

# Brook Learning Trust

## Charging and Remissions Policy



At Brook Learning Trust we bring together our unique academies in our belief in the power of education to change lives and communities. It is our steadfast purpose to challenge and defy the barriers that constrain the educational progress of any child. We set high aims for aspiration and secure collective responsibility for all our children's achievements. Our work is underpinned by the values of Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Excellence and Accountability.

### Aims & Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide clarity over the types of activity for which charges might be made to parents. This policy is fully compliant with the provisions of the Education Reform Act, 1996 (sections 449-462), which sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools.

### Education

BLT cannot charge for:

- Admission
- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- Education provided out of school 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 school, or part of religious education
- Individual or group instrumental or vocal tuition, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

BLT may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes the child to own them

### Optional Extras

BLT may charge for:

- education provided outside of school 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 school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the academy has arranged for the student to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;
- extended day services offered to students (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore

include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

### **Music and vocal tuition**

BLT cannot charge for:

- any music teaching that forms an essential part of the national curriculum
- music tuition for any child who is looked after by the Local Authority

BLT may charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or in groups, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

### **Voluntary contributions**

BLT may ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible, such as school trips and sporting activities. 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. In the event that a school trip ends with a surplus balance in excess of £5 per pupil, refunds will be made to parents for the overpaid amount. Any surpluses which do not meet the £5 refund threshold will be transferred to the voluntary fund.

### **Students eligible for Free School Meals**

Students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits, and therefore entitled to Free School Meals, are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging in relation to residential trips that are necessary for the delivery of the national curriculum.

BLT may, at its absolute discretion, apply a proportion of its Pupil Premium funding to subsidise optional extras or activities during the school day which are normally funded through a voluntary contribution, for those students who are eligible for free school meals. Decisions around the use of such funds will be based on equality of access, fairness and available funds.

#### **POLICY REVIEW AND RATIFICATION**

Policy reviewed bi-annually and ratified by BLT Finance Committee in February

This review by BLT Finance Director      February 2021

Summary of amendments to this iteration:      Addition of last two sentences under 'Voluntary Contributions' stating policy regarding surplus balances

Ratified by Finance Committee      February 2021

Next review      February 2023