TOWERS SCHOOL

AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Last Reviewed: Mar 2026
Next Review: Mar 2027
SLT Responsibility: Finance Director
Approved By: Finance, Audit & Risk Committee

The Towers School & Sixth Form Centre

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY – changes from previous version

Audit Log		
Section of policy	**Update**	**Date**
All	*None*	Mar 26

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Charging & Remissions Policy

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the academy will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge.

The policy has been informed by DfE guidance: Charging for School Activities.

Responsibilities

The Principal will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee will review the policy annually.

Policy statement

During the academy day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the academy and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge.

There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination unless:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at this academy.
- the examination is not on the set list but we arrange for the pupil to take it
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or the academy originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

From time to time we may invite a non-academy based organisation such as a visiting drama group or storyteller to arrange an activity during the academy day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents/carers direct.

Voluntary Contributions

The academy or governing body can ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the academy or any academy activity, including the sale of art or technology items that the pupils have produced. Certain activities, academy trips etc may be funded/part-funded through voluntary contributions. However, if the activity cannot be fully funded without voluntary contributions and not enough voluntary contributions are made, the activity/trip will be cancelled.

There is no obligation to parents/carers to make any contribution. The child will not be excluded from any activity due to his or her parents/guardian/carer either unable or unwilling to pay.

Education partly during the academy day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the academy day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the academy day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal academy day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Residential Activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits (see below).

Other charges will be made to cover costs when the time taken up for the activity falls wholly or mainly outside of academy hours. In such cases parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

Optional activities outside of the academy day

We may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the academy day, for example a theatre visit. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus. Where we wish to charge we will tell parents/carers in advance. Where specific funding has been received to support particular activities we will subsidise the charge to the extent permitted by the funding.

- **Optional Extras**

- Charges will be made for some activities known as “optional extras” which are activities wholly or mainly outside academy hours. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. Optional extras are:

* Education provided outside of academy time that is not:

  a. Part of the National curriculum;

  b. Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy; or

  c. Part of religious education.

* Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the academy;

* Transport that is other than that required to take the pupil to academy or to other premises where the academy /governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and

* Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In 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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and

* 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.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not include a subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If the resultant cost of the optional extra activity is less than the charges made then appropriate refunds for the difference will be issued to those pupils who have already paid.

A charge will not be added for the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental/guardian/carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental/guardian/carer agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. Prior to the event being committed to, parental/guardian/carer agreement will also be sought to any terms regarding non refundable instalments or amounts payable in the event of withdrawal from the activity.

Minibus

If the academy has a permit issued by the LA under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985 *o*nly pupils of the academy, academy staff or parents/carers may be charged for travel in the minibus. Charges made will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the academy.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the academy day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating.

Remissions

There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won’t. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits (see below).

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the academy and/or charges to parents/carers.

Eligible benefits

Universal Credit (as appropriate)
Income Support
Income Based Job Seekers 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 and their annual income does not exceed the threshold published by the DfES
Guaranteed element of Pension Credit
Income related Employment and Support Allowance