NPAT CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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Northampton Primary Academy Trust is proud to produce written materials that consider the British Dyslexia Association style guide principles.

POLICY REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary if/when any changes are made to legislation that affect our Trust's practice. Otherwise, or from then on, this policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the full Trust board.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Northampton Primary Academy Trust Board of Trustees recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, out-of-school trips, residentials and experiences of other environments, can make towards pupils' all-round educational experience and their personal and social development.

The Trust is clear that no child's education should be in any way compromised by the ability of their parents or carers to pay.

In some cases, Pupil Premium funding may be used to support those pupils who are at risk of being disadvantaged by not being able to participate due to financial circumstances at home.

2. POLICY

The schools within Northampton Primary Academy Trust are required by law to publish a policy on charging for school activities. The Education Act 1996 establishes the basic principle that the education provided by any maintained school/academy for its registered pupils should be free of charge. This basic underlying principle requires that there should be no school/academy admission charge and no charge for any related activity that takes place during school/academy time. Exceptions to this general statement are as follows:

- Individual tuition in playing a musical instrument may be charged for, provided that it is not part of the National Curriculum or part of the syllabus for a prescribed Public Examination.
- Where parents have indicated that they wish to have the finished product from a particular lesson, e.g. individual craft items, pottery, needlework, cookery, a charge may be made to cover materials.
- For all residential visits deemed to be within school hours, or part of the National Curriculum or part of the Syllabus for the prescribed Public Examination, a charge for board and lodging will be made.
- Optional visits or activities occurring outside of school hours may be charged for in full.

Within the Education Act, it is possible for schools/academies to ask for voluntary contributions from parents. The Northampton Primary Academy Trust's Board of Trustees has therefore approved the following:

- Voluntary contributions can be invited from parents towards the cost of the school activities which are related to the life and work of the school. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary, and no child whose parents feel unable to contribute will be treated differently from the rest.
- Parents not wishing to make a voluntary contribution in whole or part, but wishing their child to be included, must make the fact known directly to the Headteacher, who will treat any such approach in the strictest confidence.
- School visits and activities will be planned in advance and, if sought, voluntary contributions will usually be invited through individual letters to parents. The letter asking for support will outline the proposed visit, cost, educational value, and its relationship to the school curriculum.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are received and the trip is considered by the Headteacher to not be financially viable, then it will be cancelled, and any monies received will be returned.
- Refunds will only be given in exceptional circumstances, including refunds of deposits. They are normally only given if another pupil takes up the previously booked place on the activity.
- Surplus funds on completion of trips: if, upon completion of a school trip, there is more than £5 per paying pupil, that amount will be returned to the payee.

Compulsory charges may be made by the school for:

- Replacement of broken windows or fittings, defaced or damaged textbooks, or any other damage or loss occurring as a result of a pupil's actions. The school is empowered to recover this loss and any resulting costs as a civil debt.
- Theft or deliberate losses
- Unpaid charges legally recoverable will also be recouped, together with resultant costs, as a civil debt.

Activities for which an optional or voluntary contribution may be made

Additional activities that could be charged for: in addition to those activities noted above, the schools within Northampton Primary Academy Trust may charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast club
- After-school club
- Holiday clubs
- Swimming instruction

- Cost of day trips
- Extra-curricular music tuition
- Travel and/or other expenses associated with an event or trip outside of school hours

These charges are made to ensure the school does not subsidise the activity from its general annual grant funding, unless there is a good reason to do so. For regular in-house activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Headteacher and reviewed each year.

Any amendments to this policy will be made when necessary.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, some activities and visits where charges can legally be made, may be offered at a reduced charge to parents/carers in particular circumstances. Families who need assistance with charges should first speak to the School Business Manager or Headteacher. Any discussions or decisions made will be confidential.

The criteria for qualification for remission are where parents are in receipt of the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you applied on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get).

Additional Considerations

The Trust 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, schools will try, where possible, to:

- Publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) as soon as possible so that parents can plan ahead
- Establish a system for parents to pay instalments, and

- Avoid offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis as this may discriminate against pupils from families on lower incomes.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.