

Charging and Financial Assistance Policy

Approved by Governor Sub-committee:
N/A

Date to be reviewed:
September 2027

Responsibility of:
Director of Finance and Operations

Date ratified by Principal:
Tuesday 8th October 2026

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to explain the Academy's approach to making charges to students and their parents/carers. It also explains the circumstances where it may be possible to offer financial assistance.

This document has been produced in accordance with the DfE guidance document: *Charging for school activities May 2018*

Policy Statement

- a) The Governing Board recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, out of school trips, residential and experiences of other environments, can make towards students' all round educational experience and their personal and social development.
- b) The Academy provides a free education to all students. Any activity/trip/visit considered to be a required element of the curriculum will be provided without compulsory charge, although the Governing Board reserves the right to request voluntary donations. However the Academy also provides a number of additional services and activities, which are not a requirement of the curriculum, and for which charges may be made.
- c) The Academy is committed to ensure that no student should be at a disadvantage if their parents or carers are in receipt of benefits or are on very low incomes.
- d) The Academy reserves the right to change any financial assistance offered as it sees fit, having given parents advance written notice.
- e) The Academy reserves the right to reclaim any financial support paid as a result of any financial misinformation received.

Who does the policy apply to?

All Academy students and parents.

Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the governors of the Academy and remain under annual review by the Director of Finance and Operations.

In what circumstances will the Academy make a charge?

The Governing Board reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the Academy:

1. School trips and residential:

- a. **Education partly during school hours** Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

- b. **Non-residential activities** If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might

require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

- c. **Residential visits** If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (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 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.
2. **Materials:** the cost of materials or ingredients for design and technology and food technology where the student is offered the ownership of the final product. The cost of purchase or hire of instruments, materials, equipment or clothing for activities which take place outside school hours and which are purely voluntary and optional.
3. **Acts of vandalism, recklessness and negligence including poor behaviour resulting in the student not being able to attend a trip or visit:** the Governing Board reserves the right to recover part, or the whole cost, of damage to buildings or equipment which is the result of vandalism, recklessness or negligence by a student. This includes persistent disregard or carelessness following specific warning to the student.

This also applies where a student's poor behaviour means that they can no longer attend a trip. In these cases, the Academy will refund money if it is returned from the third parties (ticket sellers, accommodation etc). If non-refundable payments have been made by the Academy then it will not be possible to refund the money.

4. **Music Tuition**

There is a charge for individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours, unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum.

Financial assistance

Financial assistance should not provide for more than 75% of the cost and is only likely to be offered in exceptional circumstances. Students, and their parents or carers, should always retain some responsibility towards the cost for which the financial assistance is sought.

Where the Academy is able to offer a subsidy this will be available to parents or carers of students who qualify for free school meals (note - the criteria for who qualifies for free school meals may change from year to year) or who are considered to be on low incomes. The Governing Board reserves the right to set the criteria at whatever level it sees fit for any particular trip/visit/activity.

Procedure for claiming assistance – financial hardship

Some trips/ visits/ activities may have their own procedure. This may include a request for financial support from the Chelsea Academy Foundation, particularly in regards to trips overseas. In other cases of financial hardship where parents need help with costs associated with attending the Academy parents/carers should:

- a) If the need is in respect of a trip or activity, pay any deposit requested in order to reserve a place, subject to a request for assistance. If a request is submitted and refused then the deposit will be refunded;
- b) Write to the Director of Finance and Operations or Senior Vice Principal, making sure to include the following information (see Appendix A):
 - The name of the student;
 - A description of what financial assistance is required (this could be for a trip, visit, activity or another need associated with attending the Academy);
 - An explanation of how the student will benefit;

- The family financial circumstances;
 - Proof of eligibility for benefits or evidence of annual income.
- c) The Director of Finance and Operations or Senior Vice Principal will consult with the appropriate staff members before determining whether financial assistance can be justified
- d) The Director of Finance or Senior Vice Principal will contact parents with the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of their request.

Parents/carers will be expected to notify the Academy immediately if they are no longer eligible for free school meals. The Academy reserves the right to request a refund where any payments have been given based on inaccurate or fraudulent information.

Appendix A

Financial Hardship Assistance Application Form

Financial assistance will not normally be provided for more than 75% of the cost and is only likely to be offered in exceptional circumstances. Students, and their parents or carers, should always retain some responsibility towards the cost for which the financial assistance is sought.

Financial hardship assistance is usually only available to parents or carers of students who qualify for free school meals (note the criteria for who qualifies for free school meals may change from year to year) or to those who are considered to be on low incomes. The Academy Leadership Team, on behalf of the Chelsea Academy Foundation Trustees reserves the right to set the criteria at whatever level it sees fit for any particular trip/visit/activity.

