

CHULMLEIGH ACADEMY TRUST

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Approved by the Business & Finance Committee: November 2024

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the Trust will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge, or in respect of items towards which the Trust may seek voluntary contributions.
- 1.2 The policy takes into consideration Department for Education guidance and complements the Trust's other policies.

2. Definition of School Hours

School Hours are defined as:

- 2.1.1 8.40am to 3.30pm at Chulmleigh College
- 2.1.2 9.00am to 3.30pm at Chulmleigh Primary School
- 2.1.3 9.00am to 3.30pm at Lapford Primary School
- 2.1.4 9.00am to 3.30pm at East Worlington Primary School

3. Responsibilities

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Directors will review the policy every two years.

4. Policy statement

- 4.1 **During School Hours all activities that are a necessary part of the Trust's curriculum or part of religious education will be provided free of charge.**

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities which take place mainly during School Hours which entail additional costs, for example school trips that enrich the curriculum. In these circumstances no pupil will be treated differently on the grounds that his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution, but if insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities which rely upon voluntary contributions, at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher.

The Trust will make a decision on whether it is financially viable to proceed with an activity on the basis of and in reliance on charges or voluntary contributions received from parents in advance of the activity.

Please see separate Nursey Payment Policy for charges for nursery placements.

- 4.2 Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras':

4.2.1 **Activities provided outside of School Hours**, for example, a visit to another country during the school holidays will be fully charged. Such activities are not a compulsory part of our prescribed programme of study or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

4.2.2 **Examination fees:** If a registered pupil has not been prepared for the exam at Chulmleigh Community College, the examination fee may be requested

If a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Trust originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

4.2.3 **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. There will be no charge made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22 (1) of the Children's Act 1989). In cases of hardship the directors may consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils whom they consider will benefit from such tuition.

4.2.4 **Drama 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. In cases of hardship the directors may consider in their absolute discretion the remission of fees (either in full or in part) for those pupils whom they consider will benefit from such tuition.

4.2.5 **Revision Guides:** Chulmleigh Academy Trust may recommend particular exam revision guides and resources to pupils and their parents/guardians but these are not essential for completion of programmes of study. Where Chulmleigh Academy Trust does make this recommendation it may undertake to purchase these at a reduced rate for parents as part of a bulk purchase. Where this happens parents/guardians will pay for the cost of the revision guide, at the reduced rate, if they wish to purchase it for their child.

4.2.6 **Materials and Ingredients:** Chulmleigh Academy Trust requests that parents supply ingredients for food and nutrition and make a contribution towards materials for Design and Technology, Art and Textiles lessons. These curriculum areas enable pupils to complete projects, which they will later wish to own.

4.2.7 **Assisted Instrument Purchase Scheme:** Pupils attending Chulmleigh Academy Trust and receiving instrumental lessons at school can obtain musical instruments through our Assisted Instrument Purchase Scheme at a discount including full VAT reclamation.

For the purchase to qualify for the AIPS, the following criteria must be met:

- The instrument or item must be sold to the school and then supplied onto the pupil or their guardian;
- The pupil must be receiving state education;
- The instrument must be used as part of their musical tuition;
- The instrument must be appropriate to the pupil's needs; and
- The price charged to the pupil for the purchase of the instrument must be at or below cost

4.2.8 **Transport:** Chulmleigh Academy Trust offers a subsidised transport service to families who wish to attend our schools but who are out of catchment and so do not qualify for free school transport. Transport invoices will be emailed out at the start of each academic year, with an option to pay for the whole year or in ten monthly instalments.

