



**CHARGING &
REMISSION POLICY**

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The aim of this policy is to set out the charges that may be levied for school activities, external lettings and other miscellaneous items, the remissions which may be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents/carers. Guidance is based on the Education Act 1996: Sections 449-462 which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England.

The KWEST Multi Academy Trust is responsible for determining the content of the policy and each Headteacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents/carers will be considered by the Executive Headteacher/Head of Schools.

Parents/carers are entitled to information about the Trust's Charging and Remissions Policy and the Trust will ensure that it is available on websites and upon request during school hours.

Prohibition of Charges

The KWEST Multi Academy Trust recognises that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- an admission application to any state funded school;
- curricular 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for the resit at school.

Charges can, however, be made for

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the pupil's parent/carer wishes the pupil to own.
- Optional extras:
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances

Optional Extras Charges

These 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 school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- Examination entry fees if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination at the school
- Peripatetic music tuition where that tuition is not required under the National Curriculum and the school is merely the provider of the facilities for tuition. In such circumstances, charges will be levied by the teacher or organiser providing tuition.
- Transport that is required to take a pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body/trust have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Transport in relation to residential trips where the trip is deemed to take place wholly or partly outside school hours
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit taking place wholly, mainly or partly during school hours. This cost must not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

In 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
- 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.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parent/carer is 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 pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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

Voluntary Contributions

The Academy schools may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place wholly or mainly during school hours
- School equipment
- School Fund

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of the parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are insufficient voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is not an alternative way of making up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled. In this event, any contributions already received will be returned to the respective contributors.

Teaching staff and accompanying adults, who are required in a supervisory capacity, will not be required to make any payment. Any cost so incurred will be included in the overall cost of running the activity.

Once the decision has been taken to run an activity, all pupils whose parents/carers wish them to participate will be included, irrespective of whether their parents/carers have made a full, partial or no contribution.

Any shortfall in voluntary contributions will be paid out of school funds.

The responsibility for determining the level and regularity of voluntary contributions is delegated to the Executive Headteachers/Head of Schools.

Clothing

Under the Education Act, clothing is excluded from the definition of equipment required/used in connection with a child's education during school hours.

Breakages and fines

If a pupil is found to be responsible for causing wilful damage to or breakage of property or equipment (the school's or otherwise), the pupil's parents may be asked to meet the costs of any repairs or replacement in full. The defacement or loss of schoolbooks is included in this respect.

Remission Statement

In order to ensure that financial barriers do not become barriers to opportunity and learning for pupils, under certain circumstances the Governing Body of the school may elect to meet (wholly or in part) charges payable by parents as set out in the charging policy.

Requests for financial assistance and/or consideration for remission of charges for children of families experiencing financial hardship may be made where parents/carers are in receipt of the following:

- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed the stated maximum according to current tax office advice.
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Allowances in relation to a registered disability
- Free School Meals
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit.

Requests may also be made in relation to Looked After Children.

Consideration will be given in relation to:

- Costs associated with residential visits taking place during school time
- Costs associated with residential visits taking place outside school time where the visit meets requirements set out in the National Curriculum
- Costs associated with residential visits taking place outside school time where the visit meets requirements under the school's provision for religious education
- Costs associated with music tuition

Special consideration may be given for hardship cases at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher. In such cases, any subsidy will be provided from the academy school's Voluntary Fund provided there are adequate funds available for this purpose.

Miscellaneous Charges

The Trust reserves the right to charge back to parents/carers any bank charges which arise due to default on payments e.g. bounced cheques.

School meals will be charged at the levels recommended by the caterers.

Charge at cost may be made for the issue of replacement security passes.

Charges for the letting of the academy premises or grounds.

Private telephone calls made using Academy telephones may be charged at cost identified on telephone invoice listings.

Mileage rates paid to staff/trustees/LITs/volunteers using their own cars to travel on academy business where not appropriate to reimburse through payroll will be at the rate advised by HMRC.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if changes to guidance on best practice necessitate it.