



Charging and remissions policy

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Introduction

The Trust believes that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This policy describes how the responsible body will endeavour to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, endeavour to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

This policy identifies activities for which:

- charges will not be made;
- charges will be made;
- charges may be waived.

The policy also sets out the responsible body's procedures for dealing with receipts of gifts and hospitality.

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Voluntary Contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will still be treated no differently from those who have.

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset. No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

When charges will not be made

No charges will be made for:

- 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 the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours (travel and admission is a voluntary contribution);
- education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

When charges may be made

Activities for which charges may be made are:

- **Activities outside school hours**
Residential and non-residential activities 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 and specialist expertise during residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.
Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed above).
- **Music tuition**
Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 4 pupils.

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Is a residential trip in or out of school time?

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip 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.

The responsible body has agreed that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below in section Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as ‘optional extras’. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;	Eg. A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay.	
Charges will/may be made for music tuition.	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils	
Charges will be made for board and lodging of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Remission for families qualifying (see relating paragraph)

Remissions

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

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above. Criteria for family’s qualification for remission or help with charges are set out below:

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges are:

Parents in receipt of:

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- 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 the Inland Revenue) does not exceed current recommendations
<https://www.theukrules.co.uk/rules/employment/benefits/tax-credits/working-tax-credit.html>
<https://www.theukrules.co.uk/rules/employment/benefits/tax-credits/working-tax-credit.html>
- Guaranteed State Pension

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end, and as a guide, the responsible persons will endeavour to:

- publish a list of visits at the beginning of the school year so parents can plan ahead;
- maintain the established system for parents to pay in instalments;
- in the event of an opportunity for a trip which arises at short notice, and when possible, arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip;
- if opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis offered ensure spaces held do that pupils from families on lower incomes are not discriminated against.

Refunds

Refunds will be made if possible, however it will be necessary to reduce the amount refunded if costs have been incurred.

Receipt of gifts and hospitality

Gifts in kind will be included in the responsible body's accounts in the accounting period in which they are receivable.

The Trust may also receive assistance in the form of donated services (e.g. time) or facilities). Such incoming resources will be included in the Statement of Financial Activities where the benefit to the responsible body is reasonably quantifiable and measurable.

Further details are contained in the responsible body's Financial Regulations Manual.

Review of policy

The Board of Trustees, through the appropriate Committee, reviews this policy and procedure every year. It may however, review this policy and procedure earlier than this if the government produces new regulations, or if it receives recommendations on how the Policy and procedure might be improved.

After every review the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

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