

## Schools Charging and Remission Policy

### 1. Introduction

Section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities to which Academies must adhere.

This charging and remissions policy for The Children of Success Schools Trust has been reviewed in conjunction with the updated October 2014 DfE departmental advice for charging for school activities.

### 2. Philosophy

We believe that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make a valuable contribution towards pupils' education. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

We believe that all our pupils 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 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 taking full advantage of the opportunities.

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 apply.

#### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

**The Board of Trustees – are responsible for approving the charging and remissions policy and responsibility for monitoring the implementation.**

**The Head of School is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remission policy and that it is being applied consistently.**

**Staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently and notifying the Head of School of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about and where they are not certain if the policy applies.**

### 3. Where Charges cannot be made include the following:

#### Education

- any part of the admission application process.
- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of 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; and
- 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 duty to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Trust 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.

### **4. Voluntary contributions**

The Schools of the Trust may ask parents for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities such as school trips.

It will be made clear to parents at the outset if an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.

The Head of School will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Parents will not be pressurised in to making contributions (e.g. by the use of colour coded letters or direct debit/standing order mandates).

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay and they will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

The schools of the Trust will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

### **5. Charges may apply for the following items:**

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras – see section below
- music and vocal tuition – see section below
- certain early years provision costs – see section below
- community facilities.

#### **5.1 Optional extras**

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges which the School/Trust may charge. Charges will be advised in advance and parental agreement sought for these charges.

Charges will not exceed the cost of providing the service.

Examples of optional extras

- ❖ Breakfast Club
- ❖ School clubs and after-school activities that are not part of delivering the national curriculum
- ❖ Cost of board and lodging for school residential visits.

Parents will be advised in advance of the charges applicable to the optional extra, so they can decide if they wish their child to participate.

### **5.1.1 Residential visits – Board and lodging remission**

When parents are informed about a forthcoming visit if parents can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits they will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- 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 guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

### **5.1.2 Remission of other optional extras**

Parents may make a request to the Head of School for relief of charges for any other optional extra and this will be considered based on the circumstances.

## **5.2 Music and vocal tuition**

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition.

They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case. Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that 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 that provides the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

## **5.3 Early year's provision**

The Schools may make charges for snacks provided and will also charge for nappies for two years olds where they have not been provided by the parents.

For children in the nursery the Trust currently funds 15 hours in addition to the 15 hours provided as part of the local authority funded free allocation for 3-4 year olds. There could a point where this is no longer viable and is impacting the education of school age children and charges for extra hours may become applicable. Parents will be informed prior to the point of accepting a nursery place at the school if charges for hours beyond 15 per week will be made. Parents would be able to accept the place for just 15 hours per week without incurring any costs.