



Olive Academies

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Academies to note: This is an OA policy which should not be modified.	

Introduction

Olive Academies (OA) recognises the valuable contribution which a wide range of activities, including educational visits and residential experiences, can make towards a student's personal and social education.

OA aims to encourage and promote such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of each academy and also as additional optional activities.

In the interest of promoting a broad and balanced curriculum, it is current practice to make no charges for any activity provided for students attending an OA academy. However, OA reserve the right to request contributions from parents for those activities deemed to be optional extras, as identified in the following sections.

1. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge that would normally be payable

3. Roles and responsibilities

The **trustees** of Olive Academies have overall responsibility for overseeing charging and remission procedures but has delegated this to OA central leaders who are responsible for approval and monitoring implementation.

The **headteacher** within each academy is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remission policy and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

4. Possible charges

- The board and lodging element of residential activities deemed to take place within school hours e.g. visits by children.
- The cost of purchase or hire of instruments, materials, equipment or clothing for activities, which take place outside school hours and which are purely voluntary and optional. Current legislation allows pupils to be charged for instrumental music tuition so long as a teaching group does not

exceed four pupils. A charge may not be levied where the tuition is provided as part of a recognised external examination course with the school's curriculum.

- Materials if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own any finished product produced in school e.g. design technology products.
- Activities outside school hours: the full cost to each pupil of activities taking place outside school hours and deemed to be optional extras.
- Charging in kind: the cost of materials and ingredients (or the provision of them by parents) for cookery and craftwork, if the parents have indicated that they wish to own the finished product in advance.

5. Examination Fees

Where a pupil has not been prepared for a public examination by the academy or where the academy has provided no further preparation for a re-sit, the academy may make a charge for the cost of entering the pupil for the examination if previously agreed by the parents.

If a pupil fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the academy has paid (or is liable to pay), an entry fee then the academy may recover the fee from the parent; individual circumstances would be taken into consideration.

6. Damage to property and equipment, and replacement of uniform

The cost of repairing damage and replacing equipment (lost, defaced or damaged) remains the responsibility of the parents/guardians when this damage or loss is the result of their child's behaviour or negligence. We will not hesitate to charge students and their families for the cost of repairing academy property and items in cases of deliberate damage.

Should there be a concern about repeated requests for replacement of uniform, for example ties being deliberately ruined, OA reserves the right to charge parents/guardians for the cost of replacement.

7. General

The academy may from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge can be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the academy from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

8. Voluntary contributions

The Education Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific visit and/or activity either inside or outside of school time. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents will be told the amount in advance. The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, the visit or activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

To comply with DfE guidelines, the following paragraph will be included in all trip letters, indicating that the payments may be voluntary rather than compulsory and that funding may be available in certain circumstances.

“All pupils are invited to take part in our trips; payment for the trip should not be a barrier. There is no obligation to make a contribution and no child would ever be excluded from an activity such as a sports trip or sports activity.”

9. Remissions

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of:

- Universal credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family’s income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family’s income (as assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax credit)

OA will remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that it organises for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours or where it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the National Curriculum.

OA may from time to time decide to remit all or part of the cost of activities involving particular students. This will be at the headteacher’s discretion. In other circumstances, there may be cases of family hardship which makes it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made.

When arranging a chargeable activity OA will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remittance of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remittance will be made by the headteacher in consultation. All parents however, will have the right of appeal to the Academy Advisory Board (AAB), normally represented by the Chair.

The academy will sometimes be unable to help in terms of financial support for families in financial hardship. In these circumstances the academy may apply to a local charity on behalf of the family if requested to do so.

10. Withdrawal

When a pupil either withdraws or is withdrawn by the academy from a trip, for whatever reason, in both cases the academy will do its best to:

- a. find a replacement
- b. claim any lost deposits through the appropriate insurance policy

When it is not possible to refund deposits through either of the options listed above then the academy will adopt the following procedures:

- The academy will, in the first instance try to cancel the place and obtain a full refund. If this is not possible then the academy may be forced to pass on the sliding charges imposed by the travel firm.
- Charges for lost deposits will only be passed on to parents if absolutely necessary i.e. if the travel company demand the deposit and the academy’s insurance does not cover the loss, or if another pupil cannot “step in”. However, circumstances such as these and others will be considered and the outcome will be at the academy’s discretion.

When a pupil is sent home from an academy trip that has already commenced, due to misbehaviour, the academy will not refund any monies paid by the parents/guardians of the pupil in respect of that trip. In cases where a pupil is barred from participating in an academy trip in respect of which payment has been made in full or in part, but which has not yet commenced, the academy may, at the headteacher's discretion, make a part refund to the parents/guardians, having deducted administrative costs, in the event that it is possible to obtain a refund from the provider or travel firm, or to find another pupil who wishes to take up the vacant place on the trip.

11. Outside lettings

The academy reserves the right to make a charge in respect of community activities to enable organisations to continue to use appropriate parts of the site facilities such that the academy finances are not adversely affected. Please refer to OA's lettings policy for more details on this.

12. Monitoring and review

OA central leaders will review this policy on an annual basis to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate for our academies.