

GOSFORTH GROUP CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

1. Admissions

There is no charge for admissions.

2. Community facilities

The Trust makes its facilities available to outside users for a charge in accordance with the lettings policies for each academy which are agreed annually by the Trustees.

3. School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals. Students who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged on a daily basis.

4. Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the Trust's set examinations lists, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the Trust.

There may be a charge if -

- The student fails without good reason/medical certificate to complete the examination requirements the Trust may recover the fee incurred from that student's parents.
- There may be a charge of the examination entry fee if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination at the academy.
- Examination entries where there is a request from the parent for additional subject entries to be made which are not supported by the academy.
- Where amendments to examination entries are necessary after the deadline rule.
- A student wishes to do re-sits, except where the student has not achieved a grade 4 in GCSE English or GCSE Maths.
- Individual appeals by one candidate to the examination board on parental requests – payment must be made before the appeal is lodged.

5. Activities that take place during Trust hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the day)

There is no charge for activities during Trust hours with the exception of music tuition **(section 8)**.

There is no charge for transport during Trust hours to Trust-organised activities.

We may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras **(section 5)**
- music or vocal tuition **(section 8)**.

6. Activities that take place outside of Trust hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of Trust hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum, including sports matches against other schools
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the student is being prepared for by the academy
- part of the academy's basic curriculum for religious education.

Optional extras

The Trust will charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of Trust time that is **not**:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the academy
 - c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the academy
- transport that is not taking the student to the academy or to other premises where the local authority or Trustees has arranged for the student to be provided with education.
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

The cost of optional extras

The individual Academy Principal will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities.

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge (**section 12**).

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The Trust will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

7. Activities that take place *partly* during Trust hours either on or off site

Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during Trust hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 4**.

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of Trust hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the academy accompanying students on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 5**.

8. Residential activities

Our Trust will not charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during Trust hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place inside or outside Trust hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public

examination that the student is being prepared for at the academy, or part of religious education

- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the academy accompanying students on a residential visit
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within Trust hours
- residential activities that take place during Trust hours.

Our Trust will charge for:

Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the Trust where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during Trust hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying some of this cost** (see **section 11** for more guidance on remissions).

Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of Trust hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per student. These charges may not apply to those students entitled to remissions, but no other students will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities

The Trust may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of Trust hours (**see section 5**).

9. Music tuition within Trust hours

The Trust follows government legislation that states that all education provided during Trust hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

The Trust may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The Trust will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

The Trust is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all students including access to specialised music tuition. Therefore students on free school meals who receive specialised music tuition within Trust hours may receive a contribution to the cost from the Trust.

10. Extended services

The Trust is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). Extended services enable our Trust to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the Trust day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services (such as health, social care or special educational needs services)
- ways of increasing student engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of students.

The total charge will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise others.

11. Damage to property and breakages

Where Trust property has been wilfully damaged by a student or parent the Trust may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a student, and the Trust has been charged, the Trust may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Principal and dependent on the situation.

12. Remissions and concessions

The Trust will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The Academy Principal and Director of Finance will authorise the remission of charges.

The Trust may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and students, and this will be determined by the Academy Principal and the Director of Finance.

13. Voluntary contributions

The Trust may ask for voluntary contributions to the Trust for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our students' education.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the Trust. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the Academy will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

14. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Gosforth Group is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all students, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 14 September 2023