



ACORN FREE SCHOOL

Charging and Remissions Policy

Date of Policy: March 2017
Date of Review:

Charging and Remissions Policy

AIM

We believe that *all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from Acorn Free School activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions 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.*

This policy has been formulated in accordance with the Department for Education guidance on 'Charging for School Activities.' This policy is intended to set out any potential charges to parents/carers and is not intended for partner schools/Academies and Local Authorities who commission places at the Acorn Free School. Charges for commissioned placements at the Acorn Free School will be agreed by the Governing Body annually and published on the website and in the school prospectus

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for implementation

1. Prohibition of Charges

The Governing Body of the School recognise that legislation prohibits charges to parents for the following:

- 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 School 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.
- Tuition for pupils 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place 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.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Governing Body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

2. School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount for menu items as published at the point of sale .

3. Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school will ordinarily meet the costs of the visit. In exceptional circumstances, the school may invite parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If sufficient voluntary contributions are not received then the activity may have to be cancelled. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child will still be able to participate fully in the trip or activity

4. Residential activities

Our school will not charge for:

- 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, 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

- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours
- residential activities that take place during school hours.

Voluntary Contributions may in exceptional circumstances be sought from parents to contribute towards the cost of residential trips and activities and if sufficient voluntary contributions are not forthcoming then the trip or activity may be cancelled. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child will still be able to participate fully in the trip or activity

5. Music tuition

Acorn School follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule. The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument. The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

6. Transport

Acorn School currently supplies subsidised transport direct to partner schools. Whilst partner schools may be charged a small cost towards transport, parents and carers are not charged for any transport to and from the Acorn Free School.

7. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by an individual the school 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 school has been charged, the school 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.

8. Remissions and concessions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- 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

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially. The headteacher and chair of governors will authorise the remission of charges. The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher.

12. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Acorn School 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 pay. 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 make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.