The LETTA Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

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1. Introduction

The LETTA Trust recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences make towards pupils' education. The Local Governing Boards of those schools aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of each school and as additional optional activities.

2. Context

This policy is in line with the most recent DfE guidance : Charging for school activities (May 2018). The law states that education provided during school hours must be free of charge. This definition includes materials, equipment and transport (including public transport, where necessary, to work placements or other off site education provision) provided in school hours by each school. No pupil may be left out of an activity because their parents or carers cannot or will not make a contribution towards the cost of the activity.

3. Aims

The LETTA Trust aims to:

- Offer best value for money
- Ensure that each school's budget is spent effectively on the education of its pupils
- Ensure that children are not excluded from opportunities because of financial hardship
- Ensure that charges and remissions set by each school observe the law on charging for school activities set out in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996

4. Charges

Each school's headteacher reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by their school:

- **Residential activities taking place largely during school hours**

  LETTA Trust schools will charge for board and lodging on residential trips. Costs are subsidised from school budgets and funds raised towards this cost; charges to parents are then based on the balance left after any funds raised have been deducted from the total cost. The charge made in respect of individual students will be calculated by dividing this balance equally by the number of students participating. No child will be excluded from residential trips due to financial hardship. We offer payment plans and reduced rates for these families. Details of eligibility for remissions can be found in Section 5.

- **Activities outside school hours**

The full cost to be paid for all approved activities deemed to be optional extras that are not a necessary part of each school's curriculum

- **Individual instrumental tuition**
  The full cost to be paid for providing instrumental tuition at the request of the parent or carer that is not an essential part of the school's curriculum

- **Early year's top up for extra hours**
  Parents who do not qualify for 30 hours funding and who would like a full-time nursery place for their child can pay to increase their part-time place to a full-time place

- **Community facilities**
  The community may wish to use the schools' building and grounds. The promotion of equality and community cohesion are also important considerations in determining lettings. Any hiring out of facilities will be in line with current legislation and following government guidelines for the safety of the school and community. The use of school premises is also in line with the Trust's mission, values and ethos. See The Letta Trust Lettings Policy for further details.

- **Damage to Property**

  Schools reserve the right to charge parents/carers for the cost of replacement or repair of school property (e.g. broken windows, defaced books, or damaged tablets) where this is a result of a pupil's willful misbehaviour or negligence.

5. Remissions

There will be no obligation for any parent to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of school activities. Pupils will not be treated differently whether or not their parents or carers have made a contribution.

Parents and carers have the right to claim remissions (specifically board and lodging for residential trips) if they are in receipt of the following state benefits:

- 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 you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than the current HMRC threshold)
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit (within the published net income threshold)

The headteacher may also remit costs in full or in part for families experiencing exceptional financial hardship. All such requests will be handled in strict confidence.

6. Voluntary contributions

We believe that educational trips are extremely valuable in supporting pupil's learning and broadening their experiences. We keep the costs of these trips to the minimum by applying for free tickets on public transport, negotiating discounts and taking up free and discounted entry fees and tickets where possible. We also subsidise the cost of school trips.

School budgets cannot meet the full cost of all the educational trips that we organise so we ask parents or carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of some trips. By law, no parent is obliged to pay this voluntary contribution. However, some trips would have to be cancelled without parental contributions. Any voluntary contributions requested from parents will be based on the cost of the trip, less any subsidy, divided equally between the number of pupils participating.

Voluntary contributions may be requested from parents and carers to cover the cost of the following:

- Ingredients or other materials, required for use in the curriculum, which will be taken home when work with them has been completed
- Entrance fees to places visited as part of the curriculum, and any associated travel costs
- Participation in special events on school premises
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Fundraising and Capital Projects: Schools may, from time to time, launch fundraising appeals for specific capital projects or premises improvements (for example, the enhancement of outdoor learning environments or playground equipment). Contributions to these appeals are entirely voluntary. These projects are intended to provide "added value" facilities that fall outside the scope of the standard school budget. No pupil will be restricted from using any facilities improved through such fundraising based on whether their parents/carers contributed to the appeal.

7. General

Trustees may amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made. Nothing in this policy precludes the headteacher from inviting parents or carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of additional activities, which take place in school time. Parents and carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided to run such an activity no qualifying child will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions.