



The Brickfields Trust

Charging, Remissions and Refunds Policy

November 2023

The Brickfields Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. School meals
3. Educational visits
4. Residential trips
5. Music tuition
6. Swimming
7. Activities outside school hours
8. **Breakfast Club and After School Club** (*adopted to support parents and carers with childcare arrangements*)
9. Damage/loss to property
10. Voluntary contributions
11. Lettings
12. DBS checks
13. Other charges
14. Remissions
15. Refunds

The Board of Trustees has resolved to make charges as allowed by sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996

The Brickfields Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

1. Introduction

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, with the exception of some additional activities listed below, where a voluntary contribution is requested.

2. School Meals

The charge for a school meal will be set annually by the Board of Trustees following consideration of the Catering Trading Accounts as part of the annual budget setting process.

All meals taken by pupils who are not eligible for free school meals will be chargeable, parents/carers are expected to make prompt payment. Where payments are not made in advance of the meal being taken, parents/carers will be reminded of their debt by email/ letter.

There is no charge for pupils who are entitled to free school meals or universal infant free school meals.

3. Educational Visits

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary but if contributions are insufficient to cover the cost, the school reserves the right to cancel the visit.

The decision to cancel a trip will be taken on a case by case basis and will take into account the number of people declining to contribute and the funding shortfall.

We will not exclude a child from participating in an activity during the school day on financial grounds

Additional activities organised by the school that require voluntary contributions from parents may include:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities that incur transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- theatre visits;
- visitors to school that enhance the curriculum.

4. Residential Trips

If the school organises a residential trip in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of the board, lodging and travel expenses. If the residential trip is not directly linked to the National Curriculum parents will be asked to cover all costs involved in running this trip.

The costs of residential activities can be high and such activities may only continue to be available if sufficient costs are recovered.

The Brickfields Trust Charging and Remissions Policy

Charges that apply:

- travel costs – transport to and from the residential activity
- board and lodging
full cost of board and lodging on residential trips whether or not it takes place during school hours
- costs of supply staff engaged to cover the staff accompanying pupils on a residential trip where the trip takes place during term time
- full cost recovery for residential activities that take place outside of school hours

Parents/carers will be informed of the cost before the activity takes place

NB. Where required the academy will subsidise the cost of any residential trip for children of families eligible for free school meals by 10% per pupil. Please also refer to Section 14 on Remissions.

5. Music Tuition

Instrumental tuition or singing lessons do not form part of the curriculum but are an additional activity arranged by the academy and delivered by specialist tutors either on an individual basis or as part of a group, following parental request. The cost of such lessons is dependent on the charges applied by the tutors, the size of the group, the duration and frequency of each lesson.

The academy trust operates on full cost recovery basis. However, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, charges for music tuition within school hours for pupils eligible for free school meals or children in care will be considered for remission in accordance with this policy (see remissions section).

Tuition in percussion, brass and woodwind is offered on a termly basis. Charges made for the cost of lessons and the hire of instruments are dictated by Essex Music Services. Vouchers for music tuition are available for low income families.

Vouchers can only be used for tuition in Essex local authority schools from Essex Music Services tutors under contract to the school. Vouchers cannot be used for private tuition.

6. Swimming

Swimming lessons take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. The curriculum requires all children to be able to swim 25m by the end of KS2 and the academies within the trust ensure that every child meets this requirement by funding swimming in at least one year group at KS2.

Where additional swimming lessons are provided for other year groups – exceeding the requirements of the National Curriculum - we do ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of this activity as funding received in the school budget does not fully cover this. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part.

The Brickfields Trust Charging and Remissions Policy

7. Activities Outside School Hours

No charge is made for activities that are outside of school hours as part of the core curriculum. However, we may ask for a contribution towards materials. For all other activities outside of school hours, a charge up to the cost of the activity will be levied. This may apply where an outside provider is delivering the session.

Parents/carers will be advised of any such costs before their child is allowed to undertake any such activity and participation will be on the basis of the parent's willingness to pay the charges.

