

Ormiston Forge Academy

Charging and Remissions Policy

January 2023



Approved by the Governors Finance and General Purposes Committee under powers delegated by the Governing Body:

Review period: January 2025

Introduction

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities. It is the right of every student to receive free Academy education and activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be made available to all students regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.

Whilst recognising that legislation provides Academies with the discretion to charge for optional extras provided wholly or mainly out of Academy hours and to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Academy or in support of any activity organised by the Academy, whether during or outside Academy hours, the Academy will always take particular account of students whose families are suffering financial hardship. Decisions will be made on educational grounds and the Academy will endeavour to ensure that any activities which are deemed to take place mainly or wholly in Academy hours do not disrupt students' education.

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents. The policy has been updated to reflect the latest guidance on charging for school activities issued by the Department for Education in May 2018.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the Academy are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Principal for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the Principal and Governing Body.

Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the Academy recognise that the legislation prohibits charges for the following:

- Education provided during Academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education;
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education;

- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the Academy;
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the Academy;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during Academy hours;
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education;
- Transporting registered students to or from the Academy premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for students to be educated;
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he/she has been prepared for that examination at the Academy;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from Academy accompanying students on a residential trip

Publication of Information

A summary of this policy will be included in the Academy Prospectus which will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents.

Parents on low incomes or in receipt of benefits will be informed of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

Charges

- **Practical Subjects**

Where parents have indicated in writing that they wish to own a finished product, the Academy may make a charge. The charge shall not exceed the cost of the materials used by the student.

- **Transport**

Where a student travels directly from home to a place of work experience and vice versa, parents can be asked to meet the cost of such travel, except that no charge should be made in respect of students whose families are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit. Where

activities of this sort are organised by an Academy, the Academy will be expected to meet the travelling costs of these students.

- **Optional Extras**

A charge may be made for optional extras provided wholly or mainly outside Academy hours except where such activities are provided: -

- (i) To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed public examination.
- (ii) Specifically, to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum.
- (iii) Specifically, to fulfil statutory duties relating to Religious Education.

Participation in optional extras will be on the basis of parental choice and prior confirmation in writing is required from the parents that they are willing to pay charges. The charge per head cannot exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra, divided equally by the number of participating students. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Optional extras may include elements for: -

- (a) - student's travel costs.
- (b) - student's board and lodging costs.
- (c) - entrance fees to museums, castle, theatres etc.
- (d) - insurance costs.

Board and lodging costs are covered under a separate heading.

- **Board and Lodging – Residential Visits**

A charge may be made for board and lodging in connection with residential activities. The charge cannot exceed the actual cost of providing board and lodging and prior written confirmation from the parent is required that he/she is willing to pay the charge.

Where a residential activity is deemed to take place in Academy hours or take place outside Academy hours, no charge for board and lodging can be made in respect of pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income Support / Universal Credit. Where such activities are

organised by the Academy, the Academy shall bear the cost of board and lodging for these pupils.

- **Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument**

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.

Whilst group tuition remains free, the Academy reserves the right to make a charge for individual musical instrumental tuition, whether inside or outside Academy hours. Prior written confirmation must be obtained by the Academy from the parents that they are willing to pay the charge. The charge could include the cost of the teacher (based on a pro-rata calculation of his salary) and, where appropriate, the cost of sheet music and hire and insurance of the instrument.

No charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority.

- **Public Examinations**

Where a student has not been prepared for a public examination by an Academy (including GCSE resits) but has been allowed by the Academy to sit the examination at the Academy as an examination centre, the Academy may make a charge for the examination entry fee. Prior written confirmation from the parent is required that he/she is willing to pay the charge. Where an Academy prepares a student for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, even outside Academy hours, a charge should not be made for teaching costs or for the examination entry fee.

Where a student fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which he has been entered and a fee paid, the Academy may recover the fee from the parents regardless of whether the examination is prescribed.

- **Breakages**

Parents can be asked to pay for the cost of replacing or repairing damages, where this is a result of students' behaviour.

- **Private Use of Academy Facilities.**

Governors delegate the responsibility for determining charges for the private use of Academy facilities by members of staff, for example, private telephone calls, reprographics and postages to the Principal.