

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

V2

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1.0 Policy Statement

Beckfoot Trust's mission is to create remarkable schools where no child is left behind. This policy ensures that financial circumstances do not pose a barrier to the Trust ensuring equal access to opportunities for all students within the Trust.

- Beckfoot Trust will not charge for education provided during school hours.
- Beckfoot Trust will inform parents/carers on low incomes of support available to them when being asked for contributions towards visits.
- Beckfoot Trust will be transparent in communicating the basis for charges

2.0 Scope and Purpose

The policy explains all types of charges that the Trust may make to a student or parent/carer and how we support families who may encounter financial difficulties.

This policy is underpinned by the following guidance and legislative documents:

- Education Act
- DfE Charging for school activities
- DfE Governance Handbook
- Academy Trust Handbook
- Beckfoot Trust Funding Agreements ([see Trust Website](#))
- Finance policies and procedures

3.0 Charges

3.1 Where the Trust can make charges

The Trust may make a charge for the following items:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him or her to own them
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Optional extras (see below)

3.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras.' In these cases, the school can charge for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - 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 local authority/governing board 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 (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea, and supervised homework sessions)

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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Support 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra
- Any charge made in respect of individual students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.
- Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parent/carer are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- In cases 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.

4.0 Voluntary Contributions

Our schools are able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Trips
- Visits
- Activities
- Food Technology lessons
- Design Technology lessons
- Visiting Artists/Theatre Groups
- Other activities where the school incurs a cost

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

When a school organises an activity that incurs a cost, particularly a residential visit, the trip/visit/activity may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are made. Parents/carers will be informed in advance if this is to be the case.

5.0 Examination Fees

We may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list but the student was not prepared for it at the school (e.g. a language not offered by the school_
- The examination is not on the prescribed list but the school arranged for the child to take it
- Peripatetic examinations that the parent requests the child undertake
- A child fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school agreed to pay the original fee

With regards to resits and remarks:

- It will be at the school's discretion if a student is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination. Payment of fees will be discussed and agreed on an individual student basis.
- If a student or their parents/carers consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request an examination be re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the student or their parents/carers. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the fees will be refunded.

6.0 Damaged or lost items

The school may charge parent /carers for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour. Parents/carers will not be taken to court for failure to pay such costs, except in cases of criminal damage.

7.0 Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in this policy. Where appropriate, the relevant capitation budget can be used to subsidise the cost of such activities at the discretion of the school.

Parents/carers in receipt of the benefits listed below may request assistance with the cost of activities.

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

To request assistance parents/carers should contact the school.

8.0 Refunds

Where a deposit is required, this will only become refundable if the trip is cancelled. If a student can no longer attend the trip a refund will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the final decision on the refund resting with the Headteacher.

Whilst we do our best to cost trips accurately and price accordingly, occasionally there may be an underspend. When this exceeds £10 per student, a refund will be given.

9.0 GDPR

In the event of parents/carers, staff or other professionals requesting copies of files held in school, an appropriate charge may be made in line with our GDPR Data Protection and FOI Policy.

These circumstances are reviewed by Trustees annually when they consider the Annual Approvals documentation in September or October of each year.