



Charging & Remissions Policy

This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees with reference to the academy's Equality Policy. The aims of the Equality Policy are to ensure that Plume Academy meets the needs of all, taking account of gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this academy we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

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1. Summary

The law on charging in connection with education in schools and academies is set out in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. This policy adheres to the Act and is based on a supplementary document "Charging for School Activities" that was issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in May 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

Trustees are required to determine and keep under review a policy in respect of charging and remission arrangements. No charge may be made by the Board of Trustees unless it has drawn up a statement of its policy.

2. Charging

Exceptions for the above approved by Board of Trustees are as follows:

2.1 Musical Instrument Tuition within School Hours

Individual and group tuition in playing a musical instrument will be charged for provided that it is not part of the National Curriculum. Charges will be in accordance with the scale as approved from time to time by the Local Authority (LA).

2.2 'Finished Products'

The Board of Trustees reserve the right to charge for ingredients/materials/equipment (in kind) to cover the cost if the parents/carers have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials and ingredients for all areas of Technology and Art.

2.3 Public Examinations

The following charges will be passed onto parents/carers:

- (i) the charge made by an examining board where a parent/carer asks for an examination result to be re-scrutinised
- (ii) the cost of entering the student for an examination where the Board of Trustees agrees to enter a student for a prescribed public examination for which he or she has not been prepared by the academy
- (iii) the examination fee where a student, with parental agreement, is entered for a public examination which is not prescribed by the Secretary of State and which is not on the Authority's approved list for payment of fees
- (iv) the cost of the examination fee where a student does not attend the examination without good reason

- (v) the examination fee of any re-sit where a student/parent/carer wishes the student to re-sit an examination. However, if the student improves their grade the academy will refund the money to the student/parent/carer.

Where a student fails, without good reason, to complete the examination requirements for any public examination for which the Board of Trustees has paid, or is liable to pay a fee, then the fee will be recoverable from the parents/carers.

2.4 Education Partly during School Hours

Charges will be made for visits that occupy more than 50% of the time out of normal school hours. This includes travelling time.

Where more than 50% of the visit takes place during school hours, no charge will be made. If residential accommodation is involved a charge will be made for that accommodation.

2.5 Application of 50% Rule

When the 50% rule is applied to residential visits, calculations are based on 'sessions'. Sessions are defined as from 0.00 to 12.00 and 12.00 to 24.00. If the number of sessions outside school hours exceeds the number of sessions inside school hours, charges can be made e.g. a visit taking place from a Friday (if it is a full school day) through to Sunday evening, would involve two sessions in school hours and four out of school hours. Charges can therefore be made.

2.6 Charging for Visits and Activities (including in-house activities)

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges may be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for students whose parents/carers are receiving:

- * Universal Credit (with annual income of no more than £7,400)
- * Income Support
- * Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- * Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- * Child Tax Credit (providing that 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 the published amount for the year 2015-2016)
- * The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit and an income related employment and support allowance.

2.7 Voluntary Contributions

The academy wishes to continue with the important work and experience derived from an off-site visit. In order to overcome the financial difficulties that exists Voluntary Contributions will be requested for any visit taking place during school hours.

The academy will suggest to parents/carers an appropriate amount for a voluntary

contribution but cannot insist on payment. However, if the full cost of the trip is not covered by contributions, the academy reserves the right to cancel the trip and return all the contributions made.

No student will be prevented from taking part in the visit if a contribution is not forthcoming, or has been insufficient to cover the individual cost for that student.

2.8 Extra-Curricular Activities (external and in-house)

In addition to the core activities that are provided by the Academy in line with his policy, the Academy reserves the right to provide 'optional extras' to those students who wish to pay additional sums to access the additional activity. These will not be mandatory activities as outlined in 2.6 of this policy. Where contributions are made in excess of the requested sums, surplus money will be returned to parents/carers if the amount exceeds £10.00 per student; if the amount is less than £10.00 per student the money will be retained by the School Trading Company.

