

	BERNWODE SCHOOLS TRUST <u>CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY</u>			Written By: J Davison – Director of Finance & Academy Services
	Applicable to: ALL STAFF & STUDENTS/PUPILS/ PARENTS/CARERS	Accountable Officers: Headteachers:- J Maclachlan (GFPS) B J Baxter (TCS)	Date to Adopted: 11 December 2014	Date To Be Reviewed: Autumn Term 2021 (Annually)

Bernwode Schools Trust (BST) is a Multi-Academy Trust. It is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered company number 09053713 and its registered address at Churchill Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 4RS.

Bernwode Schools Trust believes that all of our pupils/students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular), independent 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 prevent some pupils/students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review.

1. The policy identifies activities for which:

- Voluntary contributions may be requested
- Charges will not be made
- Charges may be made
- Optional Extras

2. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Governing Board or Headteacher will make this clear to parents from the outset.

No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

If insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Where an activity is planned for which contributions from parents/carers would be required, the relevant voluntary contributions will be sought. The level of voluntary contributions will not exceed the actual costs (per pupil) of undertaking the activity.

Responsibility for determining the level of contribution is delegated to the Headteacher.

3. No charges will be made for:

- a) An admission application to any maintained school
- b) Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- c) Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the Academy's Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for by the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- d) Tuition for pupils/students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the Academy's Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for by the school, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- e) Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil/student has been prepared for it at the school*
- f) Examination re-sit(s)*, if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school
- g) Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours (see 4a)¹
- h) Education provided on any trip that take place outside school hours (see 4a):¹
 - a. If it is part of the Academy's Curriculum, or,
 - b. Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school, or,
 - c. Part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- i) Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils/students on a residential trip
- j) Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

*If a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge will be made.

4. Charges may be made for:

- a) Activities outside school hours

Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed in Section 2 above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours) (see section 9),

- b) Residential visits during school hours

The board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils/students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

- c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or appropriate sized groups of pupils/students to play a musical instrument or to sing and which is not an essential part of either the Academy's Curriculum or a public examination syllabus for all pupils/students.

When any trip is arranged, parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. This should recognise that parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

¹ A day visit is in school hours if 50% or more of the total time (including travelling) incurs in school hours (school hours do not include the normal midday break). A residential school visit is in school hours if the number of school sessions missed is 50% or more than the number of half days spent on the visit (including travel). A school session equates to a registration session (i.e. 2 per day) and a half day is a 12 hour period ending midday or midnight.

5. Optional Extras

Charges may be made for optional activities, which are known as “optional extras”. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil/student) of provision.

It is the policy of Bernwode Schools Trust Schools that charges will (or may) be made, with parental agreement, as indicated below:

Activity of Item(s) which will (or may) be charged for:	Notes
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual (per pupil) cost. Families that qualify for remissions will be as set out in the following section on remissions.
Charges will be made for activities wholly or mainly outside school hours (“optional extras”) to meet the costs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Materials and equipment ▪ Non-teaching staff costs ▪ Entrance fees ▪ Insurance costs ▪ Travel costs 	The charge will not exceed the actual (per pupil) cost. The charge made to an individual parent/carer cannot include any costs to subsidise parents/carers of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge. Families that qualify for remissions will be as set out in the following section on remissions.
Charges will be made for individual music tuition and group music tuition, for groups of up to four students, where the tuition is not an essential part of either the Academy’s Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.	The charge will not exceed the actual (per pupil) cost. Families that qualify for remissions will be as set out in the following section on remissions.
Re-sits for public exams where no further preparation has been provided by the school.	Such charge will include the exam entry fee and an additional amount to contribute to the actual additional administrative costs incurred by the school in connection with the re-sit.
Breakages and replacements as a result of damage caused wilfully or negligently by pupils/students.	
Charges will be made for any materials, books, instruments or equipment where a parent wishes their child to own them, where a student wants the freedom to be able to retain or use the book to annotate it or where the item is not considered to be an essential or integral part of the Academy’s Curriculum programme of study.	Families that qualify for remissions will be as set out in the following section on remissions.
Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specifically prohibited. A charge for re-sits will be made at the discretion of the Examinations Officer and the Headteacher. Parents will not be charged for use of the School as a centre for exams for subjects not part of the School’s syllabus.	The charge will not exceed the actual (per pupil) cost. Families that qualify for remissions will be as set out in the following section on remissions.

6. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from pupils/students, the Governing Board has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parent/carers in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which such charges may be waived.

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge, it is indicated in the right hand column

of the table above. This is discretionary and would include activities *outside of the school day*. Headteachers will ensure that arrangements are in place to inform families of the procedure to apply for remission of a charge.

Criteria for qualification for remission will be as follows:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent/carer is not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after qualification for Working Tax Credit ceases
- Universal Credit claimants

7. Additional Considerations

The Governing Board recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end, we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) as soon as possible, so that parents/carers can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents/carers to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it may be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first come, first served" basis discriminates against students from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

All payments should be administered via the ParentPay system.

Policy/Procedure Title	Charging & Remissions Policy
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