



St Thomas More Primary School Policy on Charging for and Remissions for Academy Activities

Inspired by the life and message of Jesus, and believing that every child is made in the image of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, St Thomas More Primary School is just like a family, where everyone is welcomed; where everyone is loved, respected and cared for; where everyone is helped to achieve their very best, and where God is at the heart of everything we do, St Thomas More Primary School believes that:

The Committee representatives of St Thomas More Primary School believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from academy activities and visits, curricular and extra curricular, independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all academies to have a policy on charging and remissions for academy activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

1. The policy identifies activities for which:

- **voluntary contributions may be requested**
- **charges will be made**
- **charges will not be made.**
- **charges may be waived**

2. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, academies may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the Academy Committee or Principal will make this clear to parents from the outset.

No child will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents are unable or unwilling to pay.

If insufficient contributions are received, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will still be given an equal chance to participate in the trip or activity.

3. No charges will be made for

- a) An admission application to any maintained academy
- b) Education provided during academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- c) 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 the academy's basic curriculum for religious education;
- d) Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) 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;
- e) Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the academy*;
- f) Examination re-sit(s)* if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academy;
- g) Education provided on any trip that takes place during academy hours (see 4a);
- h) Education provided on any trip that takes place outside academy hours (see 4a)
 - a. if it is part of the National Curriculum, or
 - b. part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy, or
 - c. part of the academy's basic curriculum for religious education;
- i) Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from academy accompanying pupils on a residential trip;
- j) Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

* If a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus a charge may / will be made.

4. Charges may be made for

a) Activities outside academy hours

Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed in Section 3 above) which take place outside academy hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside academy hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during academy hours). (See Section 9)

b) Residential visits during academy hours

The board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during academy time, However pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or appropriate sized groups of pupils to play a musical instrument or to sing and which is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus for all pupils.

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. This should recognise that parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

5. Optional Extras

Is a residential trip in or out of academy time?

If the number of academy sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during academy hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the academy day, regulations require that the academy day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Charges may be made for optional activities that are known as ‘Optional Extras’. Any charges made will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision

It is the policy of St Thomas More that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

		Remitted or help available
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Remission for category A (see below) For families not in Category A, charge may be waived or reduced at Principal’s discretion.
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;	Eg. A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay.	Charge can be waived or reduced at Principal’s discretion.
Charges will/may be made for music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or appropriate groups pupils	Charge can be waived or reduced at Principal’s discretion.

6. When Charges may be Waived

In order to remove financial barriers from pupils, the Academy Committee has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which such charges will be waived.

7. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges.

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above, the criteria for qualification for remission are given below.

Category A

Parents in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (April 11).
- Guaranteed State Pension

In addition, at the discretion of the Principal, charges may be waived or reduced for families who do not qualify under Category A, but who are in financial or other difficulties, or where these charges may prove onerous (for example, for families with two or more children attending the same academy activity at the same time, eg twins).

8. Is an academy visit in or out of academy time?

When any visit is arranged, parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

If the number of academy sessions on an academy visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit it is deemed to have taken place during academy hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the academy day, regulations require that the academy day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

9. Additional considerations

The Academy Committee 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 academy year so that parents can plan ahead. We will endeavour to ensure that the majority of requests for charges or voluntary contributions are made in a timely manner.
- 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
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.