



## **Policy: Charges and Remissions**

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## **1. Policy statement**

- 1.1. The Corinium Education Trust (the Trust) is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities, and educational extras.
- 1.2. In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 1.3. The Trust will:
  - Never charge for education provided during school hours.
  - Inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of visits/trips.

## **2. Legal framework**

- 2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Education Act 1996
  - Freedom of Information Act 2000
  - The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
  - The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
  - DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
  - DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
  - ESFA (2022) 'Academy trust handbook 2022'
- 2.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:
  - Concerns and Complaints Policy
  - Finance Policy
  - Freedom of Information Policy

Where 'school' is referred to within this policy, this is in reference to any school operating within the Trust.

## **3. Charging for education**

- 3.1. The Trust will not charge for:
  - Admission applications;
  - Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
  - Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education (RE);
  - Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school;
  - Examination resits if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.

- 3.2. The Trust may charge for:
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them;
  - Optional extras;
  - Music tuition;
  - Certain early years provision (for Trust early years providers only);
  - The use of community facilities and other commercial activities; and
  - The provision of information within the scope of freedom of information (FOI).

#### **4. Optional extras**

- 4.1. The Trust may charge for the following optional extras:
- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
    - Part of the national curriculum;
    - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school;
    - Part of RE.
  - Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school;
  - Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Trust board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
  - Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
  - Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision
  - Other activities over and above those required by the examination syllabus e.g. theatre trip.
- 4.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra;
  - Buildings and accommodation;
  - Non-teaching staff (including teaching assistants);
  - Transport;
  - Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra;
  - The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- 4.3. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

#### **5. Examination fees and resits**

- 5.1. The Trust may charge for examination fees if:
- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
  - The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it;
  - A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school or local authority (LA) originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee;

- Where the school considers that there are educational reasons why the pupil should not be entered but where the parents have requested in writing that their son/daughter be entered.
- 5.2. Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the Trust will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.
- 5.3. If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the Trust will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded.

## **6. Voluntary contributions**

- 6.1. The Trust may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Trust will make this clear to parents at the outset. There will be no obligation for parents to contribute and parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.
- 6.2. No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the Trust cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.
- 6.3. The Trust will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

## **7. Music tuition**

- 7.1. Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.
- 7.2. Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.
- 7.3. Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

## **8. Transport**

- 8.1. The Trust will not charge for:
- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport;
  - Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated;
  - Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.

## **9. Damaged or lost items**

- 9.1. The Trust may charge for the cost of replacing or repairing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the repair cost or replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The Trust will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

## **10. Remissions**

- 10.1. The Trust will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs' basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.
- 10.2. Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:
- Income Support;
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
  - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
  - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
  - Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190;
  - Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit;
  - Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

## **11. School trip refunds**

- 11.1. All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable unless stated otherwise. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.
- 11.2. If the Trust has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. If a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the Trust due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the Trust's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.
- 11.3. If a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the Trust's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The Trust will consider the reason for cancellation, whether the Trust will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.
- 11.4. Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the Trust will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.
- 11.5. In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the Trust's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The Trust will take into account whether the Trust will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

- 11.6. In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the Trust's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The Trust will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 11.7. In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the Trust's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The Trust will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 11.8. Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.
- 11.9. The Trust will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.
- 11.10. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Concerns and Complaints Policy.

## Document History

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