

Hadrian Learning Trust: Charging and remissions policy

Aims

We aim to ensure that education in school is free, and to provide facilities for the local community at no cost to school budgets.

We aim to have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions, and clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities; Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual Trustee or the Headteacher. The Trust Board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our Trust, responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, and for monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Executive Headteacher. The Executive Headteacher is also responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff are responsible for implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently, and notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training and/or support in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we cannot charge for:

Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - 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 it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

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 National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we can charge for.

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Community facilities

Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, we can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Exams:
 - Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school (e.g. where a pupil has received private tuition for the examination).
 - A charge will be made covering the examination entry fee if the pupil without good reason fails to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the school has paid or is liable to pay. Failure in this context, meaning not completing coursework or not sitting examination(s). Good reason in this context will normally mean either a doctor's letter in support of health-related problems or satisfactory parental and/or other written testimony in other cases.
 - A charge will be made covering the examination body's charge, where a parent asks for examination results to be re-scrutinised by the examination body.

- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When 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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are 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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

Music tuition

We can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, if the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition. Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out above, we are able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours that would not otherwise be possible.

We may ask parents for voluntary contributions including those towards additional learning resources, trips, sporting activities, and for the general benefit of the schools.

There is no obligation for parents to contribute, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If we are unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

Activities we charge for

We will charge for activities including optional trips, certain after-school clubs and music tuition provided at the request of parents.

Deposits may be required for school property loaned to students (such as sixth form identity cards or textbooks) which are refundable on return of the item.

We may charge for breakages and damage to property, including window breakage and graffiti removal.

Community facilities

In relation to community facilities, we aim to ensure that premises letting charges meet all costs incurred, and community and leisure courses recover the full cost of the programme delivery

For lettings, a scale of charges ensures that at least the additional costs incurred by the school are covered. Any revision of charges in year will be considered as part of the budget setting-process and will be effective from the beginning of the next term. Initial deposits are required to secure bookings. The Executive Headteacher has the discretion to reduce or waive lettings fees, provided the schools do not subsidise any lettings.

For the community and leisure programme, all course fees will recover at least the total cost of the programme. Any revision of charges in year will be considered as part of the budget setting-process and will be effective from the beginning of the next term. Enrolments must be received in advance.

Remissions

The Trust will be sensitive to the needs of any pupil that is suffering hardship and look to support them to participate in school-organised activities. In some circumstances, we may not charge for items or activities set out above, or we may reduce the cost. This will be at the discretion of the Trust Board and will depend on the activity in question.

Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- 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
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

Sixth form students facing financial barriers to participation in education may apply to the 16-19 bursary fund for financial support, either as regular payments or for additional financial support in exceptional circumstances.

Monitoring arrangements

The Executive Headteacher monitors charges and remissions, ensuring these comply with this policy, and reviews and approves this policy annually.