Charges for optional extras for which voluntary contributions will be sought can include:

- (i) the students travel costs including congestion charges, tolls etc
- (ii) materials, books, instruments and other equipment
- (iii) food and drinks not supplied by the students
- (iv) non-teaching staff costs
- (v) entrance fees to attractions, museums, castles, theatres etc
- (vi) insurance costs
- (vii) the cost of engaging a teacher, specifically for the activity
- (viii) the cost of cover for teachers accompanying the activity
- (ix) activities on school premises eg visiting theatre etc

The above are examples only and should not be interpreted as exhaustive or exclusive.

2.9 Badges

The academy has provided, free of charge, each student with an identification badge which forms part of their uniform, and is their means for payment through the 'cashless' catering system. Where a student badge has been lost or mislaid and a replacement badge is required, a charge of £3.00 will be made for the replacement.

2.10 Paypoint Cards

Individuals without access to the internet or without bank accounts or credit cards can be issued with a Paypoint card to enable the top-up of their cashless catering card. The first Paypoint card is given for free. Subsequent Paypoint cards requested will incur a £1.50 charge.

2.11 Lockers

The academy can provide lockers for students. A returnable deposit of £5.00 will be charged for the rental of such lockers. Where a student's locker key has been lost or mislaid and a

replacement key is required, a charge of £5.00 will be made for the replacement.

2.12 Printing

Every student will have a dedicated printing account allocated to them, every term each student's account will be topped up to allow £3.00 of printing (£5.00 for Sixth Form) (unused credit from a previous term will be used to maintain the £3.00 limit). Additional printing credit may be purchased by students if required at a cost of £0.04 per A4 black and white copy.

2.13 Revision Guides & Materials

The academy will provide the facility to purchase and resell revision guides and classroom materials (not limited to stationary, writing/drawing equipment and printed revision guides). The intention is to resell this equipment at a price lower than might otherwise be found at high street retailers, but will be at a rate that covers the initial purchase price, plus an allocation for the administration of the goods.

2.14 Damage and Replacement

Charges may be raised by the academy for replacement of broken windows or fittings, defaced or damaged furniture, fittings, books or equipment or any other damage or loss occurring as a direct result of misconduct on the student's part. The academy will attempt to recover this loss and resultant costs as a civil debt, although the academy does recognise that whilst the academy is acting in loco parentis, parents/carers are not legally responsible for acts of damage by their children.

2.15 Catering (including free school meals (FSM))

The academy will enable access to catering facilities to all students and staff through its three catering outlets (two at Fambridge Road Campus (FRC) and one at Mill Road Campus (MRC)). Prices will be set on the basis of covering initial ingredient cost plus an allocation to cover catering department overheads, staffing costs and other charges. All payments for catering will only be permitted via the academy's cashless catering system, with the exception of the Sixth Form Coffee Shop, that will also allow cash and debit/credit card payments from sixth formers and staff.

Students entitled to free school meals will have a daily allocation equivalent to the funding published by the LA for free school meal provision (currently £2.30 – September 2019). The academy will ensure the menu allows for the provision of a hot main meal within this FSM allocation. To encourage regular uptake of free school meals, any unspent free school meal allocation will not be permitted to carry forward to the next day.

3. Remissions

In some circumstances the academy may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and will depend on the activity in question.

A: Parents/Carers on Benefits

Parents/carers will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits that are core to the curriculum if they can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances
- 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 State Pension Credit
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

B: Looked After Children

- No charge may be made for music tuition in respect of a student who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

C: General Remission

The cost of individual instrumental music tuition will also be remitted in all cases where the individual tuition is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. There may be occasions where two or three students receive additional music lessons together at a reduced cost

At the discretion of the Trustees, any of the charges above may be remitted in whole or part for particular groups of parents/carers, for example, in the case of family hardship. In these circumstances, applications should be made to the Director of Finance & Premises, and will be treated in confidence.