8. Breakfast and After School clubs

These clubs are offered to support parents/carers with childcare arrangements. Therefore charges apply to cover the academies' costs in operating this provision. These are made clear to parents/carers and are paid in advance.

9. Damage/Loss to property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the head of school may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

10. Voluntary contributions

The trust's academies may, from time to time, ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions to the academy's general funds in order to assist with the provision of resources to enhance their children's education. There will be no pressure exerted and any contribution will be gratefully received.

Where the voluntary contribution applies to an educational visit or extra-curricular activity, if the sufficient level of contributions is not achieved, that activity will be cancelled; any monies already collected will be refunded to the relevant parents/carers.

11. Lettings

The trust schools will make their facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges is determined annually by the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee and form part of our separate Lettings policy.

12. DBS checks

The academy trust will cover the cost of DBS checks for all employed staff. The academy trust will not cover the cost of DBS checks for volunteers unless they have been asked to volunteer by the school.

The Brickfields Trust Charging and Remissions Policy

13. Other Charges

The CEO, Finance Risk and Audit committee or Board of Trustees may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, e.g. Photocopying.

14. Remissions

Any parent facing financial difficulty should contact their child's school to discuss their concerns. All claims for remissions of charges will be dealt with confidentially. Many financial contributions are voluntary and parents are not under obligation to contribute.

The academy will consider the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the relevant support payments (in accordance with the current DfE listing) which make their child/children eligible for free school meals and for children in care. The CEO will authorise the remission of charges in all cases.

The academy may decide to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils; each event or case will be considered individually by the Head of School.

15. Refunds

School meals

Where payment for a school meal is received in advance and the pupil is absent due to illness, the funds will be retained to be used for future meals.

If the academy has to cancel meal provision for a short time, the income received in advance will be recorded against each individual pupil to be used to cover future meals; where that amount exceeds £30 for any one pupil, the parent/carer may request a refund.

When a pupil leaves the academy and income has been received but meals not taken, the parent is entitled to request a refund where the figure exceeds £10, lesser amounts will be retained in academy funds.

Educational visits

When a pupil is absent due to illness and does not attend an educational visit, the transport/entrance cost will not be refunded, where already committed. However, where possible, the academy will endeavour to recover costs related to that activity and, if successful, will then refund the parent/carer.

If a trip has to be cancelled by the academy, parental contributions will be refunded, less any initial deposits withheld by the venue. Where contributions for an activity exceed the final total cost by more than £5 per pupil, a refund will be given. Excess income less than £5 per pupil will be retained in academy funds. Excess expenditure will be paid from academy funds.

Residential activities

If a pupil does not attend a residential activity due to illness, the academy will endeavour to recover costs, through the trip insurance and, if successful, will then pass this refund onto the parent/carer; please note that initial deposits may be retained by the travel company.

The Brickfields Trust Charging and Remissions Policy

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the travel company, the academy will endeavour to recover full refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto the parents/carers.

Where a residential trip is cancelled by the academy, parental contributions already received will be refunded, less any initial deposits withheld by the venue.

Music Tuition

Where Instrumental or singing lessons are cancelled by the tutor or the academy, and payment has already been received, the academy will transfer the funds to cover future lessons taken by the relevant pupil. If lessons are not being continued in the following term, the parent/carer may request a refund.

Where a pupil fails to attend a pre-booked lesson, refunds do not apply.

Extra-curricular activities

If a pupil does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where curriculum related clubs are cancelled by the academy, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where pupils are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.

Outside of school hours activities - not part of the curriculum,

If a pupil does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where the activity is cancelled by the academy, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where pupils are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.

Where the activity is arranged by the academy but has been cancelled by external organisers/tutors/sports coaches, the academy will endeavour to obtain refunds which, upon receipt, will be passed onto the parents/carers.

Where an activity arranged by external organisers directly with parents/carers is cancelled, the parents/carers must contact the organisers to obtain a refund in accordance with the separate booking agreement.

Breakfast and After School Clubs

If a pupil does not attend an activity due to illness, no refund applies.

Where the club is cancelled by the academy, the income received will be held to cover the cost of the next round. Where pupils are not taking part in the future, parents/carers are entitled to request a refund.