

FOOTSTEPS TRUST CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Footsteps Trust Academy is committed to ensuring that educational opportunities are accessible, inclusive and offered fairly to all students.

This policy explains:

- Activities for which charges may be made.
- Activities for which charges cannot be made.
- Circumstances where remissions or reductions may be considered.
- The principles governing voluntary contributions.
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2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy has regard to:

- Education Act 1996 (Sections 449-462)
- Equality Act 2010
- Department for Education Charging for School Activities Guidance
- Independent School Standards
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance

3. Definitions

Charge

A fee payable for a specifically defined activity, service or resource.

Remission

The full or partial cancellation of a charge which would otherwise be payable.

Voluntary Contribution

A contribution requested from parents, carers or commissioning agencies to support an activity, where there is no obligation to contribute.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Proprietor/Governing Body

The Proprietor or delegated committee is responsible for:

- Approving the Charging and Remissions Policy.
- Monitoring implementation.
- Reviewing charges and remissions annually.

Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is applied consistently.
- Authorising charges where appropriate.
- Considering requests for remissions.

Finance Manager

The Finance Manager is responsible for:

- Monitoring charges and remissions.
- Maintaining appropriate financial records.
- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Applying the policy consistently.
- Seeking clarification where necessary.
- Informing parents and carers of relevant charges in advance.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Raise any concerns regarding charges promptly.
- Inform the Academy regarding concerns or queries regarding this policy.

5. Activities for Which Charges Cannot Be Made

The Academy will not charge for:

- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from Footsteps
- Accompanying Students on a residential visit

6. Activities for Which Charges May Be Made

The Academy may charge for:

Commissioned Alternative Provision

Including:

- Core fees for a place on Footsteps course.
- Fees for additional support for a student
- 1-2-1 lessons, individual learning mentors
- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Community facilities Education provided during Footsteps' hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside Footsteps' hours
- A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at Footsteps
- 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/carers
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the Student has been prepared for it at Footsteps
- Examination re-sit(s) if the Student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at Footsteps These charges are normally paid by commissioning schools or local authorities.

7. Optional Extras

The Academy may charge for optional extras including:

- Footsteps can charge for activities known as ‘optional extras.’ In these cases, there can be a charge for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.
- Education provided outside of Footsteps time that is not part of the national curriculum or a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at Footsteps
- Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at Footsteps
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to Footsteps or to other premises where the local authority/governing body has arranged for the Student to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-Footsteps clubs, and supervised homework sessions)
- Holiday or weekend sessions/clubs
- 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
 - Cost of supporting 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.
- In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during Footsteps 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.

- Transporting registered students to or from Footsteps premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for Students to be educated
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at Footsteps
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit
- 5.4 Residential visits
- Education provided on any visit that takes place during Footsteps hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside Footsteps' hours if it is part of the national curriculum or a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at Footsteps

The above lists are not complete lists.

8. Voluntary Contributions

The Academy may request voluntary contributions for activities that enhance educational opportunities.

Examples may include:

- Educational visits.
- Enrichment programmes.
- Cultural experiences.
- Special events.

Parents and carers are under no obligation to contribute. Students will not be treated differently or excluded because a contribution has not been made.

However, where insufficient funding is received, the Academy may have to cancel the activity.

9. Damage, Loss and Replacement Costs

The Academy reserves the right to seek reimbursement where there is evidence of:

- Deliberate damage.
- Vandalism.
- Negligent damage.

- Loss of Academy property.

This may include:

- Books.
- Equipment.
- Furniture.
- ICT equipment.
- Vehicles.
- Facilities.

Any charge will normally reflect repair or replacement costs and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

10. Lettings and Community Use

The Academy may make facilities available for community use.

Charges will ordinarily reflect:

- Staffing requirements.
- Heating and lighting.
- Cleaning.
- Security.
- Administrative costs.

Lettings arrangements are managed in accordance with the Lettings Policy.

11. Remissions

The Academy recognises that some families may experience financial hardship.

Requests for remission or reduced charges will be considered sensitively and confidentially.

Factors considered may include:

- Financial hardship.
- Vulnerability.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Looked After Child status.

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- Exceptional family circumstances.

Residential Visits

The Academy may reduce or waive residential charges where appropriate for families receiving qualifying benefits.

Supporting evidence may be requested.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Finance Manager and Principal will monitor implementation of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier in response to:

- Legislative changes.
- Updated Department for Education guidance.
- Changes to Academy provision.
- Recommendations from audit or governance review.