

Frank Field Education Trust



Charging and Remissions Policy

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Approved by CEO:

Tom Quinn

Approved by Chair of Trustees:

Dr Chris Hampshire



Frank Field
Education Trust

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1. INTRODUCTION

Frank Field Education Trust (FFET) is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for School Activities'
- Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999
- Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- DfE (2020) 'Governance Handbook'
- FFET Funding Agreements.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on school premises.

2. DEFINITIONS

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable Parents: meaning a person or persons having parental responsibility for student.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees and Local Governing Body (LGBs)

The Trust board has responsibility for approval of this policy and will consider comments raised by the Local Governing Body in any review. The Local Governing Body will have responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff

Staff are responsible for

- implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently;
- notifying the Principal of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies. The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Parents

Parents are expected to notify school of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

4. WHERE CHARGES CANNOT BE MADE

Admissions

FFET does not charge for admission into school.

Education

FFET does not charge for;

- 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 student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for students learning to play musical instruments or vocal tuition if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent;

Examinations

FFET does not charge for:

- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school;
- examination re-sit(s), if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school, where the request for the re-sit is on the part of FFET;
- for examinations that are not on the set list, but have been arranged by FFET;

If the student fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, FFET may recover the fee incurred from that student's parents.

FFET will charge for examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at FFET.

School Meals

FFET does not charge for children who are entitled to free school meals.

Students who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount as decided by the Trustees upon review annually.

Transport

FFET does not charge for:

- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered students to other premises where the school, LGB or Trustees have arranged for students to be educated;
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when they have prepared for that examination at the school;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit or school organised activity during school hours.

Non-residential activities that take place outside of school hours

FFET does not charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum and sports matches against other schools;
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school;
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

5. WHERE CHARGES CAN BE MADE

The Academy **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, which can be retained by the student, for which the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances;
- use of community facilities.

Optional Extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. Optional extras include the following,

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - part of the National Curriculum;
 - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
 - part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- examination fees for examinations/resits requested by parents that are not considered necessary by the Trust
- transport that is not taking the student to the school or to other premises where the local authority or Principal, LGB or Trustees have arranged for the student to be provided with education.
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;
- Extended Services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions). Students in receipt of free school meals at secondary schools will automatically receive a credit on their account for breakfast.
- Nursery provision in primary schools. Costs are based on resource requirements to meet Early Years Foundation Stage and Ofsted regulations. The school will make every effort to avoid unnecessary costs to parents and will not seek to make a profit. The charging policy covers children accessing care additional to the Early Years free entitlement. No charge can be made for the Early Years free entitlement of 15/30 hours per week, but parents/carers can purchase additional childcare provision where available. Further details and terms and conditions are available from the school.
- Before school and after school childcare in primary schools. The level of fees and any remissions are set and reviewed regularly the Local Governing Body.
- Bus services provided for students on a private basis

When 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 (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- 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 students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. We reserve the right to cancel an activity if this is not financially viable.

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 students who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

Payment and refund terms and conditions for educational visits and trips will be included when details of trips and visits are announced.

Residential Activities

We will not charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided for any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on visits;
- residential activities that take place during school hours
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours

For the purposes of this section, 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, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Regardless of the starting and finishing times of the school, for the purposes of calculating a 'half day', the school is divided into two sessions and a 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

When any visit has been organised by FFET where there may be a cost for **board and lodging**, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. FFET will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision. Parents who are able to provide proof of receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost (see Section 7).

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per student. These charges may not apply to those students entitled to remissions, but no other students will be charged extra to cover those costs.

FFET may charge for **residential activities** that fall outside of school hours.

Music and Vocal Tuition

FFET follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music and vocal lessons are an exception to this rule by virtue of the Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007.

FFET will charge if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s).

FFET may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

FFET will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

FFET is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all students including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for students on free school meals. Recommendations for tuition will be received from the Creative Faculty lead.

There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for children in care. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

Damage, Breakages or Lost Items

Where FFET property has been wilfully damaged by a student or parent, or lost by a student due to their behaviour, FFET may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged or lost by a student due to their behaviour, and FFET has been charged, FFET may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Principal, LGB or Trustees and dependent on the situation.

A charge is unlikely to be made for accidental breakage, unless the student was not heeding previously stated safety procedures. The recovery of the full cost of deliberate breakage or vandalism to school property will be sought by FFET.

Work Experience

Work experience is no longer a statutory requirement for schools and therefore students who wish to participate must meet the cost of the arrangements for the work experience. The cost of travelling expenses from home to work experience placement will be the responsibility of the parent. The school will consider requests to cover the costs on the grounds of hardship.

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the additional, optional activity.

Participation in any additional, optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

6. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

As an exception to the requirements set out in this policy, FFET may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities that will enrich student's education. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and monies returned to parents who have already contributed.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. The identity of the student or parents who did not want to make the payment will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

FFET may ask parents for a voluntary contribution for the benefit of the Trust, school or school activity. This may include:

- any activity or visit which takes place during school hours;
- FFET equipment;
- FFET funds generally.

7. REMISSIONS AND CONCESSIONS

Parents may apply to FFET for remission of charges in whole or part towards the charges for activities. This is available on a case by case basis.

The Principal may use their discretion for cases of genuine hardship or situations arising from exceptional circumstances and invites parents to apply in writing, in strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. Proof of income or benefit may be requested.

The Principal will authorise remission in consultation with the Chair of the Local Governing Body, if deemed appropriate. All parents will have the right of appeal to FFET using the Trust Complaints Procedure.

There is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of a trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

FFET will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents who receive at least one of the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

FFET may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and students, and this will be determined by the Executive Principal or Head of School.

8. COMPLAINTS

FFET encourages parents who are not satisfied with arrangements and support provided by FFET to discuss their concerns directly with the school.

If the issue is not resolved with the school, a formal complaint can be made via FFET's Complaints Procedure.

9. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Principal holds delegated responsibility for implementation of this Charging and Remissions Policy.

All school staff have a responsibility to report serious breaches of this Charging and Remissions Policy to the Trustees.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Team and the FFET Trust Board.