
CHARGES AND REMISSIONS POLICY

INCLUSION AND SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT:

We are committed to creating futures for all in a welcoming and supportive learning environment, in which all pupils feel valued and challenged to be resilient thinkers, active learners with transferable skills and have an appetite for world learning.

In the Synaptic Trust all pupils are valued, inspired and respected within our happy, welcoming family.

We set high expectations for all our pupils. Practitioners give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in their learning, by providing a relevant and challenging curriculum with an emphasis on personalised learning.

All children have unique experiences to share. Across the trust we celebrate this diversity by valuing the contribution of all pupils and providing a learning environment that encourages interdependence.

Our trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and expects staff to share this commitment.

Introduction

This statement of policy has been drawn up to comply with (a) section 33 of the Academy's Funding Agreement and (b) Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 and is subject to the approval of the Secretary of State. It is reviewed annually by the Trust in accordance with the *Handbook of Governance* and a summary is published in the school prospectus of each Academy.

Special Transport

With the agreement of the Academy, pupils may at times need to attend an activity which is away from the school premises and which is not provided by the Governors. Where such a pupil uses transport not provided by the Academy to travel directly between home and the place of activity, the parents will be expected to meet the cost of that transport.

Ingredients and Materials

If parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product of a pupil's work in cooking, Art or Design Technology, for example, the cost of any ingredients or materials not supplied by those parents will be charged to them.

Instrumental Tuition

The Governors will make a charge for providing instrumental music tuition to pupils attending the Academy. The amount of the charge will be reviewed periodically.

Optional Extras

An 'optional extra' is education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for in school, or part of religious education.

A charge will be made where the parents have previously agreed in writing to a pupil participating in an optional extra activity.

An excursion not involving one or more nights away from home will count as an optional extra if less than half the time spent on it (including travel time) falls during school hours. (The expression 'school hours' means those hours in which the Academy is actually in session and does not include the break in the middle of the school day. The present school hours are: morning 8:55am to 12:25pm and afternoon 1:25pm to 3:15pm.

An excursion not involving one or more nights away from home will count as an optional extra if the number of school sessions (half days) spent on the visit = less than 50% of the visit. (A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day). It will not count as an optional extra if 50% or more of the time = school sessions (even if some activities take place late in the evening).

The charge for an optional extra will be the actual cost of providing it, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. The cost will include travel outside school hours, board and lodging, any special materials, books, instruments or other equipment required, non-teaching staff costs, entrance fees, insurance and the expenses of any teaching staff specifically engaged for the activity.

Board and Lodging

Where any school activity, regardless of whether or not it is an optional extra, involves a pupil in spending one or more nights away from home, a charge not exceeding the actual cost of board and lodging for that pupil can be made.

Outside Organisations

An educational trip or other activity may be offered to pupils by some organisation other than the Governors. If the activity is during school hours, pupils (and any teaching staff involved) will need leave of absence from the school. If such leave is granted by the Head of School or the Governors, the outside organisation concerned will charge the parents directly for the service provided.

Losses and Breakages

If a pupil is deemed to have carelessly or wilfully caused damage to school premises, materials or equipment, or by negligence loses any school property, the parents of that pupil may be asked to make a contribution to the cost of repair or replacement. The Academy also reserves the right to charge the full cost of any books which are not returned at the end of a course.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in the 1996 Education Act or in the above policy statement prevents the Governors, the Head of School or the Academy in general, from seeking voluntary contributions either for the general benefit of the Academy or in support of any school activity, whether that activity is in or out of school hours, residential or non-residential. Indeed, without voluntary contributions it would not be possible to run the rich and varied programme of extra-curricular trips so valued by parents and pupils. It may be necessary to point out to parents that a proposed activity will not take place if there are insufficient voluntary contributions.

Remissions

If the activity concerned is not an optional extra, as explained in paragraph 5 above, parents whose children are in receipt of, or eligible for free school meals may not be charged for board and lodging. They may, however, be invited to make a voluntary contribution.

Any charge made to parents by the Academy may be remitted, either wholly or in part, on the grounds that payment by the parents would cause them particular and undue hardship having regard to their financial circumstances and to the educational value to the pupil of the activity concerned. The discretion to grant such assistance will be exercised by the Head of School or other senior staff.

Benefits which entitle a parent to claim for free school meals:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (not contribution based);
- Income related employment and support allowance;
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (where there is no element of working tax credit AND the total household income for tax credit purposes is assessed to be less than £16, 190 per year); and
- Financially supported by NASS (National Asylum Support Service).

