EBOR ACADEMY TRUST

Policy Number

14a

Charges, Remissions & Debt Management policy

Approved By: Ebor Academy Trust Finance Committee

Approval Date: February 2022

Review Period: Annually

Review Date: February 2023

Author: *Andrew Robinson, Finance Director*
Date Created/updated: *January 2022*
Version Number: *3*

Contents:

1.	Aims of the Policy	2
2.	Background to the Policy	2
3.	Items for which no charges will be made	2
4.	Items for which charges will be made	3
5.	Hire of Academy facilities	5
6.	Remissions	5
	Application Form for the Remission of Charges	7
7.	Debt Management Policy	8

1. Aims of the Policy

The Ebor Academy Trust believes that all our pupils/students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independently of their parents/carers 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 otherwise prevent some pupils/students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. Background to the Policy

Sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act (1996) requires all Academies to have a policy on charging and remissions for activities. This legislation may be viewed at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/ukpga_19960056_en_28

3. Items for which no charges will be made

3.1. Education provided during Academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).

3.2. Education provided outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education.

3.3. Tuition for pupils/students 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/student is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education.

3.4. Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil/student has been prepared for it at the Academy.

3.5. Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil/student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the Academy.

3.6. Transporting registered pupils/students

a. to or from the Academy premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

b. to other premises where the Board of Trustees or local education authority has arranged for pupils/students to be educated;

c. to enable them to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the Academy.

4. Items for which charges will be made

4.1. Within Academy Hours

4.1.1. Educational visits and activities – voluntary contributions

When organising educational visits or activities, which enrich the curriculum and the experience of pupils/students, the Academy invites the parent/carer to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the visit or activity. Although not an exhaustive list; these activities may include visits to museums, galleries and the theatre as well as sporting activities.

If the Academy does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions we may need to cancel the visit or activity. When a visit or activity does go ahead it may include pupils/students whose parents/carers have not paid any contribution. We may not, by law, exclude these pupils/students and indeed would not wish to treat them differently from others.

4.1.2 Swimming

The costs of providing swimming tuition in any of our Academy's pools will currently be met by the Academy. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

4.1.3 Music

All pupils/students study music as part of the normal Academy curriculum for which no charge is made. In addition, several music groups run during the Academy day, at lunchtime or after school for which no charge is made (e.g. recorder groups, Choir). The Trustees do, however, reserve the right to charge for these activities as "optional extras" if they occur outside Academy hours and are not part of the National Curriculum.

Peripatetic music teachers teach individual or group lessons for which a charge is made. There is some remission of fees for those families in receipt of certain state benefits. Information about additional music tuition is available from the Academy office.

4.1.4 Craft/Technology Activities

All pupils/students have the opportunity within the Academy curriculum of taking part in activities such as craft and technology. The Board of Trustees reserve the right to charge for ingredients and materials at cost when they are not provided by the parents/carers.

4.1.5 Cook School (Primary Schools)

Children will be given the opportunity to take part in a Cook School session during the Academy year. Parents/carers will be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of this activity. When Cook School takes place it may include pupils/students whose parents/carers have not paid any contribution. We may not, by law, exclude these pupils/students and indeed would not wish to treat them differently from others.

4.2. Not Within Academy Hours

4.2.1 Residential Visits

Charges will be made for the cost of the visit (Board and lodging, travel costs, entrance fees etc.). Families are invited to pay in instalments over several months or in one single payment. Any parent/carer who refuses or is unable to meet the charge should not expect their child to be included. Any parent/carer unable to meet the cost is invited to apply for a remission, please refer to section 6.

4.2.2 Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities known as "Optional Extras". These may include-

a. extra curricular activities
b. any equipment and/or staffing in relation to extra curricular activities
c. Breakfast, After School and Holiday clubs

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils/students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. It will not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other pupil/student. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Charges made by external providers of activities are the responsibility of those providers and consequently not covered by this Policy.

4.3. Other Charges

4.3.1 Additional Text Books and Study Materials

From time to time recommendations may be made regarding additional text books, equipment and study materials which could enhance a pupil's learning. In these circumstances it is the parents/carers choice to purchase and therefore the charge will be met in full by the parent/carer. Any such charge will be equal to the cost price of the item concerned to the Academy.

4.3.2 Lost or Damaged Items of Academy Property

Parents/carers may be asked to make a contribution towards replacing damaged Academy property caused wilfully or negligently by their child/ren. This may include window breakage and removal of graffiti. A charge to cover the cost of replacement may also be made for lost or damaged items of Academy property, including library books/text books/chromebooks.

4.3.3 Academy Uniform

The Ebor Academy Trust uses a clothing supplier who provides quality school wear at affordable prices. In exceptional circumstances the LA has discretionary power to provide assistance towards the purchase cost.

4.3.4 Academy Meals

Parents/carers whose child takes a lunchtime meal must pay the relevant cost stated by the Board of Trustees. Pupils/students may be eligible for free school meals. Application forms are available from the Academy office, on the website or from the relevant council website or office.

4.3.5 Public Examinations

A charge will be made for examination entry fee/s if the registered pupil/student:

a. has not been prepared for examination at the Academy, or
b. fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any examination for which the Academy has already paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

4.3.6 Transport to and from school

The school may organise transport for pupils who are not eligible for free transport to and from school by the local authority. In these circumstances it is the parents/carers choice to purchase and therefore the charge will be met in full by the parent/carer. Any such charge will be equal to the cost price to the Academy.

