



Fields Multi Academy Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

Adopted: December 2016
Agreed by Trust Board: December 2016
Reviewed: November 2023
To be reviewed: November 2024

“Fields Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and always promoting the welfare of children and adults and expects everybody working with us to share this commitment.”

This Charging and Remissions Policy complies with statutory requirements, has regard to policy statements on charging and is reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust Board.

Philosophy

We recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards a child's education. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children in our schools and as additional optional activities.

We believe that all our children should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure that a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some children from taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims of this policy are to:

- Set out what the school will and will not charge for, or request a voluntary contribution towards, from parents/carers.
- Clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and carers understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities.

Activities Without Charge:

There will be no charge for the following activities:

- Education provided wholly or mostly during school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments, other equipment, and transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, which the child is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental and vocal music tuition, which is part of the National Curriculum or the first programme in which the whole class engages with the KS2 programme of Instrumental and Vocal Tuition (Wider Opportunities).
- Instrumental and vocal tuition for children in care.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, including re-sits, provided that a pupil has been prepared for it at the school.

The Department for Education (DfE): Charging for School Activities, Oct 2014 states: "... No charge may be made if there is a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination."

In addition, if the activity is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel for any child, not just those whose parents are in receipt of benefits.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_school_activities_-_October_2014.pdf

Voluntary Contributions:

The school may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school-time activities to assist with funding, subject to the following conditions:

- Any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently.
- Where there are insufficient contributions to make the activity viable, the activity will be cancelled.

The (DfE): Charging for School Activities, Oct 2014 states: “... if the school is not able to raise enough voluntary contributions to cover costs? Where there are not enough voluntary contributions, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, for example school funds and/or fundraising activities, then it must be cancelled. The possibility of the activity/visit being cancelled due to a shortfall in contributions should be made clear in the information sent to parents.”

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_school_activities_-_October_2014.pdf

Chargeable Activities:

The school may recover the full costs of the following activities, which may be provided directly or through commissioned services, but charges will not exceed actual cost. Educational or other activities provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, which are not:

- Part of the National Curriculum.
- Part of a syllabus for prescribed public examination, which the child is being prepared for at school. (Note: This could include before and after school clubs run by the school)
- Board and lodgings on residential visits (subject to remission arrangements).
- Cost of entering a child for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, and for the cost of preparing a child for that examination outside school hours.
- Provision of instrumental and vocal tuition, which takes place during the school day, and which has been requested by parents/carers.
- Provision of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Art & Design or Food Technology, where children take home a finished product.
- Breakages and Fines, the Trustees reserve the right to ask parents to pay for the cost of replacing any item such as: broken windows; defaced, damaged or lost books; replacement reading and homework diaries; any item damaged as a result of unsatisfactory behaviour.

The school has the right to refuse further activities to families who are in debt to the school for outside of school hours activities, until such time that the debt is cleared.

The Department for Education (DfE): Charging for School Activities, Oct 2014 states: “... Any charge made in respect of individual children must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of children participating.” It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other children wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Remissions Policy:

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged children, the Trust Board has agreed that activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge, or a reduced charge, to parents/carers in particular circumstances.

This Remissions Policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances.
- 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 £16,190 (financial year 2013/14).
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
- Income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.
- In the event of a child missing a trip or visit or activity where the parent has paid the cost e.g. a residential trip, the school will return any part of the cost that can be recouped by the school at the time of the trip.
- In the event of a child missing a trip or visit for which the parent has made a voluntary contribution, the school will return the contribution in full.

Transport:

The school, when asking for donations towards transportation costs, will divide the cost by the number of pupils taking part in the trip. The total amount from pupils' contributions will not exceed the transport costs.