CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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Introduction

The Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, students, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our six 'Es' as follows:

- **Ethical** – 'Doing the right thing'
- **Excellence** – 'Outstanding quality'
- **Equity** – 'Fairness and social justice'
- **Empathy** – 'Caring for others'
- **Evolution** – 'Continuous change'
- **Endurance** – 'Working hard and not giving up'

This policy is based on the value of '**Equity**'

Policy Statement

School governing bodies and local authorities, cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Schools and local authorities can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see section below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see later);
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities

Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  a) part of the national curriculum;
  b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;

     or

  c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;
- and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for

voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Policy Procedures

Optional visits wholly or mainly outside Academy hours

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly outside Academy hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges, meals and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some students to go on the visit without payment, or to cover teachers' travel costs, where a separate contract is issued in accordance with para. 24 of Circular 2/89. The visit will proceed only if all those who wish to go pay the full costs or additional funding such as is available.

Visits wholly or mainly during Academy hours

It is the intention of the Trustees to invite voluntary contributions toward the cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly during Academy hours and which may, or may not, be provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and may, or may not, be required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges and, if desired, a sum of money to enable some students to go on the visit without payment or to cover teachers' travel costs. The visit will proceed only if all those who wish to go are willing to make a voluntary contribution. If parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution certain visits may become unviable.

Board and Lodging charges on residential visits

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of board and lodging on visits taking place wholly or mainly during Academy hours, or if out of Academy hours, provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education.

Where the parents are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit the board and lodgings charges will be remitted. Voluntary contributions may, of course, be required and could become a necessary prerequisite for the visit taking place.

Individual Tuition in the playing of Musical Instrument

Instrumental tuition is available within the system offered by the Instrumental Music Support Service. Individual Academies will provide further details of costs and availability of tuition.

Resits of Prescribed Public Examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the Academy

It is the intention of the Trustees to charge the full cost of the resit.

Charges for ingredients, materials and equipment

The Board of Trustees may charge for ingredients and materials or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

Charges for Breakages

The Trustees will require payment by parents or students for damage to equipment or property whenever and however caused by their child.

Damaged iPads will be charged in accordance with the Acceptable Usage Policy

Recovery of Unpaid Charges

Sums payable by parents for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they had agreed, for board and lodging and for damages are recoverable as civil debts. All voluntary contributions or permission charges for board and lodgings and trips undertaken outside Academy hours must be paid in advance.