Student name:	
Coaching Group	
Description of the financial assistance needed: (Please include amount)	
How will the student benefit?	
Family financial circumstances:	
Proof of eligibility for benefits or evidence of annual income:	

For completion by DFO/ Senior Vice Principal

Amount of financial assistance to be provided (£) and purpose	
Rationale for decision	
Signed (Principal/ Senior Vice Principal)	
Dated	

Appendix B

Individual Music Tuition – Charges and Financial Assistance

This annex should be read alongside the Academy's **Charging and Financial Assistance Policy**. It sets out the arrangements for charges, payment, financial assistance, cancellations and refunds relating to individual instrumental and vocal tuition provided at the Academy by visiting music teachers ("peripatetic music teachers").

1. Nature of the provision

Individual music tuition is an optional additional service offered by the Academy.

The standard provision is a block of:

10 individual lessons of 30 minutes per term.

The Academy does not currently offer paired or group tuition through this scheme.

The charge for each block of lessons will be published to parents/carers in advance. The current charge is **£210 for 10 × 30-minute individual lessons**.

This charge covers tuition only. It does not include:

- music, books or other learning materials;
- examination entry fees; or
- accompanist fees associated with examinations or performances.

Any such additional costs will be communicated separately where applicable.

The Academy may amend the charge for future terms. Parents/carers will be given written notice of any change in fees before the deadline by which they would need to give notice to withdraw from the following term.

2. Payment

Payment is made to the Academy through **ParentPay** and must be made in advance of each term.

A student's place for the term is confirmed when payment has been received or an alternative arrangement for financial assistance has been agreed by the Academy.

Where payment has not been received, subsequent lessons will not take place until payment has been made or an alternative arrangement has been formally agreed.

Peripatetic music teachers must not accept direct payment from parents/carers for tuition arranged through the Academy.

3. Continuing tuition and withdrawal

Registration for individual music tuition is ongoing. Tuition will automatically continue from one term to the next, and from one academic year to the next, unless notice of withdrawal is given.

Parents/carers must give **one full term's notice** to withdraw a student from tuition.

This means, for example, that notice given at any point during the Autumn Term will take effect at the end of the Spring Term. The parent/carer remains liable for the Spring Term block of lessons.

Where the required notice is not given, the charge for the following term remains payable.

This notice period reflects the fact that the Academy and its peripatetic teachers plan teaching capacity in advance and teachers may have reserved teaching time which could otherwise have been offered to another student.

Where a student leaves the Academy during a block of lessons, the remaining lessons in that block will not normally be refunded.

Where the Academy itself has to terminate tuition and is unable to provide the remaining lessons, the value of lessons not provided will be credited or refunded.

4. Joining during a term

Students may begin tuition during a term where teaching capacity is available.

Where this happens, parents/carers will be charged only for the number of lessons being purchased for the remainder of that term.

Thereafter, the normal arrangements for continuing tuition and notice of withdrawal apply.

5. Lesson timetables

Music lesson times will normally be published at the beginning of each half term for that half term **and the first week of the following half term**.

Because individual tuition takes place during the Academy day, students and their parents/carers share responsibility for checking lesson times and identifying known clashes.

6. Student absence and missed lessons

Payment purchases an entitlement to the specified number of lessons, subject to the provisions below.

Student illness or other personal absence

Where a student is absent because of illness or another personal absence, the lesson remains chargeable and the Academy is not required to rearrange or refund it.

This reflects the fact that the teacher has reserved the teaching time, prepared for the lesson and travelled to the Academy.

Where more than **48 hours' notice** is provided, a peripatetic teacher may, at their discretion, rearrange the lesson to a later date if their timetable permits.

This is a discretionary arrangement and **not an entitlement to a replacement lesson**.

Failure to attend

Students are responsible for attending their music lesson at the published time.

Where a student has not arrived within five minutes of the scheduled start time, the peripatetic teacher will make a reasonable attempt to locate the student.

Where a student has forgotten or otherwise failed to attend their lesson, the lesson remains chargeable and will not be rearranged or refunded.

The parent/carer will be informed of the missed lesson, since the lesson has been purchased by the parent/carer but not used by the student.

Academy trips, educational visits and other known clashes

Parents/carers are responsible for notifying the Music Department of an Academy trip, educational visit or other known Academy-related clash **at least one week before the affected music lesson**.

