



## **BEACON ACADEMY Charging & Remissions Policy**

---

<b>Updated</b>	<b>1/1/18</b>
<b>Date Approved by Board:</b>	<b>6/2/18</b>
<b>Date of Review:</b>	<b>Spring Term 2021</b>
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	<b>Business Manager</b>

---

Sections 106-111 and 117-118 of the Education Reform Act 1988 set out the law on charging for all state schools. In accordance with the Act (Section 110) and in keeping with Circular 2/89 the policy of the Governing Body of Beacon Academy is as follows:

#### ADMISSION

The Governors intend to make no charges for admission to the school.

#### GENERAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

It is hoped that, if they feel able to do so, parents will consider making voluntary contributions to

- (i) the General Academy Fund to enhance facilities

#### NATIONAL CURRICULUM BASED EDUCATION

No charges will be made for education in school hours or for education necessary to fulfil National Curriculum requirements.

#### INGREDIENTS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT (IN KIND)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents / carers) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the 'finished product'. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: Science, Art and Technology. The school will subsidise or provide materials/ingredients in extreme financially challenging situations by negotiation.

#### BROKEN EQUIPMENT (REPLACEMENT)

Governors reserve the right to charge parents for defaced, damaged or lost books or wilful damage to school property. The Governors will allow all departments to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the students' part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff's duty to brief pupils thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the pupils. It is agreed school practise will be that deliberate (criminal) damage will be charged for at cost price (and if necessary fitting/labour).

#### EXAMINATION ENTRIES

All entries for public examinations will be free of charge to students except in the case for non-attendance of examinations, without valid medical reasons, for which students will be liable for the cost. Entry fees paid for by the school will be subject to the provisions outlined in Section 108 of the Education Reform Act which states that examination fees may be recovered from parents where a student fails to sit an examination without good reason or to complete any coursework requirements. The Academy Governors reserve the right, on the advice of the Head Teacher, not to enter any child for any given examination if they judge that there is good reason not to do so. The Governors will remain arbiters of the circumstances which constitute 'good reason'.

#### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES

The Governors believe strongly in the value of activities and experiences which enhance the educational process. On behalf of the Governors, the Head Teacher or his staff may write to parents inviting them to make specified financial contributions to pay for educational activities that the school proposes to organise as an optional extra for the benefit of students. Parents in receipt of income support or family credit will

receive automatic remission of such costs and arrangements will be made by the Governors to fund such activities if at all possible. It should be noted, therefore, that any activity for which parents are invited to make contributions will only go ahead if Governors are satisfied that the total costs (which may include the costs of covering absent teachers) of the activity can be met. Under the terms of the Act (Section 118.4) the Governing Body, in approving an activity which is scheduled to take place may require a third party (eg. travel company) to levy charges directly to parents in return for services provided. In this case the Governors would not take part in the transaction and it would be for parents to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements.

## TRIPS AND VISITS

Trips and visits are an important way of promoting the development of students and supporting the ethos of the academy. We affirm that:

- current legislation permits the school to ask for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved;
- no student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay;
- if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit may have to be cancelled.

Parent' sign a declaration slip to confirm this and a signed slip is requested back from parents. A letter about the visit is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit, the essence of which is contained in the following example:

*"All students will need to take a packed lunch with them. Students who receive free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch. As we are travelling by coach, a small cost will be incurred. Current legislation permits us to ask only for voluntary contributions towards the costs involved. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay, but if sufficient money is not raised by voluntary contributions, then the visit will have to be cancelled. A contribution of £\_\_\_ should be sufficient to ensure that the trip can proceed."*

The Head Teacher can charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a skiing holiday during the school holidays is an optional extra.
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination - if a GCSE level Geography syllabus mentions fieldwork as a requirement then this in itself does not necessitate a residential fieldtrip to another part of the country as local facilities may suffice. However, if the syllabus mentions that pupils need to know about the ecology of rocky shores and they live in a city a long way from the coast then the fieldtrip would not be classed as an 'optional extra'.

The parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before that visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an optional extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for students whose families do not meet the full charge.

Parental permission should be obtained as follows:

i) Sample Parental Declaration. Parents sign a declaration which contains, e.g.  
*I understand:*

- *that current legislation permits the school to ask for the full cost of the visit;*
- *that current legislation does not require the school to arrange subsidies for the visit;*
- *that if insufficient numbers of pupils opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.*

- *that my child cannot attend this 'optional extra' visit is full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.*

If any payment is requested / made towards the cost of passengers being carried in a minibus, then the appropriate licence, as recommended by the local authority, will be held by the named driver or an external driver with the appropriate licence will be hired, and the appropriate test, as recommended by the local authority, will have been successfully completed.

#### INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

The fees for the peripatetic lessons are now centrally collected by the local authority due to the large administrative burden involved in pursuing non-payment. Any such instrumental tuition will be agreed by Head of Music and parents before the tuition commences.

#### THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT & CHARGING

Members of the public have a statutory right to ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Naturally, no charge is made by the school for information sourced from the school's website. For parents of present or prospective pupils (including parents who wish information to help them decide if they wish their child to attend the School), single copies of all relevant and available information are provided free of charge. However, should a request for information involve a large amount of non-standard paperwork or duplication, the school reserves the right to charge a minimum of 10p per sheet to cover duplication and administrative costs.

When a member of the general public or a member of a professional body requests the information, then the standard charge will be made to cover duplication, postage and administrative costs.

In all cases where a cost is to be levied the purchaser will be informed of the cost and requested to pay the correct amount in advance, (by cash paid or cheque) before the work is undertaken.

#### REMISSIONS

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Head Teacher.

Governors, in determining the policy outlined above, undertake to keep the policy under review and to notify parents in writing of any changes as and when appropriate.