



SECKFORD FOUNDATION  
FREE SCHOOLS TRUST

**POLICY  
DOCUMENT**

## Charging and Remissions Policy

<b>Document Owner:</b>	Trust Board
<b>Responsible Trust Committee:</b>	Finance and General Purposes Committee
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<b>APPROVED Signature (Trust Board):</b>	DATE ( )
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## 1. Other relevant policies and documents

- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Finance Policy
- Financial Procedures Manual

## 2. Explanation of terms used in the policy

'Trust' = Seckford Foundation Free Schools Trust  
'Free School(s)' = schools within the Trust

## 3. Purpose of the policy

This document outlines the policy with regard to charging and remissions for Free Schools within the Trust. This policy covers the Trust and all its Free Schools and as such there is no need for each Free School to have its own policy.

## 4. Introduction to the policy

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools and the Education Act 2006 requires that education during normal school hours, and the examination of students in accordance with the National Curriculum is provided free of charge.

The Trust and its Free Schools recognise the valuable contribution that the wider range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential activities, can make towards students' broader education and reserves the right to charge parents / carers in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2006. The Trust aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of an academic and broad and balanced curriculum for the students of its Free Schools and as additional enrichment and optional activities.

Trustees reserve the right to make a charge in the circumstances outlined in this policy for activities organised by its Free Schools. The Trust Board will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

## 5. Charges

Except where students are entitled to statutory remission, the Trust reserves the right to make a charge in the circumstances outlined in this section for activities organised by its Free Schools.

### 5.1 School activities in school hours:

Charges will be made for the transport, board and lodging element of approved residential activities deemed to be taking place during school hours.

Where students wish to attend activities not run directly by the Trust or its Free Schools in school hours, the non-school organisation may charge the parent / carer. The parent / carer must then seek permission for absence (see Attendance and Punctuality Policy) and the Headteacher of that Free School will decide whether the activity is in the student's best interests before granting or declining permission.

## 5.2 Activities outside school hours:

Charges will be made for the full cost to each student of all approved activities deemed to be optional extras taking place wholly, or mainly outside school hours as permitted by the Education Act 2006. This may include transport, food, accommodation, resources and / or other costs associated with the activity (such as admission or ticket charges, activity staff costs, etc.).

## 5.3 Individual music tuition:

Where a student is provided with music tuition, the cost of providing any instrumental tuition which is not part of the prescribed public examination system will be charged to the parent / carer. A charge may be made for the hire of a musical instrument provided by the school for the purposes of individual tuition.

## 5.4 Meals in the school restaurants:

All students are expected to eat at school using the catering facilities provided by the Trust. Food is served at three points in the day: breakfast, breacktime and lunchtime. All students in attendance will incur a daily charge to cover the cost of food provided, except where students are entitled to Free School Meals (when food will be provided free of charge). Subsidies will be provided where parents/carers have provided evidence of financial hardship. Determination of the level of the subsidy is at the discretion of each Free School Headteacher.

## 5.5 Transport:

No charge will be made for the following:

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the Trust has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when (s)he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Where the Trust provides transport for students to or from the school premises and the local authority has no statutory obligation to provide transport, a charge may be made by the

School to parents as a contribution towards the cost of that transport, provided that this is at or below cost.

## 5.6 Other situations:

Charges may be levied for the cost of materials, ingredients or equipment directly (if the school provides them on behalf of parents / carers) or indirectly when materials are provided by parents / carers in subjects such as Food Technology, Textiles, Art, etc.

No charge will be made in respect of books, materials, equipment, instruments or incidental transport provided in connection with the curriculum, statutory Religious Education or in preparation for prescribed public examinations or courses taught at our Free Schools. There may be an exception where materials have been provided (e.g. in Resistant Materials) and parents / carers have indicated that they wish to own the finished product.

## 6. Examinations

The Trust and its Free Schools will only charge for examination entries in the following circumstances:

- A Free School has not prepared (a) student(s) for the examination in the year for which the entry is made;
- The examination is not on the set list of examination courses provided, but the Free School has arranged for the student to take the examination at the request of the parents / carers;
- The student has failed, for no good reason, to complete the requirements of the examination course, or has failed to attend the examination;
- A student wishes to re-sit a whole examination or module for which a Free School has paid the initial fee.
- A student wishes to have their exam papers remarked where the Free School initially advised against the student entering the exam.

## 7. General and voluntary contributions

The Trust may from time to time amend the categories of activity for which charges may be made. Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Trust from inviting parents / carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of additional activities which take place in school time.

In no case will the charge for each student exceed the actual cost (e.g. to subsidise hardship cases, or general fundraising). Parents / carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided that an activity will take place, no qualifying students will be excluded or treated differently by reason of inability to make a voluntary contribution.

It is the case that should not enough voluntary contributions be forthcoming for an planned activity, then the Trust and its Free Schools may have to cancel the activity.

## 8. Remissions

Where the parents / carers of a student are in receipt of:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income support;
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance;
- Financial 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 HM Revenue & Customs) does not exceed the threshold published by the DfE ;
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

(All of the above are subject to changes in legislation).

The Trust will offer to remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that is deemed to take place during school hours, forms part of the curriculum or is a requirement of a prescribed examination.

In the event that parents / carers believe they will be unable to pay the charges outlined in this policy, they may apply for remission of part or all of the charges due and should contact the school for details. They will be required to provide evidence of financial hardship and the decision as to whether to offer any remission will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

## 9. Damage to Trust property

The Trust will seek payment from parents / carers for damage or loss to the Trust or Free School property caused willfully or negligently by their child.

## 10. Subsidy

The Trust and its Free Schools will subsidise certain activities to a limited extent as funding allows. This is at the discretion of the individual Free School Headteachers.

## 11. Delegation

The Headteacher of each Free School is empowered to make determinations regarding individual cases arising from the implementation of this policy.

In the case of appeals, the Chair of the Trust Leadership Group is empowered by the Trust to make any final determinations.

## 12. Contributions to the curriculum

In principle, the Trust approves the seeking of sponsorship from external sources including donations from parents / carers. In addition, the Trust and its Free Schools offer opportunities for parents / carers to take part in fundraising activities or to contribute by giving their time.

Although careful planning and scrutiny will ensure optimum use of Free School resources, parents / carers may be asked to contribute voluntarily to the provision of different materials.

The Trust expresses their appreciation for all such contributions.

## 13. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Trust will review this policy every two years and ensure that practice across all schools is in line with this policy. Any review will take into account the most up-to-date legislation and guidance.