



## **Charging and Remission Policy**

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**The Perins MAT**

2022 - 2023

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## 1 Introduction

1.1 This policy is intended to:

1.1.1 provide clarity as to when the Academy can make a charge to Parents, or ask them to make a voluntary contribution, towards the cost of activities, visits, residential trips and associated costs, and other items such as books, materials, instruments and equipment, examination entry fees and the repair / replacement of property;

1.1.2 provide clarity as to when Parents may be eligible for statutory remission of the cost of board and lodging on educational residential visits or for discretionary remission of some or all of the cost of an activity, trip, non-educational residential visit or other item].

1.2 This policy is intended to comply with Sections 450 to 462 Education Act 1996 (**EA 1996**) [which apply to Academies by virtue of their funding agreements] and current advice published by the Department for Education (**DfE**) on charging and remission. In the event of inconsistency between the legislation / DfE advice and this policy, the legislation / DfE advice will apply.

## 2 Definitions

2.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

2.1.1 references to the **Academy** are references to schools within The Perins MAT.

2.1.2 references to **Parent** or **Parents** means the natural or adoptive Parents of the pupil (irrespective of whether they are or have ever been married, with whom the pupil lives, or whether they have contact with the pupil) as well as any person who is not the natural or adoptive Parent of the pupil, but who has care of, or Parental responsibility for, the pupil (e.g. legal guardian, foster carer).

## 3 Implementation and application

3.1 The Academy will make Parents aware of this policy by publishing it on the Academy's website and providing a hard copy on request to the School Business Manager. In addition, information about particular activities, trips and visits will be notified to Parents by letter with full details of the costs involved (this is set out in further detail below).

3.2 The Academy will ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and ensure that it is implemented in relation to any activities, trips or visits they organise. Staff will ensure that no charge is made to Parents unless it is permitted under the policy. All requests for payments must be referred to the School Business Manager for action and / or approval before they are sent out.

## 4 Prohibited charges

4.1 No charge can be made in connection with admission to the Academy.

4.2 No charge can be made for education provided to pupils, or for books, materials, instruments or transport used in connection with the education provided to pupils:

4.2.1 wholly or mainly in school hours (excluding the lunch break); or

4.2.2 wholly or mainly outside school hours and provided:

- (a) as part of the curriculum;
  - (b) as part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination for which the pupil is being prepared by the Academy; or
  - (c) as part of statutory religious education.
- 4.3 No charge can be made for the cost of making alternative provision for pupils remaining in school when an activity, trip or residential visit takes place out of school.
- 4.4 No charge can be made for entry to a prescribed public examination where the pupil has been prepared for the examination by the Academy, including re-sits. The following exceptions apply:
- 4.4.1 where the pupil, without good reason, fails to complete a requirement of a public examination, and the Academy has paid or agreed to pay the entry fee, the Academy can recover the entry fee from the Parents;
  - 4.4.2 the Academy is not obliged to enter a pupil for a public examination it has prepared the pupil for where it considers there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil. Where this is the case and the Parents nevertheless ask for the pupil to be entered, the Academy can make a charge for the entry fee.

## 5 Permitted charges

- 5.1 The Academy is permitted to make the following charges:
- 5.1.1 The cost of activities, trips and residential visits provided wholly or mainly outside school hours (i.e. 'optional extras'), including (but not limited to):
    - (a) activities;
    - (b) non-teaching staff who provide the activities (excluding the Academy's own staff, but including teaching staff engaged under a contract for services purely to provide that specific activity);
    - (c) transport (including the proportionate cost of transporting pupils in the Academy's own vehicle);
    - (d) buildings and other venues;
    - (e) materials, books, instruments or equipment;
    - (f) entrance fees;
    - (g) board and lodging (on residential visits);
    - (h) insurance<sup>1</sup>.
  - 5.1.2 the cost of providing instrumental and vocal music tuition to an individual pupil or a group of pupils as an 'optional extra' at the request of Parents in or outside of school hours (this does not apply to music tuition provided as an essential part of the curriculum, under first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition

Programme or as part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination])). This includes the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of teaching staff employed to provide the tuition as an 'optional extra';

- 5.1.3 the cost of a finished product (e.g. in art, craft, design or home economics) which Parents have confirmed they want to own (including food items made and consumed by pupils), having been notified in advance of the relevant charge;
- 5.1.4 the cost of extended services for pupils (e.g. breakfast and after-school clubs);
- 5.1.5 the cost of entry to an examination (prescribed or otherwise) for which the pupil has not been prepared by the Academy;
- 5.1.6 the cost of preparing a pupil for a non-prescribed examination outside school hours;
- 5.1.7 the cost of repair or replacement of property belonging to the Academy which is, in the Academy's reasonable determination, carelessly lost or wilfully damaged or destroyed by the pupil.

## 6 Status of activities, trips and residential visits

- 6.1 Before Parents are notified of the cost of an activity, trip or residential visit, the Academy must determine whether it is educational or non-educational, as set out in the table below:

Status	Definition	Compulsory charge	Voluntary contribution
<b>Educational</b>	An activity, trip or residential visit which takes place wholly or mainly in school hours	No*	Yes
	An activity, trip or residential visit which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours and is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as part of the curriculum;</li> <li>• as part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination for which the pupil is being prepared by the Academy; or</li> <li>• as part of statutory religious education</li> </ul>	No*	Yes
<b>Non-educational</b>	An activity, trip or residential visit which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours otherwise than as set out above	Yes	No

**\*Except for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits which is subject to a compulsory charge in both cases**

6.2 In order to determine whether an activity, trip or residential visit takes place mainly in or outside school hours, the '50% rule' must be applied as follows:

Type	The '50% rule'
<b>Activities and trips</b>	<p>Where <b>50% or more</b> of the actual time spent on the activity or trip (including travelling time but excluding the lunch break) takes <b>place in school hours</b>, it is deemed to take place <b>mainly in school hours</b>.</p> <p>Where it is <b>under 50%</b>, it is deemed to take place <b>mainly outside school hours</b>.</p>
<b>Residential visits</b>	<p>Firstly, the total number of half-days (a half-day being a 12 hour period ending at noon or midnight, rounded up or down as appropriate) spent on the residential visit are calculated.</p> <p>Secondly, the total number of school sessions (morning and afternoon) during the period of the residential visit (including travelling time) are calculated.</p> <p>Where the number school sessions is <b>50% or more</b> of the number of half-days, the visit is deemed to take place <b>mainly in school hours</b>.</p> <p>Where the number of school sessions is <b>less than 50%</b> of the number of half days, it is deemed to take <b>mainly outside school hours</b>.</p>

6.3 For example, where pupils leave for a residential visit on immediately after school on Thursday during term time and return on Tuesday at 12.00 noon the following week, the total number of half days will be ten and the total number of school sessions will be five. As the number of school sessions is 50% of the number of half-days, the residential visit is deemed to take place mainly in school hours and a compulsory charge cannot therefore be made (except for the cost of board and lodging).

## 7 Determining the level of costs

7.1 For all educational and non-educational activities, trips and residential visits, the costs must be calculated to represent the actual cost per pupil (equally and proportionately).

7.2 The costs must not include:

- 7.2.1 any administration costs incurred by the Academy in making the arrangements for an activity, trip or residential visit;
- 7.2.2 any element of subsidy for other pupils (including those pupils for whom no payment is received, or who are eligible for statutory or discretionary remission);
- 7.2.3 any element of profit;
- 7.2.4 any element of contingency (other than nominal, where it was not possible to accurately determine the actual cost in advance).
- 7.2.5 any contribution from pupils towards the cost of additional staff attending trips or visits beyond those necessary to satisfy the pupil to staff ratio

## 8 Compulsory charges

- 8.1 Where a compulsory charge is made for a non-educational activity, trip or residential visit, this must be paid in full by Parents for their child to be included. This includes the compulsory charge for board and lodging on educational residential trips where all other costs are requested by way of voluntary contributions.
- 8.2 Where the cost of an educational residential visit includes a compulsory charge for board and lodging, together with voluntary contributions for all other costs, and Parents make payments to the Academy by way of a deposit and instalments, payments will be used to satisfy the voluntary contributions in full first, and the compulsory charge for board and lodging last.

