

Charging and Remissions Policy

Version 1 (1st Combined policy)

This policy applies to all NCLT settings.



Wingfield Academy



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1.0 Introduction & Purpose

1.1 New Collaborative Learning Trust (NCLT) is committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to high-quality educational activities, irrespective of family financial circumstances.

This policy:

- Defines what the Trust can and cannot charge for, following statutory requirements under the Education Act 1996, our DfE Master Funding Agreement, DfE guidance, and the Academy Trust Handbook 2025.
- Ensures consistent charging, remissions (reductions/exemptions in charges), and voluntary contributions across all phases of the Trust.

1.2 This policy applies Trust-wide, allowing fees to be established for Colleges, Primary and Secondary Schools.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to:

- All NCLT Primary Schools including nurseries
- All NCLT Secondary Schools including their Sixth Forms
- All NCLT Post-16 Colleges
- All Trust staff involved in planning activities, trips, tuition, or chargeable elements

3.0 Legislative & Regulatory Framework

3.1 This policy is written in accordance with:

- Education Act 1996 (Sections 449–462)
- Academy Trust Handbook (financial oversight, value for money, publication requirements)
- Funding Agreements
- DfE statutory guidance on Charging for School Activities

3.2 The policy also reflects requirements within the Trust's:

- Financial Regulations
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Curriculum Policy

4.0 Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Trust Board

The Board has delegated responsibility for approval of this policy for Charges and Remissions to the Trust Executive Team. The Trust Board approves that charges may be made in respect of the categories identified in this policy, where permitted by law.

The level of charges, including any refund rules, shall be determined and may be varied by the Chief Financial Officer, acting jointly with either an Executive Director or a Principal/Headteacher. In exercising this delegated authority, the officers must ensure that:

- no charge is made for provision required to be free under applicable law or funding conditions;
- charges are reasonable, proportionate, and broadly reflect the cost of provision; and
- arrangements for remissions or concessions are applied in accordance with this policy.

All charges set under this delegation shall be subject to periodic review.

4.2 Local Advisory Groups are responsible for:

- overseeing and scrutinising compliance with the policy and how it is implemented in practice.

4.3 Principals / Headteachers are responsible for:

- Day-to-day implementation and ensuring staff understanding.
- Ensure communication with families is clear, accurate, and timely.

4.4 Staff will:

- Apply this policy consistently and escalate queries where needed.
- Participate in relevant training

4.5 Parents/Carers are:

- Expected to raise concerns promptly.
- Asked to request financial support discreetly where appropriate.

5.0 Principles of Charging & Remissions

5.1 NCLT is committed to ensuring that:

- Education during normal school or college hours is free of charge.
- No learner is excluded from an activity (activities for which charges cannot be obtained) because families are unwilling or unable to pay.
- Where activities are optional or take place outside statutory education, charges may be made in line with legislation.

- Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, no profit made for the Trust or used to subsidise other learners.
- Remissions are applied equitably and consistently across the Trust.
- Fees and charges are transparent and published.

6.0 Activities for which charges cannot be made

6.1 In line with statutory guidance NCLT must not charge for:

- Admission applications
- Education during school/college hours, including materials, books, equipment, where they remain property of the school/college
- Education outside school/college hours where it is part of the National Curriculum, Religious Education (RE), or a prescribed public examination the student is prepared for
- Instrumental or vocal tuition required as part of the curriculum
- Transport to or from school/college premises, where the local authority has statutory obligation to provide transport
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the student has been prepared for them by the school/college.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school/college
- School meals for Reception and Key Stage 1 students (year 1 and 2) or those in receipt of Free Meals (up to the value of a school meal), in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) national eligibility criteria.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying students on visits
- Students aged 19-24 with an EHC plan for provision funded by DfE. However, charges for resits will be made to such students as follows:-
 - where the required attendance or completion of work has not been achieved. Requirements for attendance and coursework are applied reasonably and set out to students from the commencement of their programme. Absences or non-completion of coursework due to illness or other acceptable reasons are not grounds for charging.
 - where the student fails without good reason to sit the examination for which the institution has paid
 - where a student resits an examination resulting from an initial examination failure (unless the repeat period of study is being funded through planned hours)
 - where a student resits an exam with the aim of achieving marginal improvements in grades (unless the repeat period of study is being funded by inclusion in planned hour returns)
 - qualifications leading to a GCSE grade 4 to 9 in English and/or maths where the student has not yet achieved either a grade 4 to 9 in these subjects are not treated as resits for this purpose

7.0 Activities for which charges may be made

7.1 Activities outside academy hours

Charges are made for non-residential activities which take place outside School/college hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside

school/college hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during School/college hours) and it is not the part of the National Curriculum, RE, or a prescribed public examination the student is prepared for.

7.2 Meals and refreshments during the school/college day

Charges are made according to the tariffs established by catering provider. For schools payments must be made by the relevant school online system, in advance. All accounts must have a positive balance.

