

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Introduction

All pupils/students at schools/academies operated and managed by Turner Schools (the “Trust”) have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) regardless of their parents’/carers’ financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes the circumstances in which charges will be levied, when they won’t and when they may be waived. It also outlines how schools/academies will do their best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils/students taking full advantage of the opportunities. This policy has been informed by the Governance Handbook 2019: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf and the latest DfE Guidance: Charging for School Activities - May 2018: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust’s Equality and Diversity Policy and the school/academy’s SEND Policy. The school/academy has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils/students to avoid the disadvantage caused by a pupil’s/student’s disability. The cost of an adjustment is a factor in determining whether that adjustment is reasonable. The cost of any adjustments that are deemed reasonable will not be charged to parents/carers.

2. No charges will be made for:

- admissions;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum; or part of a syllabus or to fulfil duties relating to Religious Education;
- education provided on any trip if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school/academy, (a voluntary contribution may however be requested to help towards the cost of travel and/or other expenses associated with the event or trip (see section 9);
- after school clubs and lunch time clubs that are offered free by the school/academy;
- for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school/academy. The school/academy is required to enter a pupil/student for each examination in a syllabus for a prescribed public examination for which the pupil/student has been prepared. A pupil/student is regarded as having been prepared for the syllabus at the school/academy if the school/academy has provided any part of the necessary preparation. The requirement to enter a pupil/student may only be lifted where, in the opinion of the Chief Executive (CEO), there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil/student, or where the pupil’s/student’s parents/carers

request in writing that the pupil/student should not be entered.

(Please note If a pupil/student fails, without good reason, to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the Trust has paid or is liable to pay an entry fee, that fee can be recovered from parents/carers).

3. Charges will be made for:

- materials, books, instruments or other equipment from the school/academy for use in connection with education provided during school hours that the pupil/students want to keep. All sales made by the Trust will have no VAT recharged and will be sold at cost;
- non-residential activities which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours);
- costs for residential activities such as board and lodging during school time. However, pupils/students whose parents/carers are in receipt of certain benefits (see below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs;
- school meals for those children eating school meals who are not entitled to free school meals;
- wilful damage by a child or parent to school or third party property/equipment;
- school photographs. [A photographer will visit the school/academy annually and parents/carers will be sent proofs of the photographs of their child which they can purchase if they wish; there is no obligation to buy];
- after school clubs/lunch time which carry a charge – parents/carers will be made clear of any costs relating to After School or Lunch time Clubs before they sign their child(ren) up;
- music or vocal tuition (see details below);
- examination fees where a pupil/student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus;
- uniform – this can be purchased through a third party or student financial services;
- optional extras (see section 7 below).

4. Charging and Remissions Procedures

- a) Staff organising a trip, visit, club or activity will notify parents/carers in advance of any likely costs. This will be done by letter or similar electronic means of communication, with a reply slip (or equivalent) for parents/carers to accept the proposed costs. The letter will contain details of remission arrangements as set out in this Charging and Remissions Policy.
- b) The organising member of staff, in agreement with the Trust's Finance department, will set out the arrangements for collection of costs to parents/carers.
- c) The organising member of staff will agree the process for the collection of monies with the Trust's Finance department.
- d) Collection of unpaid or late monies will be the responsibility of the Trust's Finance department.
- e) The Trust's Finance department will keep accounts of all trips, visits, clubs or activities.

5. Insurance

Any insurance costs will be included in charges made for trips and activities.

6. VAT

To enable the Trust to reclaim VAT on school/academy journeys and the school/academy should have purchased all elements, apart from accommodation directly.

7. Optional Extras

In addition to the charges that may be made in section 3 above, the school/academy may charge for some optional activities. 'Optional extra' activities are those which take place wholly or mainly outside school/academy hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.

Participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. Any charge made in respect of individual pupil/students may include an appropriate element for the following: a pupil/student's travel costs; a pupil/student's board and lodging; materials, books, instruments and other equipment; non-teaching staff costs; entrance fees to museums, theatres etc.; insurance costs.

