Charging and Remissions Policy

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Charging and Remissions Policy

1. AIMS

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum. To follow legislation dictated by the academy trust's funding agreement.

It has been written to reflect the guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on Charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996:

DfE Charging for School Activities Guidance

The school day is defined as the point of registration to the closure of the school day when planned curriculum activities cease.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all schools within Veritas Multi Academy Trust. Further to this:

(a) Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the trust/schools' equal opportunities policy, curriculum policy and teaching and learning policy. This policy also aligns with the trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, particularly regarding residential trips, volunteer supervision, and safeguarding requirements for all school activities.

(a) Review

Review of this policy is carried out annually by the Trust Business Manager and CEO.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

(a) Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher, other staff, Local Academy Committee (LAC)

The **Headteacher** will ensure that the following applies:

(i) During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching individual pupils or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, for example swimming, school trips.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. Children of parents who do not make a contribution will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

(ii) Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example

sports/creative clubs, breakfast, after school club and holiday club. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education, nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

(iii) Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day.

Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

(iv) Residentials

Charges will be made for school residential trips. Pupils whose parents are in receipt of Income or Housing Support or whose children are entitled to Pupil Premium funding may receive support from the school in order for their child to undertake the activity. Should a parent require financial assistance they should seek a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss how payments can be made manageable for the parent / carer and how the school may support financially.

(v) School mini-bus

Only the school's pupils, staff, parents or members of local schools and nurseries may travel at a charge in the school mini-bus. Charges made for travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation where applicable; the service should not make a profit for the school.

(vi) Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who receive income support, housing benefit, Universal Credit (from September 2026, all households receiving Universal Credit qualify for free school meals) or whose children fit the criteria for Pupil Premium funding.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust Board (via the Trust Business Committee Group) will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies.