

Gloucestershire Learning Alliance

Offsite Visits (including Charging & Remissions) Policy

Status Statutory <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Good Practice <input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose The GLA believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) that are provided outside the Academies premises. Taking part should be independent of their parents' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimize the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities. This policy has taken into consideration: Gloucestershire County Council – Guidance for Offsite Visits, The HSE Guidance - School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities, National Outdoor Education Advisers Panel - Requirements and Recommendations for Establishments, Education Act 1996, DfE Guidance - Charging for School Activities (Nov 2013), Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
Consultation This should include all the people who were consulted in the drawing up of this policy.
Links with other policies Health & Safety Safeguarding
Monitoring and Evaluation Annually <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Every 3 years <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Executive Headteacher <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair of MAT Board <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Dates Original Implementation March 2014 Reviewed March 2017 Review March 2018

INTRODUCTION

The GLA considers that activities away from the individual Academy site can offer excellent learning and development activities that can significantly enhance the education the Academy can provide. There are two major concerns:

- The safety and security of pupils
- The cost of activities.

The MAT Board have been encouraged by the guidance from the Health & Safety Executive that requires establishments to take a balanced and realistic approach to planning such events and make such planning proportionate to the risks.

Parents have expressed concerns about the cost of such activities and this is always a prime consideration when organising events away from the Academy. This policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be made and the arrangements for remitting charges where appropriate.

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF OFFSITE VISITS

All Academies of the GLA have a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the Academy premises.

Each year Academies will arrange a number of activities that take place offsite and/or out of usual hours, which support the aims of the individual Academy. The range of activities are outlined in the relevant Academy prospectus along with the criteria by which pupils are able to access them and the methods by which parents¹ will be notified and asked for their consent.

Each Academy Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the Academy:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, conservation, sport, etc)
- Academy teams
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, shops, woodlands, place of worship, walks in local area)
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits
- Adventure activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

These activities are made available to pupils by invitation, by class or year group or by other criteria depending on the nature of the activity or visit.

PLANNING/APPROVAL PROCEDURE

Each Academy will nominate an appropriate person as the Offsite Visits Co-ordinator (OVC) to be approved by the Academy Governing Body. The Governing Body will delegate the consideration and approval of offsite visits and other offsite activities to the Headteacher and s/he will act as signatory, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body.

Staff arranging visits will use the procedure at Appendix 1.

CONSENT

Each Academy will contact parents before each trip or offsite activity to get parental consent (see Appendix 1). Pupils cannot attend these activities without consent and parental cooperation will be appreciated.

LOCAL TRIPS

Local trips are defined as those that take place to Gloucester/Cheltenham schools or within the borough of Cheltenham. For these visits, involving travel either by car/coach or on foot, a generic risk assessment will be completed at the start of each Academy year by the designated member of the Senior Management Team and they will submit this using the 'QES' website. As part of the planning process visit leaders will be required to review the risk assessment and confirm that it is appropriate for their visit.

Prior approval for these trips must be gained from the Headteacher using the Visit Approval Form at Appendix 1 and once this approval has been given, the form should be forwarded to the OVC. These trips do not require a pre-plan.

The QES site should be used to log the following:

- The date of the activity

¹ All references to parents includes either or both parents, legal guardian or authorised carer.

- The children involved (including those requiring individual risk assessments or with specific medical needs)
- The adults involved (to assess adult to child supervision ratios)
- Risk assessments.

A table summarising the procedure is in Appendix 1 to this policy.

SPORTING TRIPS

For sporting trips to local Gloucester/Cheltenham schools a single plan on the QES site can be done to last a season. These trips do not require a pre-plan and all dates for fixtures must be put on this plan. A new entry updating the plan with the children involved and adult helpers should be done for each fixture. All parents and staff who offer transport to sporting events must complete a declaration letter that will last for the period of the insurance cover dates. A table summarising the procedure is at Appendix 1 to this policy.

RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

The routine planning/approval procedure should be followed for residential trips but the timescale is different. A pre-plan should be completed as soon as the booking is made and the completed QES submission must be forwarded to the OVC at least 8 weeks prior to the trip taking place.

STAFFING

GLA recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing learning in a variety of environments through induction, apprenticeship and training. The selection of staff for offsite visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

Where it is appropriate each Academy will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with offsite activities and visits.

GLA does not support additional people accompanying offsite visits who are not at the Academy or part of the agreed visit staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Governing Body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and OVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

CHARGING POLICY

There is a full schedule of what the Academy can and cannot charge for at Appendix 2 below and a short guide that will be given to all parents at Appendix 3.

THE EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

Each Academy has a clear code of conduct for offsite visits based on its 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and include the potential for withdrawal of a child, prior to and during the visit, if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from the Academy.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The Academy will appoint a member of the Senior Management Team as the emergency contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Group Leader will take with them a copy of the Emergency Procedure.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the Academy systems.

The Academy will have funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

EVALUATION

The Group Leader will evaluate all visits and the Headteacher will be advised accordingly. A short evaluation report will be made available to the Academy Governing Body and a summary will be available for the MAT Board.

The OVC will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified as a result.

The School Secretary and/or the Business Manager (where appropriate) is responsible for preparing a financial account for the visit, which will be audited as part of the Academy's procedures.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed, and updated if necessary every three years. The Executive Headteacher should review the Charging Policy annually, to ensure that it is not inhibiting pupils from taking part in the full range of activities offered by the Academy.

PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING & APPROVING VISITS

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Headteacher must approve the visit using the form at below. Once this approval has been given, it should be forwarded to the OVC and the visit leader can then start the planning process.

Staff intending to take a class/group to a new destination must undertake a pre-visit. All visits are to be planned and co-ordinated using the 'QES' website. The planning process and risk assessments must be completed and submitted on-line to the OVC for approval no later than seven days before the visit is scheduled to take place.

In conjunction with this process the visit leader must liaise with the OVC to ensure that all the necessary bookings have been made and the visit has been accurately costed. A table summarising the procedure is below.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the Academy on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the Academy's accounts.

CONSENT

For visits that take place during the school day parents will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation in these activities at the start of each school year. A letter will be sent to parents giving the details of the activities that pupils are to be involved each time a trip is planned and this will give them the option to contact the Academy to opt out of the activity. They will be informed by letter, phone call, text as appropriate if an activity has to be cancelled.

For Academy teams and out of hours clubs, parents will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation in these activities. Parents will be given the details of the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed by letter, phone call, text as appropriate if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more parents will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to the child taking part. The Academy has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose.

As part of the parent consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

VISIT APPROVAL REQUEST

Visit Leader	
Class	
Date of Visit	
Visit Destination	
Timings of Visit	
Purpose of Visit	
Approved by Headteacher	
Forwarded to Offsite Visit Co-ordinator	

PLANNING A SCHOOL TRIP

TIME	ACTION	COMMENT
AT LEAST 5/6 WEEKS BEFORE	<p>Consider learning intentions of trip</p> <p>Costings incl. coaches (obtain quotes from Office); admissions etc</p> <p>Risk Assessment incl. staffing ratios; SEN needs</p>	
AT LEAST 4/5 WEEKS BEFORE	<p>Bring above information to HT (via Visit Approval Request form) for authorisation. Forward authorised form to OVC</p> <p>Complete pre-plan on QES – this will be immediately passed on where OVC is in receipt of via Visit Approval Request form</p>	
AT LEAST 4 WEEKS BEFORE	<p>Inform Office of all trip details for letter to parents</p> <p>Office will send a letter out to parents informing of trip & requesting payment (with a deadline date for replies preferably 3 weeks before trip date)</p> <p>Make staffing arrangements and secure additional parent support where necessary</p>	
AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE	<p>Office sends hastening letter / text to parents</p> <p>Teachers remind children</p> <p>HT decision taken on viability of trip</p>	<p>If the cost is 90% covered – trip goes ahead.</p> <p>If the costs are 80 -90% covered – seek advice (HT).</p> <p>Less than 80% - cancel!</p> <p><i>No charge for coach if cancelled at least 3 weeks before the date of the trip (Marchants policy)</i></p>
ONE WEEK BEFORE	<p>QES final plan approved by OVC</p> <p>Final numbers confirmed</p> <p>Office orders packed lunches for pupils on free school meals</p>	

PLANNING A LOCAL/SPORTS TRIP

TIME	ACTION	COMMENT
ANNUALLY IN SEPTEMBER	Deputy Head to complete QES entries for all local trips Cover whole Academy Include risk assessments for travel on foot, by car and coach	
AT LEAST 5/6 WEEKS BEFORE	Consider learning intentions of trip Costings incl. coaches (obtain quotes from Office); admissions etc Risk Assessment incl. staffing ratios; SEN needs	
AT LEAST 4/5 WEEKS BEFORE	Bring above information to HT (via Visit Approval Request form) for authorisation. Forward authorised form to OVC Complete pre-plan on QES – this will be immediately passed on where OVC is in receipt of via Visit Approval Request form	
AT LEAST 4 WEEKS BEFORE	Inform Office of all trip details for letter to parents. Office will send a letter out to parents informing of trip & requesting payment (with a deadline date for replies preferably 3 weeks before trip date) Make staffing arrangements and secure additional parent support where necessary	
AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE	<i>Only if there is a charge for the trip</i> Office sends hastening letter / text to parents Teachers remind children HT decision taken on viability of trip.	If the cost is 90% covered – trip goes ahead. If the costs are 80 -90% covered – seek advice (HT). Less than 80% - cancel! <i>No charge for coach if cancelled at least 3 weeks before the date of the trip (Marchants policy)</i>
ONE WEEK BEFORE	QES final plan approved by OVC Final numbers confirmed. Office orders packed lunches for pupils on free school meals	

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO CHARGES FOR SCHOOL TRIPS, VISITS AND OTHER EXTRAS

This guide is intended to provide you with the detail of what the Academy can and cannot charge you for. If you have any queries, please speak to your child's teacher or to a senior member of staff.