It should be noted that any charge for an 'optional extra' activity, as distinct from a request for a voluntary contribution, should not exceed the actual cost of providing that activity, divided equally by the number of pupil/students willing to participate. It may not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other pupil/students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

If a charge is made for each pupil/student it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds are needed for additional costs, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school/academy who supervise the activity. These include:

- 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/student is being prepared for at the school/academy; or part of religious education;
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil/student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school/academy;
- transport that is not taking the pupil/student to the school/academy or to other premises where the school/academy has arranged for the pupil/student to be provided with education;
- board and lodging for a pupil/student on a residential visit;
- theatre company visits to the school/academy;
- travelling expenses to the pool for swimming lessons outside of the normal curriculum requirements;
- optional sports clubs where a fee is payable to a sports coach or company running the group;
- the cost of day trips other than those set out in section 1 above;
- individual or group music tuition.

8. Cost of Optional Extras

The Principal will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. 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;
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra;
- participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school/academy will seek the agreement of parents/carers before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. The school/academy has the right to

cancel an activity or visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are made.

9. Voluntary Contributions

- There will be some trips or activities which the school/academy cannot charge for but which the school/academy considers would be beneficial to the students. In this case the school/academy may ask for voluntary contributions. No pupil/student will be excluded from the activity or treated differently because they do not make a contribution. If voluntary contributions are not sufficient then it may be that the planned activity or trip cannot go ahead.
- There is no obligation for a parent to make any contribution and the school/academy will in no way pressure parents/carers to make a contribution.

10. Music Tuition

- Charges for music tuition will be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupils/students). The school/academy may charge for teaching requested by parents/carers and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil/student or groups of any appropriate size to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument but will not exceed the cost of the provision.
- The school/academy will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. [This includes instruments, music books and exam fees or for education provided to a class of students in Key Stage 2, which follows the DfE's policy "Instrumental and Vocal Tuition at KS2"]

11. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils/students, the school/academy will offer some activities and visits at a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances. Families who need assistance with charges must first speak to the Principal who will authorise any remissions. Any discussions or decisions made will be confidential. The circumstances in which charges will be waived are as follows:

- The full cost of board and lodging on residential visits outside school time which are covered by the following criteria:
 - where the purpose is to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
 - where the purpose is to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum imposed by Section 88 of the Education Act 2002.
 - A proportion of the costs associated with individual tuition of the playing of a musical instrument, whether in or out of academy hours

Criteria for qualification for remission are given to parents/carers in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
- Income related employment and support allowance; and
- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances.

12. General Remission

The cost of individual instrumental music tuition will also be remitted in all cases where the individual tuition is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. There may be occasions where two or three students receive additional music lessons together at a reduced cost.

13. Academy minibuses or transport provided by the Local Authority

Any transport provided in school hours by the Trust to carry particular pupils/students between parts of the school premise, other schools/academies within the Trust and any other place where education is to be provided by the Trust will be provided free of charge. However, if a pupil/student makes use of transport not provided by the Trust to travel directly from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by the Trust, then parents/carers may be asked to meet the cost of such travel. An example of this would be travel direct from home to work experience and vice versa.

14. Charging in kind

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as craft or food technology, must be budgeted for and borne by the Trust. Parents/carers who are willing to contribute in cash or kind can however be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis.

The school/academy may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents/carers have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product, if there is one. The school/academy should obtain written confirmation from parents/carers that they wish to supply or pay for materials on this basis.

Pupils/students must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents/carers. It should be recognised that much of the practical work in craft or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a "finished product", however this is an essential part of the learning process.

15. Activities run by a third party

The Act permits an organisation other than the Challenge & Community Committee to levy a charge directly on parents/carers for activities organised in school/academy hours by a non-school organisation. The school/academy will not be involved in collection of charges on behalf of the third party organisation.

Where pupils/students are granted leave of absence to attend these activities it would be for parents/carers and any staff members similarly released to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements made by the third party to secure the safety and welfare of the children.

16. Looked After Children

No charge may be made for individual music tuition provided in school hours in respect of a pupil/student who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

17. Further assistance

Where possible, the school/academy will assist parents/carers by:

- publishing a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents/carers can plan ahead;
- establishing a system for parents/carers to pay in instalments;

- arranging a system so that parents/carers can pay in instalments beyond the date of a trip, where such trip is organised at short notice;
- avoiding offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis as the school/academy recognises that this potentially discriminates against pupils/students from families on lower incomes.

18. Refunds

If the school/academy has overcharged or there are any amendments to the cost of a trip/event, the school/academy will reimburse parents/carers. Parents/carers will be informed from the out-set in writing if any deposits paid for extra-curricular school trips are non-refundable.

19. Review

The CEO will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving a [termly] financial report from the Director of Finance on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded and the source of those subsidies. The CEO will evaluate the impact of the extended services on those pupils/students most in need of additional support.