



Charging, Remission and Refund Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline items where charges may be applied and clarify the position regarding subsidy and refunds.

This policy has been prepared in line with DfE requirements and in accordance with section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

Charging

All education during school hours is free. Barnes Infant Academy does not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. The Academy charges for optional extras, where education is provided outside of Academy time and not as part of the national curriculum.

The Trust Board recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including Academy visits and clubs, can make towards all aspects of our pupils' education. The Trust Board promotes and provides such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the benefit of all pupils at the Academy.

The Trust Board cannot charge for:

- education provided during Academy hours relating to the National Curriculum (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside Academy hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the Academy.

The Trust Board reserves the right to make appropriate and fair charges for the following activities:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them;
- Optional Extras (see Voluntary Contributions);
- Individual or group music tuition (see Music Tuition).

Voluntary Contributions

When organising activities or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the Academy invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If sufficient voluntary contributions are not received the activity or visit may be cancelled.

The following list of additional activities/visits, known as optional extras often require voluntary contributions from parents/carers:

- External visits to museums, farms etc.
- Activities which require transport expenses;
- Outdoor adventure activities;
- Visits to the theatre;
- Musical events;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip;
- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.

Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra. Costs will be divided equally by the number of pupils participating and the Academy does not aim to make a profit from these activities/visits. Occasionally, where possible the Academy may subsidise trips/visits.

Participation in any optional extra requires parental agreement.

Music Tuition

There is a charge for individual or group music tuition that does not form part of the National Curriculum. Charges for lessons are made at a discounted rate and instruments are provided free of charge.

Study Support

Study support provided through Breakfast and After-school Clubs are optional extras and as such the Trust Board will charge parents/carers for providing these services. Charges for these services are reviewed annually and the Trust Board reserves the right to increase costs accordingly.

Where children are collected late from school teaching staff will remain with children for a maximum of 10 minutes before children will join after school club. The after school club fee will be charged in full for all children who attend the club due to late collection.

School Meals

Where a pupil is not entitled to free school meals, a charge determined by the Trust Board will be made to parents/carers where a child stays for a school meal.

Nursery Lunches

Children in Nursery have the option to stay at school for lunch for an additional one hour per day. A charge is made for this optional extra which covers childcare and the cost of a school meal.

Residential Trips

If the Academy organises a residential visit which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum no charges will be made. However charges can be made to cover the costs of board, lodging and transport.

Lettings

If the Academy facilities are made available to external users a charge determined by the Trust Board will be made.

Other charges

The Trust Board may charge for miscellaneous services and goods, such as items produced for sale where a charge will be made to purchase. There is no obligation to purchase any such items.

Remissions

Children eligible for Pupil Premium funding may have the cost of the activities and/or visits subsidised. This will be reviewed annually and will be dependent upon funding.

Receiving Payments

The Academy accepts payment by cash, cheque, online via the Sunderland City Council website or through a childcare voucher scheme. Restrictions are in place for childcare voucher schemes, meaning the vouchers can only be accepted towards childcare services, such as breakfast club, after school club and nursery lunches.

It is expected that payments are made to the Academy at least one week in advance for services and before any visit takes place. Payments can also be accepted for longer periods, such as monthly, half termly or termly, where appropriate. Monies owed should not accrue for more than one week. In these instances the Academy will endeavour to recover the fees before services are terminated the following week.

Unpaid Fee Collection

Where services are provided and fees are unpaid following numerous contacts the Academy will initiate debt collection procedures. Continued non-payment could result in legal action, and if necessary court summons. The case could be passed to the Small Claims Court and non-payment can result in County Court Judgements (CCJ's) being added to the individuals credit rating.

Refunds

Refunds shall only be considered if a pupil is unable to take part in an activity/visit. Any refund of costs obtained by the Academy will be passed to the parent/carer where applicable. Refunds cannot be issued where additional costs are incurred by the Academy, for example where goods/services are purchased collectively and paid in advance by the Academy.

Any applications for refunds can be made in writing to the Headteacher. Each application will be assessed individually.