4.2.8 **Extended day services:** Where Chulmleigh Academy Trust offers breakfast club or after-school club, charges will be made that do not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity

4.2.10 **Acts of vandalism or negligence:** The Trust reserves the right to recover part, or the whole cost, of damage to buildings or equipment which is the result of vandalism or negligence by a student

5. **Non-residential activities taking place partly during School Hours**

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside School Hours and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if 50% or more of the time to be spent on the activity falls within School Hours. Conversely, if more than 50% of time spent falls outside of the School Hours, compulsory charges will be made to cover the cost, if any. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

6. Residentials taking place mainly during School Hours

Charges will normally be made for board and lodging for residentials mainly taking place during School Hours (e.g. mid-week residentials), except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of eligible benefits (as defined in paragraph 10). In some circumstances, the Trust may seek voluntary contributions in addition to such charges to cover other costs relating to the activity. A residential will be deemed to take place mainly during School Hours if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school 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. See also appendix 1.

7. Residentials taking place mainly outside of School Hours

We will charge for the cost of residentials taking place mainly out of School Hours (e.g. weekend only residentials, or those taking place during school breaks), and attendance on those residentials will be subject to full payment of those charges by all pupils who wish to attend. See paragraph 6 for details of how we will calculate whether a residential takes place mainly outside of School Hours.

Appendix 1 is a flow chart produced by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, which summarises the process for determining whether an activity is deemed to take place in school hours.

8. Minibus

Only pupils of the Trust, school staff or parents may be charged for travel in the minibus, and charges will be made only where the Trust is permitted by law to make a charge for transport (though voluntary contributions may be requested where the Trust is not permitted to make a charge). Charges made will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service should not make a profit for the Trust.

9. Calculating charges and voluntary contributions

- 9.1 Subject to paragraph 9.2, when charges are made or voluntary contributions are sought for any activity, whether during or outside of the School Hours they will be based on the actual costs incurred by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not pay.
- 9.2 In some cases (e.g. outdoor education), the cost of the activities are subsidised by contributions from the school budget and/or third party charitable donations. In such cases, the participants will be asked to pay a fair and reasonable contribution towards the costs, and these costs may be waived at the Trust's discretion for individuals who may otherwise be prevented from taking part due to financial hardship.
- 9.2 The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

10. Eligible benefits are:

- 10.1 Income Support
- 10.2 Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- 10.3 Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- 10.4 Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- 10.5 The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- 10.6 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)

- 10.7 Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- 10.8 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)

11. Refunds

- 11.1 In the event that a pupil is unable to attend an activity for any reason, the Trust will refund any element of the charge or voluntary contribution paid by the parent which relates to costs saved as a result of the pupil's non-attendance. In some cases, this may result in a full refund, a partial refund or no refund.

Examples of how this may work in relation to partial refunds include the following:

- 11.1.1 a theatre does not charge the school for tickets for a non-attending pupil: the cost of the ticket will be refunded, but the cost of the coach will not be refunded as the cost of the coach will remain the same despite the non-attendance of the pupil.
- 11.1.2 a theme park requires a non-refundable deposit, but does not charge for the balance of the ticket for non-attendance: the balance would be refunded, but not the deposit, as the school is still required to pay the deposit.
- 11.1.3 a pupil is unable to attend a residential trip to France due to illness, and the Trust is able successfully to claim the cost of the trip from its insurers, less the applicable excess: the amount paid out by the insurer will be refunded to the parent.
- 11.2 If the non-attendance is due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. family bereavement) or an unavoidable absence, the parent may apply to the school for a full refund, and due consideration will be given to the request.

12. Excess Funds

In line with paragraph 9.1, the Trust will make every effort to ensure that the correct amount is collected to cover the actual cost of an activity. However, in the event that the total monies received from parents in relation to an activity exceed the actual cost, the excess funds will be divided proportionally between the parents' respective contributions and refunds issued, unless the average amount refunded would equal less than £5.00 per child, in which case the excess funds will be paid into the Trust's Trips Subsidy Fund to subsidise future activities.

When a pupil leaves Chulmleigh College their MyEd account will be reviewed and any balances will be transferred to a younger sibling or a refund issued, unless the amount is less than £5.00.

Appendix: Charging for activities out of school hours



Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