5. Hire of Academy facilities

Trustees wish to encourage community use of the Academy's facilities when they are not required for Academy use. Details of the facilities available, the Terms and Conditions of Hire and the scale of Charges may be found in the Academy's Hire of Facilities (Lettings) policy.

6. Remissions

Ebor Academy Trust believes that all pupils/students should have equal opportunities to benefit from Academy activities and visits both curricular and extra curricular, independently of their parents/carers financial means. To that end the Board of Trustees have agreed in circumstances of family hardship they will invite parents/carers to apply, in confidence, for remission of charges in part or in full. Pupils/students may be eligible for a remission of charge if their parent/carer is in receipt of at least one of the following:-

a. Income Support
b. Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
c. Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
d. Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, that does not exceed £16,190 from 6 April 2010)
e. The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
f. An Income-related employment and support allowance.
g. Universal credit – all applications post 1st April 2018 must have household income of less than £7400 per year.

In cases where the specific circumstances, often temporary, of a particular family's hardship fall outside these criteria; the Finance Director may use their discretion to remit charges in part or in full.

If a parent/carer wishes to apply for a remission of charge a form is available from the Academy office. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Finance Director.

In the event a remission of charge is declined parents/carers have the right to appeal in writing to the Chair of Trustees whose decision will be final.

Application Form for the Remission of Charges

To apply for a remission of a charge a parent/carer should complete this form with the following information.

Family name of Parent/Carer				Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/	
Forename/s			Relationship to pupil/student		
Full Postal Address					
Postcode		Phone No.		Mobile No.	

Please give details below of each dependant child who is in full-time attendance at the Academy for whom you wish to apply for remission

Full Names of Child/ren	M/F	Date/s of birth	Class/es

Name of Activity		Date of Activity	
Please state the reason(s) why you are requesting remission:			

I wish to apply for remission of charges for the educational activity detailed above

Signature of Applicant …… Date …….

Please return the completed form to the Academy office in an envelope addressed to the Finance Director and marked confidential.

For Academy use only

Remission Approved	Yes / No	Reason
Signed by		
Position		

Date		

Ebor Academy Trust Debt Management Policy

7. **Debt Management Policy**

Rationale
The Academy will make every effort to regain monies owing for goods and services provided through the Academy.

Procedure
7.1 Voluntary Contributions

a. The Academy may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of any activity out of school which takes place during academy hours.

Pupils/students of parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

7.2 Academy Meals/ After School Club/ Breakfast Club/Nursery
Parents/ Carers will be charged for the care of children through the Academy After School Club, Breakfast Club, for lunchtime meals and for unfunded Nursery hours.
The Academy will carry out the following procedure to reclaim monies owing resulting from the provision through the After School Club, Breakfast Club and the purchase of lunchtime meals:

a. A gentle reminder letter will be sent to parents/carers to encourage them to settle their account.
b. Letter 1 - A letter will be sent to parents/carers if their account falls into arrears electronically via ParentPay.
c. Letter 2 - A reminder letter will be sent to parents/carers if their account remains in arrears.
d. Letter 3 - A strong letter urging parents/carers to bring their account into credit would be sent to parents/carers.
e. Final Letter will be sent to parents/carers informing them that the Academy will consider legal action to reclaim the funds.

7.3 Lettings
Persons will be charged for hire of the facilities in accordance with the Lettings Policy.
The Hirer will be invoiced on a regular basis for the Hire of the facilities. The Academy will carry out the following procedure to reclaim monies owing from the hire of the facilities:

a. Invoice will be issued stating that payment is due within 14 days from the date of the invoice.
b. If payment is not received within this time, a reminder letter/ email will be issued. The reminder will state that if payment is not received within 14 days a meeting may be arranged to formally review the contract with the possibility of a termination of the contract.
c. Formally review the contract.
d. The Academy will consider legal action to reclaim any outstanding funds following termination of the contract.

7.4 Residential Trips

a. The Academy charges for the cost of board and lodging during residential trips.
b. Where the trips takes place wholly, or mainly, during academy hours children whose parents/carers are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school meal entitlement, will also be entitled to the remission of these charges:

i. Income Support;
ii. Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
iii. Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
iv. Child Tax Credit provided the parents/carers is not entitled to Working Tax Credit

In cases where remissions are not appropriate and the parents/carers chooses not to pay then the pupil/student will be excluded from the trip.

7.5 Instrumental Music Lessons
A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition. The contract is between the provider and the pupil/student; the Academy will not become involved in the recovery of any debts resulting from the contract. Any monies paid to the academy for these services will be passed to the provider in full.

7.6 Damage/Loss of Property
Any damage to or loss of the Academy Trusts property caused by a pupil or staff member which is deemed to be malicious or careless in nature will be invoiced to the parents of the pupil or the staff member in question.
If it was possible to claim on the Academy Trusts insurance policies for this damage/item the prevailing excess on the insurance policy will be invoiced instead.

7.7 Legal Action
All debt which is uncollectable and reaches the legal stage must be declared to the Finance Director. A decision will be made by the Finance Director to proceed with legal action or write off the debt if legal action is uneconomical.