7.3 Trips

Charges are made for entrance fees and transportation costs for trips during the school/college day unless the learner meets remissions criteria based on statutory benefit. Initial deposits will be non-refundable.

7.4 Board and lodging on residential visits

Board and lodging costs for residential trips deemed to take place during school/college time are chargeable unless the learner meets remissions criteria based on statutory benefit

7.5 Materials, equipment, or items retained by the learner

7.6 Music and performing arts tuition

Charges are made for Music and performing arts tuition not part of the National Curriculum, e.g. optional instrumental tuition or singing tuition

7.7 Examinations

Charges are made for:

- Re-sits not required by the curriculum or where repeat learning hours are included in funded planned hours
- Missed exams or failure to meet examination requirement without good reason
- Exams not prepared for by the school/college
- Review of external examination marking at student/parent request

In some instances, the school/college may decide to pay the cost for a review of external examination marking where students are close to boundaries. This is at the discretion of the Principal/Headteacher.

7.8 Uniform

Charges are made for uniform and other clothing items.

7.9 Extended Services

Charges may, at the discretion of the school/college be made for:

- Wrap-around care (primary)
- Breakfast clubs
- After-school childcare
- Outside school/college hours clubs
- Additional Nursery sessions (dependent on availability)
- Late payment charges on these Extended Services

8.0 Post-16 educational provision for un-funded or 19+ learners

Where learners are aged 19 or above on 31 August in the year they begin their programme of study, the Trust cannot claim DfE funding.

In such cases, students may be admitted on a fee-paying basis, and charges will be applied.

All fees must be paid in advance or according to an agreed instalment plan where permitted.

These fees cover access to tuition, learning resources, enrichment, tutorial guidance, and examination entry (excluding resits). Additional charges may apply for specialist courses requiring enhanced materials or support. Fees are fixed for the duration of the course.

The Trust may also charge students who have not been ordinarily resident in the UK/EEA for at least three years, to reflect the core funding that would otherwise have been received, plus any course-specific costs.

Failure to pay fees by the required deadlines may result in withdrawal from the course.

9.0 Damages or lost items

Charges may be imposed for the replacement of items provided by the school or college which have been lost by the student or following a student's wilful or negligent damage of NCLT property.

10.0 Other charges / business activities

VAT will be applied on supplies or services that fall within the scope of business activities. These will be either at zero rate 0%, reduced rate 5% or standard rate 20% and displayed on the invoice.

11.0 Voluntary Contributions

The Trust may invite voluntary contributions for activities where funding is not fully available.

Non-payment must not result in exclusion from the activity or the student being treated differently, but activities may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

12.0 Remissions (reductions/exemptions in charges)

Families in receipt of qualifying benefits (see Appendix A) may receive full or partial remissions for:

- Board & lodging on residential visits
- Educational trips and visits
- Certain optional extras
- Other costs as deemed appropriate by the Principal or Headteacher

13.0 16-19 (Years) Bursary Support

The Trust operates the 16–19 Bursary Fund & Free College Meals scheme to provide targeted financial support for eligible students. NCLT are responsible for assessing bursary applications, determining awards, and setting conditions for continued support.

All bursary support is subject to evidence of effort, good attendance, and acceptable conduct; funding may be withheld where a student becomes subject to formal disciplinary action.

The bursary framework comprises:

- Free College Meals¹ – awarded where students or parents/carers meet national qualifying criteria.
- Discretionary Bursary – supporting students from low-income households (including those eligible for Free Meals as above).
- Enhanced Bursary – supporting the most vulnerable learners up to a maximum value of £1,200 per year.

Details of eligibility criteria and evidence requirements for outlined on each school/college website.

Students may also receive additional bursary support for essential trips, visits, or UCAS fees, where approved by Head of Sixth form (Schools) or college leadership.

14.0 Refunds

Refunds may be issued:

- Where the Trust cancels an activity and funds have not been irreversibly committed.
- At the Principal/Headteacher's discretion for parent/carer-initiated cancellations

¹ Sixth form in schools - Free School Meal entitlement does not form part of the Sixth form bursary process in schools. This is provided separately by the school to all eligible students consistent with the national Free School Meal qualifying criteria.

The arrangements for refunds in Colleges, Primary, and Secondary phases are detailed in their respective appendices.

15.0 Financial Controls & Compliance

All charging, remissions, bursary allocations, and refunds must comply with:

- Academy Trust Handbook obligations for internal control, value-for-money, and fraud prevention.
- Trust Financial Regulations.
- Clear record-keeping and itemised invoice requirements.

16.0 Monitoring & Review

- Annual review by the Trust Executive Team or as required by statutory changes
- Internal scrutiny will examine compliance at school/college level.
- Policy published on all school/college websites.

Appendix A – Remissions – Qualifying Benefits

Parents/Carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can demonstrate that they are eligible in receipt of one or more of the following benefits under national qualifying criteria:

- 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

All parents/carers should contact the relevant school or college to confirm how they apply.