**

#### **A non-curricular ski trip**

**A non-curricular ski trip in the school holidays. If a parent refuses to pay but wishes their child to be on the trip does the notion of "*no child should be excluded simply because his/her parents are unwilling or unable to pay*" still apply?**

No, this principle would not apply in the context of a ski trip during school holidays. This is because the trip itself would be non-curricular and taking place outside of school hours and could therefore be classed as an "optional extra". In addition, the legislation and guidance state that the board and lodging element of any residential trip is automatically an optional extra. With optional extras, the guidance is clear that "*participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made*". The principle regarding not excluding a pupil because of parental unwillingness/inability to pay applies in the context of voluntary contributions, not optional extras.

#### **A non-curricular ski trip in term time**

Non-curricular trips should not be undertaken in term time.