



## Charging and Remissions Policy

**Date of Policy:** Autumn 2017

**Review:** Summer 2019

### INTRODUCTION

This policy has been agreed by STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees and applies to all member Academies.

#### **1. Admissions**

There is no charge for admissions.

#### **2. School meals**

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount decided by the Academy Trust.

#### **3. Public examinations**

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the Academy's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the Academy. However, if the pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the Academy may recover the fee incurred from that pupil's parents. This includes re-sits.

#### **4. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)**

In general, and subject to the exceptions set out below, there is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music tuition (section 6).

There is no charge for transport during school hours to Academy-organised activities.

In respect of activities that take place during school hours, we may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge);
- music or vocal tuition (section 6).

Note that there is a distinction between the cost of activities being undertaken, and the cost of board and/or lodging (which is covered in section 8).

## 5. Activities that take place outside of school hours

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum,
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the Academy
- part of the Academy's basic curriculum for religious education.

We will not make any charge for organised sports matches against other schools.

Note that there is a distinction between the cost of activities being undertaken, and the cost of board and/or lodging (which is covered in section 8).

## 6. Optional extras

The Academy will charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

Education or activities provided outside of school time that are not:

- part of the National Curriculum;
- part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the Academy;
- part of religious education.

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

**Note:** *If you charge for other activities that take place outside of school hours, you should list them here.*

### The cost of optional extras

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the Headteacher on the recommendation of the SGB. The charges, when determined, will be published on the Academy's website and appended to this policy.

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. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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 Academy will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## **7. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site**

There are complicated formulae for calculating whether an activity, trip or residential visit which takes place partly during and partly outside school hours will be deemed to take place during or outside school hours for charging purposes. This will be made clear to parents in any letter regarding an activity.

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity for the purposes of determining whether the activity takes place during school hours.

## **8. Board and Lodging**

Our Academy will charge for:

- **Board and lodging**  
When any visit has been organised by the Academy where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost (see section 12 for more guidance on remissions).
- **Travel**  
Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours and does not fall within section 5 of this policy. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil.

## **10. Damage to property and breakages**

Where Academy property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the Academy may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the Academy has been charged, the Academy may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and dependent on the situation.

## **11. Remissions and concessions**

There is a statutory remission scheme for compulsory charges made for board and lodging on residential visits which either take place during school hours, or are provided as part of the national curriculum, the syllabus for a prescribed examination, or statutory religious education. Where the remission scheme applies, the school will fund the board and lodging element of those residential visits for eligible students.

Parent will be eligible for statutory remission if they are in receipt of any of the following:

- ☐ Income Support

- ☒ Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- ☒ Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- ☒ Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- ☒ Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- ☒ Income related employment and support allowance
- ☒ Universal Credit (in prescribed circumstances).

Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

[In addition to the statutory remission scheme, the Academy operates a discretionary support fund covering all activities for which compulsory charges are made. Eligibility for a Support Fund grant mirrors eligibility for statutory remission, as outlined above. The school will make it clear in the letter to parents notifying them of the activity, trip or visit and the costs involved whether a Support Fund grant may be available to assist eligible parents with some or all of the costs involved and, if so, what the application deadline is.

The Support Fund is limited and, accordingly, there is no automatic right to full or partial remissions of costs, as there is with statutory remission. Once the application deadline has been reached, the Strategic Governing Body and Headteacher will consider all applications and make decisions fairly and consistently having regard to the number of applications received and the level of funding available.

Complete confidentiality will be observed at all times.]

## **12. Voluntary contributions**

The Academy Trust may ask for voluntary contributions to the Academy for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.

In any case where an activity for which the Academy is not able to charge cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the Academy. It will also be made clear that the activity may be cancelled if sufficient voluntary contributions are not received. Where the amount requested in respect of an activity or trip consists of a combination of compulsory charges and voluntary payments, this will be made clear.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the Academy will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

## **13. Inability or unwillingness to pay**

Applegarth Academy is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to (or could not) make the voluntary contribution will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

## 14. Refunds

A refund of a compulsory charge or voluntary payment received will be made only where the following circumstances apply:

- ☐ The activity, trip or visit was cancelled due to circumstances beyond the control of the student and/or his parents; or
- The School made a decision that the student will not take part in an activity, trip or visit for any reason. Where this is as a result of the student's behaviour, the refund will be reduced by the amount of any costs already incurred by the school.

Where a student/parent has decided to pull out of an activity, trip or visit, the school will be under no obligation to refund any compulsory charge or voluntary payment received.