## 9 Voluntary contributions

- 9.1 Where a voluntary contribution is requested for an educational activity, trip or residential visit, it will be made clear to Parents in the letter sent to them setting out the costs of the trip and the voluntary contributions requested that they are under no obligation to pay and, if they do not, their child will not be excluded from the activity, trip or residential visit.
- 9.2 Letters requesting voluntary contributions will make it clear whether, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the activity, trip or residential visit will have to be cancelled, or whether the Academy is able to fund any shortfall.

## 10 Statutory remission for board and lodging on educational residential visits

- 10.1 Section 457 EA 1996 provides that Parents who will be in receipt of certain State benefits or tax credits **at any point during a residential visit** are entitled to full remission of the compulsory charge made for board and lodging on educational residential visits (as defined in the table above) only. This does **not** apply to non-educational residential visits.
- 10.2 Eligibility for statutory remission mirrors that for Free School Meals (**FSM**). A list of qualifying State benefits and tax credits can be accessed via the government's [website](#). As such, the Academy will use the same entitlement verification procedures used for FSM to confirm eligibility for statutory remission.
- 10.3 Statutory remission is funded by the Academy.

## 11 Discretionary Remission

- 11.1 In addition to the statutory remission as set out above, the Executive/Headteacher may award discretionary remission for those families experiencing financial hardship of some or all the cost of any charge which would otherwise be payable in accordance with this policy.
- 11.2 Residential trips not essential to the curriculum that take place wholly or mainly during school holidays or weekends and bank holidays will not be eligible for remission of any charges.
- 11.3 Discretionary remission is funded by the Academy. Accordingly, the eligibility criteria used, the nature and level of the remission given, and the way in which eligibility will be verified will need to be decided by the Academy each year, once it has set its budget and established the level of funds available for both types of remission.

## 12 Notifying parents of charges

- 12.1 Parents will be notified of all compulsory charges in advance of them being incurred (with the exception of the cost of repair or replacement of property as set out in Section 4 above).
- 12.2 In relation to proposed activities, trips and residential visits, Parents will receive a letter / email setting out the details of the activity, trip and residential visit. In particular, the communication will include:
  - 12.2.1 confirmation as to whether the activity, trip or residential visit is deemed to be 'educational' or 'non-educational', as defined in Section 5 above;
  - 12.2.2 a breakdown of the costs involved (e.g. transport, buildings / venue, entrance fees, activities, board and lodging, insurance, etc.). These must reflect the actual cost per pupil (equally and proportionately);
  - 12.2.3 identification as to which costs are subject to a compulsory charge, and which costs are requested by way of a voluntary contribution;
  - 12.2.4 confirmation as to which costs, if any, are eligible for statutory or discretionary remission for qualifying Parents;
  - 12.2.5 confirmation that, in respect of voluntary contributions, Parents are under no obligation to pay, and their child will not be excluded from the activity, trip or residential visit if it goes ahead (except where a compulsory charge for board and lodging is made, there is no eligibility for statutory remission and the charge remains unpaid);
  - 12.2.6 confirmation as to whether, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received (i.e. payment is not received in full for every available place), the activity, trip or residential visit will be cancelled, or whether the Academy has determined that it is able to fund any shortfall. There must not be any element of subsidy of one Parent by another Parent;
  - 12.2.7 confirmation of the date by which payment needs to be received, or the date by which the deposit and instalments need to be paid, where instalments are offered as an option;
  - 12.2.8 the order in which each payment received will be allocated to the cost elements for the activity, trip or residential visit. For residential visits involving a combination of compulsory charges and voluntary contributions, payments will be allocated as voluntary contributions first, and compulsory charges last. Where insurance is included, this will be purchased on receipt of the first payment (which may be set at a higher level as a result);
  - 12.2.9 confirmation as to which cost elements will be non-refundable once paid, as the Academy will not be able to recover these costs from the provider (e.g. insurance, booked non-refundable flights, booked non-refundable accommodation, etc.).
- 12.3 Parents may request payment in instalments. Requests should be made to the Trip Leader and approved by the School Business Manager.