Activities for which no compulsory charges will be made:

No charges will be made for the following activities:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the Academy, or part of the Academy's basic curriculum for religious education
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from Academy accompanying students on a residential trip
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Activities for which charges may be made:

I think this section is overly complicated and have attached the table we have had at SPA at the end of the document – it may not be quite so legally correct, but is much more comprehensible? But we would need to revise the section on eligible benefits to take account of the changes.

Charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of [delete space] the provision:

- Activities Outside School Hours: non-residential activities (other than those listed above) which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours)
- Residential Activities During School Hours: Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. A residential trip is deemed to have taken place during school hours if the number of school sessions on the trip is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent on the trip (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day
- Residential Trips Outside School Hours: residential trips deemed to take place outside school time
- Music tuition: a charge will be made for instrumental or vocal tuition unless:
 - i. It is in a class or group of four or more
 - ii. It forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. (Charges will be made if a student fails to turn up to the lessons on a regular basis)
- Finished Products: where a parent has indicated in advance a wish to own a finished product made at the Academy, the parent may be required to supply the ingredients or materials or be charged the cost thereof
- Transport: parents may be required to meet the cost of transport from home to an activity sanctioned but not provided by the Academy
- Activities arranged by third parties in school hours: a "Third Party" is somebody other than the Academy. A Third Party who arranges an activity during school hours may make a charge for their services to the parents of the students who are released to participate
- Damage to property: a charge may be made to parents for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student
- Optional extras outside school hours: some charges may be made for education provided as:
 - An option - participation must be on the basis of parents' choice and willingness to meet the charges made
 - Wholly or mainly outside school hours. These charges may include:

- (i) Pupil's travel costs
- (ii) Pupil's board and lodging costs
- (iii) Materials, books, instruments and other materials
- (iv) Non-teaching staff costs
- (v) Entrance fees (museums etc.)
- (vi) Insurance costs
- (vii) Costs of engaging teaching staff specifically for this activity, including their travel, board and lodging. (But not the cost of teaching staff already employed by the Academy unless employed to provide individual musical tuition engaged on a separate contract to provide the optional extra).

Voluntary Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought from parents in support of any Academy activity, in or out of school time, residential or not. These contributions must be genuinely voluntary. It is a statutory requirement that the terms of any request make it clear that:

- There is no obligation to contribute
- Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed.

It will be made clear to parents if the activity cannot take place without over 80% support. There is no limit to the amount of the contribution or to the use that can be made of it, provided that parents are aware of that use when they contribute.

Refunds

Refunds will be made in the following incidences: colon

- Overpayment of more than £5.00 per student
- Pupils who withdraw from an activity due to medical reasons with supporting evidence
- Refunds will not be made where a deposit is required to secure a service.

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged students, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or at a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reviewed.

Parents in receipt of:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008;

There may be other extenuating circumstances in which waiver of charges will be considered. Application for remission along with supporting information should be made to the Academy Business Manager and it will be treated in confidence.

Appendix 3

A SHORT GUIDE FOR PARENTS TO CHARGES FOR SCHOOL TRIPS, VISITS AND OTHER EXTRAS.

This guide is intended to provide you with an outline of what the school can and cannot charge you for.

The full policy can be found on the school website at:

<http://www.springbankpriac.gloucs.sch.uk/docs/Policies/Charging%20Remissions%20Policy.pdf>.

If you have any queries, please speak to your child's teacher or to a senior member of staff.

WHAT THE SCHOOL CANNOT CHARGE YOU FOR	WHAT THE SCHOOL CAN CHARGE YOU
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<p>Education during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment</p> <p>Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours, including supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential trip and transport provided in connection with an educational trip.</p>	<p>FOR</p> <p>Activities outside school hours that are not part of the National Curriculum</p> <p>Residential activities during school hours: board and lodging costs only.</p> <p>Music tuition where it is not part of the National Curriculum</p> <p>Activities arranged by other individuals or organisations in school hours</p> <p>Damage to property by a pupil</p>
<p>WHAT THE SCHOOL CAN ASK YOU FOR A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION FOR</p>	<p>THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH YOU ARE EXCUSED MAKING A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION</p>
<p>We can ask you for voluntary contributions to support any school activity, in or out of school time, residential or not. If we ask you for a contribution, we must make it clear that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no obligation to contribute • Pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed: in other words we cannot just take those children whose parents have made a contribution on the trip. <p>If there are not enough voluntary contributions to fund the trip without a significant contribution from the school budget, then we are entitled to cancel the trip. We have made it clear that we need at least 80% of parents to contribute for a trip to take place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances; • Income Support (IS); • Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA); • Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; • Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14); • The guarantee element of State Pension Credit; • An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008; <p>There may be other extenuating circumstances in which waiver of charges will be considered. Application for remission along with supporting information should be made to the Academy Business Manager and it will be treated in confidence.</p>