



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust

Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive

Charging and Remissions Policy

Policy Statement

Introduction

This statement sets out the legal framework, the definitions and our policy expectations.

The L.E.A.D. Academy Trust requires this policy to be implemented by all its member academies.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly when schools may or may not make a charge, and that they must inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

The L.E.A.D. Academy Trust defines the policy expectation, but the responsibility for implementation of the policy rests with the Headteacher of each academy.

Legal Framework

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

Sections 451 and 454 of the Education Act 1996 prohibits schools from charging for education and the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment (including tablets) during school hours. However, there is no prohibition of asking parents/carers to make financial contributions. There is a specific exception in the legislation which enables schools to charge for materials where the parent/carer wishes the pupil to own the materials.

Guidance from the Department of Education is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365929/charging_for_school_activities_-_October_2014.pdf

Paragraph 1.9(n) of the 'Schools Admission Code 2012' rules out requests from admission authorities for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process.

Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 sets out the circumstances in which a charge can be made.

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20081203030132/opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/uksi_20072239_en_1

Section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989 states no charge can be made for music tuition for looked-after children.

Since April 2003, the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with Free School Meals eligibility criteria.

Charging and Remissions Policy

No charge is made for:

- education within school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) [School hours do not include the midday break.]
- an admission application
- 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 during school hours, for pupils learning individually or in groups of two or more, which is part of the National Curriculum or at KS2 to help pupils decide whether they wish to receive further tuition in singing or playing any musical instrument (and if so which instrument).

A charge can be made for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent/carers wishes him/her to own them
- 'Optional extras': transport (other than to and from school); board and lodging on a residential visit; extended day services e.g. breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea, snacks, school disco, film nights, Yr 6 Prom, sleepover and some supervised homework sessions. Parental agreement (to the child's participation and to paying the charges) is therefore a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.
- Music and vocal tuition in limited circumstances i.e. when the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parent/carers or is in addition to that offered as part of the school's core curriculum.
- Certain Early Years provision - 'Optional extras': extended day services e.g. breakfast club or after-school club. Parental agreement (to the child's participation and to paying the charges) is therefore a pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.
- Community facilities
- Costs of repairing damage to property etc caused by children or parents or replacing items stolen by children or parents.

Voluntary Contributions

On occasion, schools may request voluntary contributions from parents to support the delivery of enhanced provision beyond the core legal entitlement.

Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if an activity cannot take place without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher must make this clear to parents. The Headteacher must also make it clear that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, the school will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity the school organises for the pupil if the activity:

- forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or fulfils statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or religious education, irrespective of whether the activity takes place within or outside school hours.

Any other remission arrangements for a particular activity or pupil will be entirely at the discretion of the school. Any subsidy provided by the school will be met from the funds at its disposal.

Parents/carers will be made aware from the outset of any possible cancellation of the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.