

Charging and Remissions Policy

Statement of Intent:

Belmont Academy is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances and has established the following policy to ensure that the family or child is discriminated against when offering our enrichment provision which includes school trips, residential visits, activities and educational extras.

We are committed to adhering to the legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting the DfE statutory guidance.

Legal Framework:

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE Charging for School Activities
- DfE Governance Handbook

Charging for Education:

Parents/carers will not be charged for:

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (our school hours are set out in our school prospectus)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless 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.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.
- Educational resources to include stationery equipment, workbooks and any materials that support/supplement learning.

We may charge parents/carers for the following optional extras:

- Materials/resources, where they desire their child to own them.

- Attendance to after school club activities hosted on school site by both school staff and external providers (not including Cherry Tree After School club provision which operates under its own remit).
- Music tuition
- Education outside of school time that is not:
 - o Part of the National Curriculum
 - o Part of a syllabus including RE
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Transportations, board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

Participation in any of the above will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.

Charges for optional extras will be remitted by 40% of the total cost if children are in receipt of Free School Meals or shown to be Pupil Premium.

Voluntary Contributions:

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents at any time to subsidise an activity, e.g. a school trip taken wholly or mainly in school hours. There is no obligation on parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution; a child will not be excluded from an activity if their parent/carer does not send in a voluntary contribution. However, an activity may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

Music Tuition:

Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parent.

Belmont Academy collaborates with Bexley Music Service to provide music tuition to its pupils. The school collects tuition fees on behalf of Bexley Music. Individual music tuition, including the hire cost of instruments, where not part of the syllabus, may incur charges. Where charges are made, parents/carers will not be asked to pay more than the cost of the actual provision for their child.

Charges for music tuition will be remitted by 40% of the total cost if children are in receipt of Free School Meals or shown to be Pupil Premium.

Damaged or Lost Items:

The school may charge parents for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to lack of care this includes reading books, stationery resources.

The school will charge for equipment loaned to families which is broken, damaged or lost whilst in their possession.

Remissions:

The school has a fund available to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their child/ren on visits and activities that incur a charge. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee all requests can be met.

Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity may not go ahead.

Parents of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals or those that are eligible for Pupil Premium through previous benefits related Free School Meals are eligible for financial assistance which provides a 40% discount on the total cost of any trip or activity incurring a charge.

School Trip Refunds:

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded whereby the trip cannot be rescheduled. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Head Teacher will consult the governing body on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher as to whether a refund is given. The Head Teacher will consult the governing body on the matter, taking into consideration the reason for the cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher as to whether a refund is given, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The Head Teacher will discuss options with the governing body which could include carrying forward the

money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip or refunding parents.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedure Policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and Head Teacher.