



# WIGSTON ACADEMIES TRUST

## CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Original Policy date:

Next Review Date: May 2020

Date Approved by Trustees: 09.05.18

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joseph Kelly', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Signed by Chair of Trustees:

**WIGSTON ACADEMIES TRUST**

## **MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES POLICY**

- Any charges made by the school must meet the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988. The governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child should have access to the curriculum limited by charges.
- Our aim is to make a broad programme of trips and activities accessible to as many pupils as possible. Also to establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the school budget. The school, as a matter of policy, significantly subsidises all trips and visits.
- Charges will not be made for any activities which form part of a prescribed examination syllabus, or are in fulfillment of National Curriculum requirements.
- In cases where charges are to be levied, parents must be advised in advance and monies collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents on income support or family credit will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of the school's budget or Trust Fund. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters. Any insurance costs will be included in charges for trips and activities.

M Mitchley  
December '16

## Introduction

The purpose of this administrative memorandum is to set out the regulations which apply to schools charging for school activities.

## Summary

The following is a summary of the regulations. When considering charging for any activity the school should, however, consult the appropriate section in Section 1 as appropriate.

- The school **may not** charge for any activities which take place in school time except for musical instrumental tuition for individuals or groups of up to four.
- The school **has drawn up a Charging Policy** (See Appendix A).
- The school may **invite** parents and others to make **voluntary** contributions towards any aspect of the school's work.
- The school **may charge** for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours **as long as these are 'optional extras'** (for example after school recreational or sporting clubs).
- The school **may charge** for board and lodging on residential courses (except for pupils whose parents fall within certain categories).

## SECTION 1

### LOCAL AUTHORITY GUIDELINES

#### Charging for School Activities: Community Schools

##### 1. Education During School Hours

No charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. **Education provided during school hours must be free.** This includes materials, equipment and transport provided during school hours by the LA or by the school to carry pupils between school and an activity. "School hours" are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Parents and others have a right to information about school hours and this information must be included in prospectuses published by the school.

##### 2. Musical Instrument Tuition

The provision of tuition in the playing of a musical instrument is an **exception** to the above rule. Therefore charges may be made by schools for the provision of instrumental tuition to **either an individual pupil or a group of up to 4 children** but only if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus.

##### 3. Voluntary Contributions

Whilst schools cannot, as a matter of course, charge for activities during school time they may still **invite** parents and carers (and others) to make voluntary contributions in cash or in kind to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions **must** make it clear that the contributions are **voluntary**. Governing Bodies should also make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute voluntarily will not be treated differently from children of parents who do make voluntary contributions and that **the child will not be excluded from the activity if a contribution is not made**. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, that should be explained at the planning stage. Where voluntary contributions are insufficient to make the activity possible and the school is unable to make up a shortfall then the activity must be cancelled. The intent of the legislation is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents or carers cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind. It is possible, within the legislation, to fund pupils whose parents or carers will not make a voluntary contribution from funds raised through general fundraising.

##### 4. Activities not run by the school or LA

When an organisation acting independently of the school or LA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity such organisations may charge parents. Parents would then need to ask the school to agree to their children being absent from school just as they would if they wanted to take the child out of school for a family holiday. An example of this would be tuition provided off-site by the Dyslexia Association.

When an activity is arranged by a third party and is approved by the school, is educational (or is supervised by someone authorised by the school) then it should be treated as if it were being provided by the school. No compulsory charge should therefore be made to parents

or pupils. Such an activity if it takes place outside the school premises is an “approved educational activity” within the meaning of Regulation 4A(a) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended). An example might be a performance by a reputable Theatre in Education Group.

## 5. Education Outside School Hours

Parents may only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours where these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or they form part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education, such as a visit to a place of worship after school. In addition, no charge can be made for activities that are an **essential** part of the syllabus for an approved examination. A visit to a theatre to see an examination set text in performance may be advantageous but is unlikely to be ‘essential’ or a requirement of a literature syllabus.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities which can be charged for as “optional extras”. These might include a recreational visit to a pantomime. It is up to the LA or Governing Body providing the activities to decide whether or not to make a charge.

## 6. Charging Policies

The Governing Body or the LA **may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of general policy of charging.** The Governing Body’s policy may be more or less generous than the LA’s as long as it meets the requirements of the law. A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made. A copy of the policy is attached at Appendix A. If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free of charge: see paragraph 8). Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included in the prospectus published by the school. **If a charge is made for each pupil this should not exceed the actual cost for that pupil. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fundraising.**

The permitted charge may include an allowance for the cost of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, **but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the optional extra. A contract need not be formal document. It could be a letter to a teacher asking him or her to provide a service on a particular occasion.**

## 7. Education Partly During School Hours

Some activities may take place partly during outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charges may be made. Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours. For example, a long journey might involve much travel before and after normal school hours but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours the journey (and the activity) would count as happening in school time and therefore have to be free of charge. By contrast, a visit which involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon but then went on until quite late in the evening would be classified as taking place outside school

time. Charges would then be allowed.

