

Charging & Remissions Policy

Ormiston Meridian Academy

Ormiston Academies Trust

Revision level	Revision date	Description of changes	
Prepared: <i>Signature</i>		Approved: <i>Signature</i>	Released: <i>Signature</i>

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Policy Version Control

Policy type	Internal Policy
Policy prepared by (name and department)	M Bennett, D Kirkham
Last review date	December 2022
Description of changes	New Policy
Date of approval	December 2022
Date released	January 2023
Next review date	September 2024

POLICY STATEMENT

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the governing body of Ormiston Meridian Academy must have a policy on charging students to participate in academy activities. By law, children may not be charged for activities that take place during the academy day.

Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions, but if they do not pay their child can not be prevented from participating, should the activity go ahead. In any request for voluntary payments, it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- there is no obligation to make any contribution; and
- students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

All staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with the academy's Policies and Procedures.

CHARGES

Provision of Education – No charge shall be made in relation to the education of registered students where education is provided during academy hours. Where education is provided outside of academy hours, no charge shall be made provided it is required as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or part of the National Curriculum. The academy, however, also offers a wide range of opportunities for students to broaden and enrich their educational experiences, some of which may involve additional costs. Parents will be asked to contribute to optional trips out of academy hours and for a voluntary contribution for visits undertaken in academy time. Should these contributions not meet the required additional expense, the academy may have to cancel the visit. Assistance with costs is available in cases of genuine hardship.

Musical Instrument Tuition – The academy may charge for practical instrumental lessons held during the academy day which are provided individually or to a group of not more than four students, unless they are required under the syllabus.

Practical Subjects – Charges may be made in practical subjects, so that students may experience a wide range of activities and develop essential basic skills. Examples of such occurrences could be ingredients or materials where parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Examinations – No charge shall be made in respect of the entry of a registered pupil at the academy for a prescribed public exam for which the student has been prepared at the academy unless the student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirement for that syllabus. If a student has not regularly attended the lessons for a particular examination subject, the examination fee may be requested, refundable if the student attends for

examination. There may be a charge for examination entry where there is a request from the parent for additional subject entries to be made which are not supported by the academy.

Charges may be made if a parent request a re-sit of a prescribed public examination or the remark of an exam paper (remark fees will be refundable if the grade is improved upon). All charges will be at the current Examination Board fee.

Incidental Charges – No student is expected to pay for text books. However, parents may be advised, as in the case of English, that if their children wish to annotate texts for examination purposes it would be desirable to purchase a personal copy of the text. Students may also be invited to purchase additional revision booklets/guides.

Visits during the academy day – Parents cannot be asked for a compulsory payment for any visit that is taking place during a normal “academy” day. Voluntary payments (including full staff costs) can be requested, but if the visit proceeds, students wishing to go but whose parents are not prepared to pay, will be allowed to attend. They can not, however, be subsidised by other parents. This may then mean that insufficient funds will be available and the trip may be cancelled.

Optional extra visits out of academy time or as part of extra-curricular activity – These are visits which are not part of a National Curriculum topic or part of a public examination preparation. Here parents can be asked to meet the full cost of the trip. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

Visits abroad will incur the full charge. Any charge for a particular activity will be dependent upon the type of activity and its cost and the number of participants. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

This compulsory payment will not include:

- Subsidising students unable to pay
- Staff costs.

Residential visits including study visits abroad – Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal academy time or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip can be classified as optional. As an optional trip, the cost of board and lodging for the student will be passed on to parents. The cost of staff accommodation, insurance and transport must be obtained by voluntary payments if the trip is to go ahead.

Recovery of sums payable by parents – Any sums payable by parents – for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they have agreed, or for board and lodging, are recoverable as a civil debt.

Breakages and fines – parents may be charged for the cost of replacing damaged or lost equipment where appropriate.

Transport – Where a student makes use of transport not provided by the academy to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided, by the LEA or the academy, then parents will be expected to meet the costs of such travel.

CHARGES FOR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came fully into force on 1st January 2005. The Academy will respond to straight forward requests, for individuals, at no cost But may make charges where the costs are significant.

REMISSIONS

The academy is sympathetic to families who are unable to afford the cost of additional activities and/or extra-curricula activities, and has a limited amount of money set aside to assist parents in particularly difficult financial circumstances. Approaches for such assistance may be made to a member of staff, who will then consult the Principal.