



TIMU ACADEMY TRUST

Policy Document for: Charging and Remissions

Approved: September 2018, reviewed December 2019

Due for Review: December 2020

Introduction

Under the charging provisions of the Education Act 1996, trustees of academies must draw up a statement of their charging and remissions policy before they may charge for certain defined activities.

Education legislation demands that schools, subject to certain exceptions, may not charge for education provided during school hours. However, schools are permitted to charge for other items and experiences provided to the pupils. Schools may also invite voluntary contributions to help support these provisions. Schools have a duty to inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits that support is available towards certain costs when they are being asked to make contributions eg towards school visits.

Objectives and targets

The objective of this policy is to clarify which items and experiences that the school provides may have a charge levied upon them, how much of the cost the school expects parents to be charged and who will be offered support to pay for items and experiences for their children. It will be no less generous than the local authority's (LA's) policy.

Action plan

At Timu Academy Trust we believe the children benefit from outside visits, journeys, visitors and extra-curricular activities in sport and the creative arts. We follow government regulations on charging. When an event takes place during school time, we ask the parents of the children benefiting to share the cost. Legally, we are requesting voluntary contributions, but if we do not receive enough to cover the cost, the activity may be cancelled.

Remission of charges

No child is barred from attending because his/her parents have not contributed. Families eligible for benefits, and others the headteacher believes are experiencing financial hardship, are not expected or pressured to pay. We keep such information confidential and handle situations discreetly.

Parents who are in receipt of the following benefits are exempt from paying charges:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances (the government plans to prescribe these circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out).
- Income support.
- 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 HMRC does not exceed certain limits.
- The guarantee element of state pension credit.
- An income-related employment and support allowance.

Payment

All payments, including dinner money, are to be made via the School Gateway (online payments). If any parent does not have a bank account or access to the internet they should contact the school office for a voucher which can be used to make a cash payment at the paypoint network of local shops.

Circumstances where no Charge is made

Education in School

- Education provided wholly or mainly during school hours.
- Admission to school for children of compulsory school age.
- Activities that are part of the entitlement* curriculum for all pupils, or are part of a prescribed examination syllabus, or part of Religious Education.
- The supply of any materials, books and instruments or other equipment that are a requirement of the entitlement curriculum.

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the academy premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local 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, which is part of the entitlement curriculum.

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 entitlement 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.

Music Tuition

- Children learning to play musical instruments as part of the entitlement curriculum; or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education

Examination Fees

- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school**.

Circumstances where the School may charge Parents

Charges may be made for other activities known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge may be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment as follows:

Education

- Activities that take place mainly or wholly out of school time if they are not part of the entitlement curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupils are being prepared for at the academy and not part of religious education.
- Materials used in practical subjects and project assignments provided parents have agreed in advance that they or the pupil wish to keep the finished product e.g. ingredients or materials.

Music Tuition

- Musical instrument tuition provided to individual pupils or to a group of not more than four pupils if the teaching of music tuition is not part of the entitlement curriculum.

Transport

- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the trustees have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.

Examination Fees

- An examination that is independent of the academy curriculum, but the academy arranges for the pupil to take it.

Board and Lodgings

- The cost of board and lodging for residential trips, even when taking place largely during school time. (Pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging).

Extended Schools

- Various charges as set by the Trustees will apply to the trust's Breakfast and Afterschool club (Child's Play). Full details are available on the trust website.

Voluntary Contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school time activities, voluntary contributions may be sought from parents for activities that supplement the normal academy curriculum.

Requests to parents for voluntary contributions will state that:

- there is no legal obligation to make a voluntary contribution;
- pupils will not be excluded through parents' inability or unwillingness to pay;
- pupils of parents who cannot contribute will not be treated any differently;
- where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity will be cancelled.
- Requests made for voluntary contributions made in respect of individual pupils must not include any element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Supplementary Information

Parents can be invited to equip their child with items of personal equipment intended for use solely by their child such as Uniform, P.E. Kit, Calculators, and Pens etc.

Breakages and Damage

Where a student's behaviour results in damage to school property or equipment, parents may be asked to pay for the necessary repair or replacement. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the trust's discretion.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in the light of changes to legislation and comments received from parents and other interested parties.

*The 'entitlement curriculum' is the learning activities and experiences that the academy will make available to all or any pupil that is provided wholly or mainly during school hours.

**The only public examinations that the academy currently enters pupils for are the Key Stage 2 SATs.