



SIR ROBERT PATTINSON ACADEMY

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Approved in School: November 2023
Approved by Governors: 11 December 2023
Review Date: September 2026

CHARGING POLICY

Introduction

Sir Robert Pattinson Academy believes that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from Academy activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Please note that, in some circumstances, the Academy can make a specific charge towards the cost of a trip or activity but, in other circumstances, they can ask for a voluntary contribution in order to allow a visit or activity to take place and offer a wide variety of experiences to students. All requests for contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and that students of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils should not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

This charging policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The definition of a charge is a fee payable for specifically defined activity.

The definition of a remission is the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but has delegated this to the Audit and Compliance committee. This committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2 Headmaster

The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Headmaster or EVC of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headmaster of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of Religious education

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the board of Trustees or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

Residential/non-residential visits

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

Departments will make it clear to parents at the outset what the policy is for allocating places on academy visits as detailed in the Educational Visits protocol.

1. Day Activities

- Voluntary contributions will be requested for activities which take place during the school day. The letter will indicate if the activity cannot take place without the voluntary contributions or if there are insufficient voluntary contributions that the trip may have to be cancelled.
- The Academy will ensure no child is excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay a charge or a voluntary contribution.

2. Residential Activity

- A charge will be made for all residential visits which take place outside of school time.
- If a residential activity takes place during school time and meets the requirements of a syllabus for a public examination, charges will be made for board and lodgings and a voluntary contribution sought towards other costs.

A trip counts as falling within school if the number of school sessions missed by the student amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity.

For example:

- Wed pm to Sun pm is 9 sessions of which 5 are in school - this counts as in school time
- Thu pm to Sun pm is 7 sessions of which 3 are in school - this counts as out of school time

It is not possible to fund all Academy visits and additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the Academy, and the Academy will request a voluntary contribution from parents towards the cost of the trip. Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions and Academy funds to make the activity possible, then it will be cancelled.

Please see flowchart in Appendix A.

Please note:

No charge or voluntary contribution should be requested from parents to cover the inclusion of teaching staff

No charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Examination Entries

1. A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students where the Academy has prepared the student for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the student should not be entered and the student's parent/guardian wishes the student to be entered (or student him/herself when over 18 years old). In these circumstances, if the student subsequently passes the examination, the Academy may refund the cost.
2. A charge may be levied for students re-sitting an examination.
3. A charge will be levied where a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the academy paid or agreed to pay the entry fee. The charge levied will be the cost of the examination entry, plus any additional cost to the centre.
4. The checking of a student's examination paper will be levied to parents unless the Trustees wish to have a number of scripts checked.

Materials/Textbooks/Equipment

1. Where a student or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. In the case of Food Technology, students usually provide their own ingredients, but if the student forgets, the academy provides the ingredients and levies a charge.
2. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides or prepared booklets are available, for which a charge is made.

Music Tuition

The academy levies charges in respect of individual music tuition, and group music tuition up to and including 4 persons, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

Activities Outside School Hours

1. No charge will be made for activities outside school hours that are part of the Curriculum or that form an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.
2. For all other activities outside school hours, a charge up to the cost of the activity will be levied.

Damage/Loss to Property

1. A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of Academy property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headmaster may decide.
2. A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the academy. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headmaster may decide.

Lettings

The academy will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. Please refer to the Lettings Protocol.

Other charges

The Headmaster, Audit and Compliance Committee or Board of Trustees may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

Activities not run by the academy

When an organisation acting independently arranges an activity to take place during the school day and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents would then need to agree to their child being absent from school. If the activity is organised by the academy then it would come under a day activity above.

Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Community facilities

Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- Non-teaching 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 pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils 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 school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

Remissions

The Board of Trustees recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year on the parent portal so that parents can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- The Headmaster, Audit & Compliance Scrutiny Committee or the Board of Trustees may remit in full or part charges in respect of a student, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.
- If the parent/guardian of a student is in receipt of any of the following, charges in respect of board and lodging will be remitted in full plus considerations to other charges will be made:
 - Income Support (IS)
 - Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance (IBJSA)
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Asylum support)
 - Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190).
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Universal Credit – if you applied on or after 1st April 2018 your household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get
 - Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

NB: Special consideration will be given to families where children qualify for Pupil Premium funding.

The above information relating to benefits will be subject to any changes in national legislation. (Correct at October 2021)

Further source of information

DfE guidance - Charging for school activities (May2018)

Educational Visits protocol

Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462

Returns and Refunds Procedures

