

Charging and Remissions 2024					
DOCUMENT INFORMATION – FRONT SHEET					
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POLICY DETAILS					
POLICY OWNER/AUTHOR	NEW POLICY		CURRENT POLICY - REDRAFT/AMENDMENTS		
Operational Finance Lead	No		Yes	If Yes please provide brief details of changes below in the version history section and highlight changes in yellow.	
VERSION HISTORY					
VERSION NO & DATE	24.1 September 2024				
VERSION DETAIL & CHANGES					
PREVIOUS REVIEW DATE	September 2024	NEXT REVIEW	December 2025	REVIEW CYCLE	1 years
APPROVAL INFORMATION					
DATE APPROVED/REVIEWED			APPROVED BY	Trust Board	
UNION CONSULTATION REQUIRED	No		IF YES, PLEASE STATE DATE OF CONSULTATION		

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Version Log

Date	Version No	Change
19/09/2024	24.01	ABR – Changes for 24/25 Cycle
March 2022		Addition of Early Years Provision - actioned
March 2022		Addition of Requests for Financial Assistance - actioned
January 2024		Early years funded hours

Change Log

1. Introductions

The charging and remissions policies adopted by the Trustees ensures that statutory requirements are met and is intended to reflect the general principles of the Education Act which identifies activities for which:

- 1) Charges will not be made
- 2) Charges will be made
- 3) Charges may be waived

We want all our pupils to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means.

This policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions. Our intention is to ensure transparency in setting charges so that all our pupils are able to access all the provisions on offer.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

2. Admissions

No charge will be made for admissions.

3. Free school meals

No charge will be made for school meals for pupils who qualify for statutory remissions

A charge is made for pupils not entitled to free school meals, where a parent/carers chooses for the pupil to receive a school meal, unless the relevant local authority funds the universal provision of free school meals

4. Educational Activities for Pupils

4.1. Examinations

No charge will be made for the entry fee if the pupil has been prepared for the examination at the school.

We reserve the right to charge parents/carers any other examination fees which may be incurred.

We may charge parents/carers the examination fee if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of a public examination where the school originally paid the entry fee. This will be decided by the principal, in conjunction with the chief executive

4.2. Education provided within Academy hours

Education provided by any Academy for its registered students should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours. School hours being those hours when a school is actually in session and not including the break in the middle of the day. This means that neither the student nor his or her parents or guardian may be required to pay for, or to supply, any materials, books, instruments or other equipment for use in connection with education provided during school hours, unless they wish to own them.

4.3. Education provided out of Academy hours

Where education is provided out of school hours, charging is permitted, except where the education is provided:

- a) to fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed Public examination;

- b) specifically, to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum; or
- c) to fulfil duties relating to Religious Education.

In these cases, the only charge that may be made is for board and lodging or for residential trips.

4.4. Trust minibuses or transport provided by the trust during academy hours

Any transport provided during school hours by an academy to carry particular students between parts of the trust's premises or between a school and any other place where education is to be provided by the LA or the trust, must be provided free of charge. However, if a student makes use of transport not provided by the trust to travel directly from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by the trust, then parents may be asked to meet the cost of such travel. An example of this would be travel direct from home to work experience and vice versa.

4.5. Activities run by a third party

The Act permits an organisation other than the Trust Board to levy a charge directly on parents for activities organised in school hours by a non-school organisation. The Trust will not be involved in collection of charges on behalf of the third-party organisation.

Where students are granted leave of absence to attend these activities it would be for parents and any staff members similarly released to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements made by the third party to secure the safety and welfare of the students.

4.6. Charging in kind

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as craft, must be budgeted for and borne by each school. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash or kind can however be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis.

Students must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents. The Trustees charging policy should make their policy on this clear. It should be recognised that much of the practical work in craft or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a "finished product", however this is an essential part of the learning process.

5. Other Trust Activities

5.1. Voluntary Contributions

The Trust will seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the Trust or support any Trust activity whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential and including inviting parents to pay for materials or ingredients where they wish to own the finished product. However, all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that students of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise students from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers.

The Law says that:

- 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 the parents are unable to pay;
- If insufficient contributions are raised the trip or activity may have to be cancelled; and

- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

5.2. Board and lodging on residential visits

Board & lodging on residential visits may be charged for whether or not the visit takes place within school time and whether or not the activity is provided to fulfil the requirements of

- the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or
- of the National Curriculum; or
- to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education.

Charges for board and lodging must not exceed the actual cost to the student. They must not, for example, include any element representing a share of the costs of staff accompanying the visit (This may, however, be covered by voluntary contributions).

Trustees will, as a statutory minimum, remit any charges for board and lodging in the case of students whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit etc. where the activity is deemed to take place in school hours. Trustees may wish to consider whether to remit charges in other circumstances.

6. Charges

If a charge is made it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds are needed for additional costs e.g. to help hardship cases this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.

6.1. Materials

Schools and local authorities can charge for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;

6.2. 'Optional extra' activities

'Optional extra' activities are those which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.

Participation will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as they are made. Any charge made in respect of individual students may include an appropriate element for the following: a student's travel costs; a student's board and lodging; materials, books, instruments and other equipment; support staff costs; entrance fees to museums, theatres, insurance costs etc.

It should be noted that any charge for an 'optional extra' activity, as distinct from a request for a voluntary contribution, should not exceed the actual cost of providing that activity. This includes activity costs, bank charges and administration time. The actual cost is divided equally by the number of students willing to participate. It may not, therefore, include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

The costs of teaching staff involved in optional extra activities, may only be passed on, through charges if:

- they are engaged specifically by the Trustees for the purpose of providing the activity;
- they are employed by the Trustees to provide instrumental music tuition; or
- they are teachers already employed by the Trustees, who have been engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra.

6.3. Music Tuition

A charge may be made in respect of individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during academy hours. Parental agreement must be obtained before a student is given that tuition.

6.4. Home to school transport

Where a school provides home to school transport the costs will be re-charged back to parents/guardians.

6.5. Printer credits

Students will be allocated a number of credits dependent on their year group. Students who exceed their allocation will be asked to purchase additional credits.

6.6. IT lease scheme

The Trust operates an IT Lease Scheme for pupils and staff in some of its schools. Parents, carers and staff members who participate in the scheme will be expected to make the necessary payments as per their agreement. Failure to keep to the agreement will result in the Trust requesting the device be returned to the participating school immediately. Any equipment returned to the Trust must be in reasonable/usable condition. If the device is not returned in a timely manner the Trust reserves the right to report that the equipment has been stolen to the police.

7. Breakages and fines

7.1. Trust Damages

We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of school property. This will be determined by the principal, in conjunction with the chief executive.

7.2. 3rd Party Damages

11.2. We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of property belonging to a third party where the school has been charged. This will be determined by the principal, in conjunction with the chief executive.

8. Requests for financial assistance

Requests for assistance should be made to individual schools in the first instance. Depending on the circumstances, requests may need to be addressed to the schools Chair of Governors.

9. Early Years Provisions

From April 2024, working parents of eligible 2-year olds will be able to claim 15 hours funding which can be used during term time only or if parents don't utilise all of these hours some can be banked to use over the holiday periods.

From September 2024, working parents of eligible children between 9 months and 3 years will be able to claim 15 hours as above too.

From April 2025, working parents of eligible children 9 months and above will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare.

All of the above can be claimed from the term following the child's 9 month/2-year birthday.

Providers are permitted to charge for extras such as:

- Nappies
- Meals

- Trips