## 8. Residential Activities

Different rules apply for residential activities. An activity counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into 2 sessions and each 24 hour period divided into 2 half days beginning at noon and midnight. On this basis a term time activity from noon on Wednesday to 9.00pm on Sunday would last for 9 half days including 5 school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. An activity from noon Thursday to 9.00pm on Sunday would count as 7 half days, including 3 school sessions, and would be classified for charging as taking place outside school time. If 50% or more of a half day is spent on a residential activity this should be treated as the whole of that half day spent on the activity.

For a residential activity taking place during school time which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with a national curriculum or religious education no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.

However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances **except for pupils whose parents are receiving: income support; income based job seekers allowance; support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1990; or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £13,230). The Principal/Headteacher should tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits. Further guidance on how to check the eligibility of children whose families receive tax credits can be found at:**

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3681](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3681) Children whose parents fall within this category may not be excluded from these activities.

## 9. Public Examinations

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in Regulations. The Governing Body must enter a pupil for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the pupil for. This does not need to apply if the Governing Body thinks there are educational reasons for not entering the pupil or if the pupil's parents or carers ask in writing that the pupil should not be entered. The LA may not override the Governing Body's decision on whether to enter a particular pupil for an examination.

**An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:**

- i) the examination is on the set list but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
- ii) the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- iii) a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements set by the examination board and the Governing Body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Schools may not, however, impose charges where the requirements of the examination board have been met.

Charges may not be made for any costs associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. Charging is, however, allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared

outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in the regulations.

## 10. Further References

The advice in this administrative memorandum is based on the following legislation:

Education Act 1996: Sections 402, 450-458, 460

The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) Regulations 1989

The Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003

The Education (Public Registration) Regulation 1995 (amended)

Further guidance is available in A Guide to the Law for School Governors (2003 Edition) or from [www.governor.net.co.uk](http://www.governor.net.co.uk)

**SCHOOL POLICY FOR CHARGING**

1. The provisions of the 1988 Education Reform Act will be followed.
2. In addition to free provision of education during the school day, pupils whose parents are receiving: income support, income based job seekers allowance, support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1990, or Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, that does not exceed £13,230) will not be charged board and lodging where otherwise applicable to residential activities. The Principal/Headteacher undertakes that parents will be told of the right to claim free activities if they are receiving these benefits. Further guidance on the eligibility of children whose families do receive Tax Credits can be found at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3681](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3681)
3. Charges will normally be made for the following activities:
  - a) Board and lodging on residential visits
  - b) The proportionate cost for an individual child of activities wholly or mainly outside school hours (“optional extras”) to meet the costs of :
    - Travel
    - Materials and equipment
    - Non-teaching staff costs
    - Entrance fees
    - Insurance costs
  - c) Individual tuition (or tuition in groups of not more than 4) in the playing of a musical instrument.
  - d) Re-sits for public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school.
  - e) Costs of non-prescribed examinations and preparations for such examinations outside school areas.
  - f) Any other education, transport or examination fee unless charges are specially prohibited.
4. In accordance with LA guidance the Governing Body will adopt the Remissions Policy outlined in paragraph 2 above.

## **WIGSTON ACADEMIES TRUST**

### **GOVERNORS ALLOWANCES POLICY**

This policy statement has been developed in accordance with the Education (Governors' Allowances) Regulations 2003. These regulations give Governing Bodies the discretion to pay allowances from the school's annual budget allocation to Governors for certain allowances which they incur in carrying out their duties. Wigston Academies Trust Governing Bodies believe that paying Governors' allowances, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as Governors for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of school funds. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

**All Governors of Wigston Academies Trust will be entitled to claim the actual costs, which they incur as follows:**

1. Governors will be able to claim allowances providing the allowances are incurred in carrying out their duties, as a Governor or representative of Wigston Academies Trust, and are agreed by the Steering Committee that they are justified before any reimbursable costs are incurred.
2. Governors will be able to claim for the following, on a case-by-case basis and with the prior approval of the Governing Body:
  - Childcare or baby-sitting allowances (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner);
  - Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner);
  - The extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language.
  - The cost of travel relating only to travel to meetings/training courses at a rate of 23 pence per mile which does not exceed the specified rates for school personnel;
  - Travel and subsistence costs, payable at the current rates specified by the Secretary of State for the Environment. Transport and the Regions, associated with attending national meetings or training events, unless these costs can be claimed from the LA or any other source.
  - Telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage, etc.
  - Any other justifiable allowances.

**The Trustees of Wigston Academies Trust acknowledge that:**

- Governors may not be paid attendance allowance;
- Governors may not be reimbursed for loss of earnings.

Governors wishing to make claims under these arrangements, once prior approval has been sought, should complete a claim form (obtainable from the School Office), attaching receipts where possible, and return it to the School within two weeks of the date when the allowances were incurred, when they will be submitted for approval by the Chair of Governors or Chair of Finance to be presented to the Finance Committee (which meets at least once per term) for final approval.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the Chair of Governors

(or Chair of Finance in respect of the Chair of Governors) if they appear excessive or inconsistent.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

*(This policy is taken from the National Governors' Council, Good Practice Guide for Governors)*

### Remissions and Concessions

The Trust will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The Headteacher will authorise the remission of charges.

The Trust may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and students, and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher.

#### Inability or unwillingness to pay

The Trust is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all of its students, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled. The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.