## 13 Refunding payments

Where Parents cancel or withdraw their child's inclusion on a service, activity, trip or residential visit:

13.1.1 the payments made by Parents (whether voluntary contributions or compulsory charges) will only be refunded by the Academy where they are recovered from the supplier(s) of the service, activity, trip or residential visit (e.g. tour operators, airlines, hotels, etc.) and/or under a policy of insurance with appropriate cover;  
**except that**

13.1.2 the Academy may at its sole discretion refund some or all of the payments made by Parents (whether voluntary contributions or compulsory charges) from its own funds in cases of severe financial hardship where the decision was taken for unavoidable, unforeseeable no-fault reasons. Such decisions will be made by the Executive Headteacher in consultation with the School Business Manager and Chair of Trustees to ensure a fair and consistent approach.

13.2 Where the Academy cancels or withdraws the service, activity, trip or residential visit (including where any or all elements of these are cancelled by the supplier(s) of them) the Academy will seek to recover payments made by Parents from the supplier(s) of the service, activity, trip or residential visit (e.g. tour operators, airlines, hotels, etc.) and / or under a policy of insurance with appropriate cover. All such monies recovered will be passed on to Parents in equal proportion up to the total of the payments made by each parent.

13.3 The Academy arranges travel cover for all services, activities, trips or residential visits through the government's **Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)** which usually covers losses that cannot be recovered from suppliers.

13.4 The Academy will take reasonable steps to pursue suppliers and insurers for recovery of costs incurred, where this is determined to be appropriate following a cost-to-benefit analysis of what this would involve.

13.5 In the rare instances where it was not possible for the Academy to confirm the actual cost of a particular element of a service, activity, trip or residential visit in the original notification letter, and therefore had to provide Parents with an estimate, but the actual cost incurred was lower than anticipated, the Academy will write to Parents to notify them of this and ask if they would like the surplus to be refunded to them, or be treated as a donation to the school.

## 14 Other charges outside the scope of this policy

14.1 The Academy has separate uniform requirements for pupils (including required PE kit) and where this can be purchased by Parents. In determining the Academy uniform, the Academy complies with the requirement to achieve the best value for money for Parents.

14.2 Patchwork Nursery has a separate Admission Policy which sets out the cost of nursery places not qualifying for State funding.

14.3 The Academy has terms and conditions within its Schoolhire booking system which sets out the cost of hiring the Academy's facilities.

## **15 Equality**

- 15.1 In implementing this policy, the Academy will have regard to its duties and responsibilities towards pupils and other persons with a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). In particular, the Academy will ensure that the application of this policy does not discriminate (either directly or indirectly) against a pupil or other person with a protected characteristic.
- 15.2 Where the application of this policy would put a pupil or other person at a particular or substantial disadvantage compared to other pupils or persons because they or the other person are disabled (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), the Academy will adjust this policy or take other steps to avoid that disadvantage, where it is proportionate and reasonable to do so (e.g. make a 'reasonable adjustment').
- 15.3 An adjustment may be made in a number of different ways, depending on the particular circumstances involved. For example, the Academy may remit some or all of the compulsory charges and / or voluntary contributions requested, or it may agree to fund an additional member of staff or another adult (e.g. family member) being included in the activity, trip or residential visit in order to provide one-to-one support for a disabled pupil.
- 15.4 The Academy may also adjust this policy for pupils with special educational needs who are not disabled (as defined by the Equality Act 2010), where it is reasonable and proportionate to do so.

## **16 Data protection and confidentiality**

- 16.1 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The Academy's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The Academy has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the Academy will use personal data.
- 16.2 Staff must ensure that they follow the Academy's policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the Academy's Data Protection Policy.
- 16.3 For the avoidance of doubt, information about payments made to the Academy and, in particular, inability to pay and qualification for statutory and / or discretionary remission will remain strictly confidential, and staff will only be made aware of this information on a 'need to know' basis.

## **17 Charges by third parties**

- 17.1 On completion of satisfactory checks, the Academy may sometimes allow a third party to provide activities to pupils (e.g. music tuition, after school clubs, etc.). Those third parties are permitted to charge Parents for the activities offered, and any such charges do not fall under the remit of this policy (even where the Academy collects these payments on behalf of the third party for onward transmission).

## **18 Review and monitoring**

- 18.1 This policy will be kept under regular review and monitored by the Trust Board particularly when there has been a change in legislation or DfE advice.

**19 Version control**

Date of adoption of this policy	01/02/22
Date of last review of this policy	19/07/21
Date for next review of this policy	February 2023