Woodland Academy Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Woodland Academy Trust is committed to inclusion, diversity and promoting equal opportunity for all. All schools within the Trust share this commitment, providing an inclusive environment.
This objective applies to all policies and procedures and the Trust will at all times adhere to the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and any other associated guidance.

1. Introduction

We aim to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions; and
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.

The Woodland Academy Trust recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits, after school clubs and residential experiences can make towards a pupil's education and aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities. We believe that all our pupils should benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This policy also describes how we will try to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. General Principles

The general principle within the relevant legislation is that no charge will be made for:

- Education within school hours (excluding the mid-day break) including the supply of books, materials; instruments, equipment or transport); or
- Education outside school hours which forms part of the school's curriculum; or
- Entry for a prescribed public examination or a re-sit prepared for by the school.

3. Exceptions

Charges are permitted to meet the costs of the following:

- Education outside or predominantly outside school hours (which does not form part of the school's curriculum);
- Board and lodging on residential educational trips (however parents/carers in receipt of certain benefits (see section 6 below) cannot be charged;
- Music tuition and the hiring of musical instruments where the tuition does not form part of the school's curriculum;
- Books, instruments, or equipment, where the pupil's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;
- Materials/ingredients required to produce a finished product made in school (e.g. in art, design, food or technology lessons), where parents/carers have agreed in advance that the finished article should be owned by the parent/carer or the pupil;
- Entry of a pupil for a public examination which is not prescribed in regulations, and for preparing the pupil for such an examination out of school hours;
- Entry of a pupil for a public examination against the wishes of the school;
- Re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested by the parent/carer or pupil;

- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school; and

- Voluntary optional extras provided outside of school hours (or mainly outside school hours)

4. Charging

In all cases where a permitted charge is made, parents/carers will be told the amount in advance. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per pupil incurred.

5. Voluntary contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested for the benefit of the school or for any visit and/or activity either inside or outside of school time. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested for a visit or activity parents/carers will be told the amount in advance.

The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per pupil incurred.

The school's Pupil Premium funding may be used to support those pupils in respect of which the school receives that funding.

No pupil will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent/carer cannot or chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, the visit or activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

6. Other charges

Photocopying and/or printing, which is not required by a member of staff, may be charged for.

The school will seek payment from parents/carers for damage to or loss of school property caused wilfully or negligently by their child.

7. Remissions

In order to reduce financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, some activities and visits, where charges can legally be made, may be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents or carers in receipt of the benefits set out below.

Where charges are to be made to parents/carers, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity.

Requests for help from parents/carers on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits:

- Universal Credit (in certain prescribed circumstances);
- Income Support;
- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based);

- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income as assessed by HMRC does not exceed certain limits;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999;
- The 'Guaranteed Element' of Pension Credit.

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit, the school will nonetheless consider sympathetically requests for assistance in the phasing of contributions, provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.