Where this notice is provided, reasonable efforts will be made to rearrange the lesson. If the lesson cannot be rearranged, its value will be credited or refunded.

Where the required notice is not provided, the lesson remains chargeable and the Academy is not required to rearrange, credit or refund it.

The fact that an activity has been organised or authorised by the Academy does not in itself constitute notice to the Music Department.

Academy closure or cancellation

Planned Academy closures will normally be taken into account when lesson timetables are produced.

Where an unforeseen Academy closure, or another circumstance for which the Academy is responsible, prevents a scheduled lesson from taking place, reasonable efforts will be made to rearrange the lesson. If this is not possible, its value will be credited or refunded.

7. Peripatetic teacher absence

Where a peripatetic teacher is unable to deliver a scheduled lesson, the student remains entitled to that lesson.

Reasonable efforts must be made to provide the missed lesson at another time.

Where a replacement lesson cannot reasonably be provided, the value of the undelivered lesson will be credited or refunded to the parent/carer.

Replacement lessons should normally be delivered within the same term and should not normally result in a student receiving replacement lessons less than one week after their most recent lesson.

Any lessons owed at the end of the academic year which cannot reasonably be delivered will be credited or refunded.

8. Financial assistance

The Academy is committed to ensuring that financial disadvantage does not unnecessarily prevent students from accessing opportunities provided by the Academy.

Applications for assistance with the cost of individual music tuition will be considered through the financial-hardship arrangements set out in the Academy's **Charging and Financial Assistance Policy**.

There is no automatic fixed percentage reduction for individual music tuition. The level of assistance offered in an individual case is at the discretion of the Academy and will take account of the student's circumstances, the funding available and competing demands upon the Academy's resources, including the Pupil Premium budget where applicable.

Financial assistance under this scheme applies to **tuition fees only**. It does not automatically cover books or music, examination fees or accompanist fees.

Where demand for subsidised tuition exceeds the funding or teaching capacity available, the Academy may prioritise students experiencing financial disadvantage, including students eligible for Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium.

Continued financial assistance may also take account of a student's attendance at lessons, engagement with tuition and use of the opportunity provided. This is intended to ensure that limited Academy funding is used effectively for the benefit of students.

9. GCSE and other examination courses

Individual instrumental or vocal tuition provided through this scheme is separate from the curriculum teaching provided by the Academy for GCSE Music or another public examination course.

Where the Academy is required to provide teaching as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination, no charge will be made for that required provision.

The Academy provides curriculum teaching and preparation for the solo and ensemble performance requirements of GCSE Music within its taught curriculum. Participation in optional individual tuition with a peripatetic music teacher is additional to that curriculum provision and is therefore charged in accordance with this annex.

10. Recording and verification of lessons

Peripatetic music teachers will maintain an accurate record of lessons scheduled and delivered, including:

- lessons delivered;
- student absence or failure to attend;
- teacher absence;
- lessons rearranged;

- lessons remaining to be made up; and
- any other information required to determine the student's remaining lesson entitlement.

Peripatetic teachers will also make appropriate records of students' progress in their practice diaries.

Peripatetic teachers invoice the Academy monthly for lessons actually delivered. Invoices must be submitted by the **5th of each month** and supported by the appropriate timesheet.

Timesheets must be countersigned by the **Curriculum Lead for Music** before payment is authorised.

The Academy's Finance team is responsible for reconciling payments, lesson records, credits and refunds.

11. Entitlement to lessons and refunds

Payment for a standard term purchases **10 individual 30-minute lessons**.

The Academy will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all lessons for which a student remains entitled are delivered.

A refund or credit will normally be due only where:

- a peripatetic teacher is unable to deliver a lesson and it cannot reasonably be rearranged;
- an unforeseen Academy closure or other circumstance for which the Academy is responsible prevents the lesson taking place and it cannot reasonably be rearranged;
- a parent/carer has given at least one week's notice of an Academy trip, educational visit or other known Academy-related clash and the lesson cannot reasonably be rearranged; or
- the Academy terminates the provision and cannot deliver lessons already purchased.

A refund or credit will **not normally be due** where:

- the student is ill or otherwise personally absent;
- the student forgets or fails to attend;
- the parent/carer does not provide the required notice of a known Academy-related clash;
- a discretionary request to rearrange a lesson cannot be accommodated by the peripatetic teacher;
- the student withdraws without the required notice; or
- the student leaves the Academy part-way through a block of lessons.

Where a lesson is to be rearranged, reasonable efforts should be made to provide the lesson within the same term before a refund or credit is issued.

Any final refund or credit will be calculated according to the value of the individual lesson within the block purchased.