

EDWARD WORLLEDGE
ORMISTON ACADEMY



**CHARGING FOR SCHOOL
ACTIVITIES & REMISSIONS
POLICY**

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Academy Charging

Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy adheres to the guidelines from the Department of Education (October 2014) when charging for school activities, as detailed in this document.

Academy governing bodies and local authorities, **cannot** charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school – paragraph 1.9 (n) of the ‘School Admissions Code 2012’ rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- 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 national curriculum¹, 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;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil’s parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academy.²

Academies and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child’s parent wishes him / her to own them;
- optional extras (see page 3);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 4);
- certain early years provision,³
- community facilities.

¹ It should be noted that ‘part of the National Curriculum’ is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirement under the National Curriculum ‘inclusion statement’ (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil’s parents.

³ The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

- education provided outside of academy time that is not:
 - a) part of the national curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fees(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the academy; or
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority / governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In 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;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those

pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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.

Voluntary contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents an academy governing body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the academy or any academy activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or principal should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or principal must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the academy cannot fund it from some other source then it must be cancelled. The academy must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. The academy should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during academy hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Transport

The academy **cannot** charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the academy premises, where the
 - a) local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
 - b) transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
 - c) transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the academy; and
 - d) transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Residential Visits

Academies **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during academy hours.
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside academy 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 academy, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the academy accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Academies **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the academy informs parents about a forthcoming visit, parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place during and partly outside academy hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside academy hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside academy hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during academy hours, it is deemed to take place during academy hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during academy hours. Academy hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity fall during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside academy hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the academy day ends but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of academy sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during academy hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the academy day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during academy hours.

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9 p.m. on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during academy hours.

Example 2: Visit outside academy hours

Pupils are away from academy from noon on Thursday until 9 p.m. on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 academy sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside academy hours.

