

HARBOURSIDE LEARNING Partnership

Charging and Remissions Policy

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1. Aims

Our Trust aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Trust Board Finance and Resources Committee has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy.

4.2 Each School's Headteacher and Local Governing Body (LGB) has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy locally.

4.3 The Director of Finance and Operations is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.4 Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that, within their individual school:

- the charging and remissions policy is applied consistently
- Advice is sought from the Director of Finance and Operations of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

4.5 Parents are expected to notify the school of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what the school cannot charge for. However, paragraph 7 highlights that the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent and is over and above that required by the national curriculum
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has agreed or arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what the school can charge for.

6.1 Education

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

- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras' as follows:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Residential visits (See section 6.4)
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

6.2.1 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
- Non-teaching 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

6.2.2 Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

6.2.3 Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

6.2.4 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 pupils who do not wish to participate.

6.2.5 Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

6.3.1 The school can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

6.3.2 Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

6.3.3 Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

6.4.1 Residential visits are considered as 'optional extras' and therefore are chargeable. Such visits are often high cost & cannot be subsidised from the school budgets. Whilst the visit may well take place in school hours, participation is optional and education will continue to be provided for any children remaining in school during the period of the visit. The initial letter to parents will signpost them to the remission arrangements (Section 8) if they are concerned that their financial situation means that they cannot allow their children to participate.

6.5 Damage/Loss to property

6.5.1 In cases of willful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books on loan to children, the Headteacher may decide it appropriate to make a charge which may represent the full or partial cost of replacement. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit.

7. Voluntary contributions

7.1 As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

7.2 Voluntary contributions will be sought from parents for activities which supplement and enhance the normal school curriculum, eg, outings and visits which take place wholly or mainly during school hours, and visits to the school by theatre groups and other organisations providing an educational service. These voluntary contributions support the cost of things such as travel, entrance fees, insurance costs; such costs may well make such activities prohibitive without voluntary contributions. Such activities will be costed on a non-profit making basis and there will be no additional cost passed to the majority to cover any shortfall incurred through parents unwilling or unable to contribute. In order to work out the voluntary contribution required, the anticipated cost of the event is to be calculated on the basis that there is to be no subsidy from school funds. This is to be divided by the number of children expected to travel on the event, rounded up to the nearest £1.00.

7.3 There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, then it will be cancelled.

7.4 When voluntary contributions are requested, the terms of the request will clearly state:

- there is no obligation to contribute;
- pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution;
- the proposed activity may not take place unless a substantial majority of parents contribute;
- a suggested amount for a contribution to cover costs.

7.5 If the full cost towards any of the activities for which a voluntary contribution has been sought is not available from voluntary contributions, then it will be at the Headteacher's discretion to further subsidise the cost from other sources, including school funds, to enable the activity to take place. If the amount of the subsidy required (other than voluntary contributions) is too great, then the activity may be cancelled.

8. Remissions

8.1 Remissions for residential visits

8.1.1 Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits or eligible for Free School Meals will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- 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 £16,105
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008

8.2 Other remissions

8.2.1 Each school may remit charges in full or in part to other parents after considering other specific hardship cases.

8.2.2 The schools encourage parents/carers to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full.

8.2.3The Headteacher will authorise remission in consultation with the local governing board.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Finance and Resources Committee.