



# Charges & Remissions Policy

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Version 2.3

## 1. Aims

Our school aims to have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions and to 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.

## 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

The Longthorpe Academy Committee has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff are responsible for implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently.

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

## 5. Basic Principles

No charge can be made for education during school hours.

The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the school to carry pupils between the school and the activity. 'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the day.

School trips, visits and practical activities enhance the pupils' learning and broaden their knowledge and experience. These are undertaken with the voluntary contributions of parents and can be defined as 'Optional Extras'.

## **6. Admissions**

There is no charge for admissions.

## **7. School meals**

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per day decided by the school.

School meals charges are reviewed annually, and parents will be given one half term notice of any increase. Parents are required to pay for school meals in advance. Entitlement to free school meals is verified by the Local Authority. Where the Local Authority has rejected a claim for free school meals, that decision will be final and the school will not subsidise the cost of providing school meals for any pupil.

## **8. Public examinations**

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school.

## **9. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)**

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum including sports matches against other schools
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

## **10. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)**

There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of private music tuition. There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities. Exceptions apply for some school visits which are optional extras.

## **11. Where Charges Can Be Made**

Below we set out what we can charge for:

### **a. Education**

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

## b. Optional Extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment in relation to these activities.

The following are optional extras:

- 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 or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- Transactional and admin fees

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, including admin and transaction fees, divided by the number of pupils within the class or year group expected to partake. A charge may be rounded up or down to the nearest pound.

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.

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.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for. Where a payment has been made by the parent this will be considered as consent for the pupil to partake on the visit.

c. Music tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil, or pupils in groups of up to four, to play a musical instrument.

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

d. Residential visits

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place.

We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not.

As they are optional activities, the full cost of these visits must be met by parents or other family representatives. The school reserves the right to cancel a visit if costs are not fully covered. Payments can be made in instalments if required, and dates when payments are due will be included in the visit details.

Refund of payments cannot be made except in exceptional circumstances and must be agreed by the headteacher. The charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Residential visits are offered to pupils in Key Stage 2. Though not part of the National Curriculum, they offer an opportunity to widen pupils' experiences.

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

The school may charge for residential activities that fall outside of school hours

e. Losses and Damages

Where school property has been lost or damaged, either wilfully or through neglect by a student or parent, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the headteacher's discretion.

## **12. Voluntary Contributions**

The school can ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible. Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include school trips, external visits, sports activities, clubs, etc.

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. However, the school reserves the right to cancel any school trip / visit / event if insufficient contributions are received.

Where reasonable, the opportunity to pay in instalments will be offered to parents who wish to pay in this way.

## **13. Refunds**

Due to financial commitments made by the school to suppliers for which parent contributions are relied upon, we cannot issue refunds in the event of absence from school for any reason.

If a planned school trip or visit does not go ahead then refunds will be issued or payments reassigned to another school trip within the same academic year.

## **14. Financial Difficulties**

If a pupil is in receipt of Free School Meals (at the time of the educational trip, or organisation of the educational trip), the School may offer a reduction in the cost of the activity. The decision to subsidise an activity, visit or trip will be at the headteacher's discretion and will depend upon the cost per pupil.

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance

- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals.

In case of other financial difficulties parents should contact the Headteacher, who will use their discretion on an individual basis, if a parent states that further financial hardship would be a barrier to a child engaging in a special activity. All subsidy information is confidential.

## **15. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be annually reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team.