



# **CHARGES & REMISSIONS POLICY**

## Charges & Remissions Policy

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### CHARGING POLICIES

In general the provision of education is free but as permitted by the Education Act 1996 charges are permissible in the areas listed below. The Act gives LAs and Academies the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of Academy hours, and the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Academy or in support of any activity organized by the Academy whether during or outside school hours.

The Governors operate the following policy on charges and contributions for Academy activities where such activities involve additional expenditure.

The policy is required to take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made. If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost. This information will be made available to parents. Parents will be given notice of any proposed change to the policy.

The remissions policy will set out the circumstances in which the school propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable in accordance with their charging policy. Torquay Academy continues to commit to the provision of equal opportunities for all students.

#### 1. Charges

The Academy will charge in the following circumstances allowed by the Education Act 1996:

- a. The provision of music tuition given to students as individuals or groups except in the following:
  - Statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum
  - Requirements specified in the syllabus for a public exam.
- b. Ingredients and materials for cooking and DT (Design and Technology):

Materials will be charged for, or parents will be required to supply these, if the parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

- c. The use of personal IT devices to support learning. For full details see 'Chromebooks for 6<sup>th</sup> Form' scheme.
- d. Activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours and which are not a statutory part of the National Curriculum: eg outings, visits, sport coaching/courses.

Charges will be made for all or part of a pupil's travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and equipment, entrance fees, non-teaching staff costs, supply costs, insurance and costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for the activity.

- e. Activities which involve students in nights away from home:

Charges will be made for board and lodging. Families in receipt of benefits as shown under 'Financial Assistance' will be eligible for financial assistance.

- f. No charges will be made for examination entries except where:
  - The school has not prepared the pupil to take an earlier exam.
  - The pupil has failed to complete the requirements of the exam without a valid reason.

Charges must **not exceed actual cost** otherwise there may be VAT implications. Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the actual optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not include an element of subsidy for any other pupil wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the charge in full.

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. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from Academy accompanying students on a residential visit.

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

## 2. Financial Assistance

Families in receipt of the following benefits will be eligible for financial assistance. The value of this assistance will normally be 50% of the cost of the activity or £150, whichever is lower. A 'Request for Financial Assistance' form should be completed for each activity so that the Parent/Carer acknowledges the contribution that they need to make.

Where an activity includes residential costs the financial assistance will in the first instance cover the board and lodgings element.

Benefits:

- Universal Credit (UC) where earned income is below £7400.
- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190 (correct as at October 2015)
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.
- Where a child has been in receipt of Free School Meals within the previous 6 years.

### **3. Voluntary Contributions**

Voluntary contributions will be sought from parents for activities which supplement the normal school curriculum, e.g. outings and visits which take place wholly or mainly during Academy hours; visits to the Academy by theatre groups and other organisations providing an educational service.

When voluntary contributions are requested, the terms of the request will clearly state:

- I. There is no obligation to contribute
- II. Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution
- III. The proposed activity may not take place unless a substantial majority of parents contribute
- IV. A suggested amount for a contribution to cover costs.

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the benefits detailed above are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

#### 4. Remission

It is the Policy of the Governing Body:

- To offer financial assistance in the circumstances listed above
- To look at individual cases where parents have been unable to give a donation
- To agree how to fund shortfalls for activities where it is agreed that the activity will go ahead

#### 5. Other Charges

##### *Private Photocopying/telephone calls*

Private photocopying is charged at the current reprographics rate. Private telephone calls are charged at the current telephone charging rates. Both of these are subject to VAT regulations.

##### *Income from Sales – Non profit Making*

Some goods may be purchased through the Academy for the convenience of parents, students or teachers. The Academy will not seek to make a profit from these sales other than those needed to cover administrative costs. Goods in the category include Academy clothing, stationery, books, calculators, instruments etc

##### *Income from Sales – Profit Making*

Some goods will be sold through the Academy with the intention of making a profit and thus raising money for the Academy or charity. This includes vending sales.

##### *Income from Donations*

From time to time the Academy will seek voluntary donations for specific purposes. This may be via non-uniform days, sponsorship, etc. It will be made clear at the time of asking that such donations are voluntary and the purpose for which the donations will be used.

##### *Income from Lettings*

The Finance & Estates Committee reviews and sets charges made for use of Academy premises. The charges include actual caretaking costs, insurance and a premises charge.

See Lettings Policy for further details.

## **6. Responsibilities**

Authority for day-to-day management of the policy is delegated to the Principal who will determine the costs of activities other than those set by the Governors.

The level of charges is a matter for the Governing Body. It is recommended that all charges should include a reasonable element for overheads like electricity, heating, caretaker's overtime, etc. Other things to consider are whether the Academy aims to make a profit, to meet actual costs or to offer a letting at a subsidy.

All staff responsible for collecting income are made aware of the current charge rates and are aware of VAT implications.

The Charging Policy is reviewed by the Governing Body annually.

## **7. Damage to Property**

The governing body reserve the right to ask the parents of students whose inappropriate behaviour causes damage to contribute to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property. This will include any damage to School's Mini Bus.

## **8. The Law & Guidance**

Education Act 1996: sections 449 - 462