

Charging and Remissions Policy

Date Approved:	29 th March 2022
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Responsible sub-committee:	Finance & Resources
Related Policies:	Financial Standing Instructions / Finance Policy Trust Hire Agreement Debt Policy
Review Date:	March 2025
Target audience:	All stakeholders in the Trust – external and internal
Dissemination via:	Sharepoint, Trust Website

Version	Section	Amendments	Date	Author
1.0			November 2016	D Kirkham
1.1		None	November 2017	D Kirkham
1.2		Added school meals, Extended services	March 2022	J Delaney

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I. Purpose

This policy applies to charges made by the Trust.

Legislation allows Trusts to charge for certain activities and the Education Act 1996 requires the Trust to set out its policy on charging students to participate in school activities.

By law, students may not be charged for taking part in activities that take place during the school day. Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that 'all education provided during school hours must be free.'

Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions but if they are unable to 'contribute', their child should not be prevented from participating should the activity go ahead. In any request for voluntary payments, it must be clear that:

- There is no obligation to make any contribution and
- That pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed towards the planned activity.

2. Procedure

All income must be processed and accounted for in line with the Trust finance policy.

2.1 Admissions

No charge shall be made in respect of admission unless it is for the purpose of education for persons over compulsory school age or teacher training

2.2 Provision of education

No charge shall be made in relation to the education of registered pupils where education is provided during school hours with the exception of music tuition (see section 2.9).

When education is provided outside of the normal school hours, no charge shall be made provided it is required as part of the syllabus/curriculum.

The school may charge persons who are not registered pupils at the school for education provided or for facilities used by them belonging to the school.

We may charge for

- Books and materials the student wishes to keep (we will advise of the cost in advance).
- Optional extras (see section 2.5).
- Music or vocal tuition (see section 2.9).

2.2 Public examinations

No charge shall be made in respect of the entry of a registered pupil.

Charges are applied for the entry of a student for an examination for which they have not been prepared by the Trust.

Entry for resit examinations is also subject to charge. Where a student has paid for an examination re-mark and the new grade exceeds the original, then a refund is made for the fee.

2.4 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.

2.5 Optional extras

Charges may be made for optional extras including:

- Education provided outside school hours that is not part of the school curriculum; part of a syllabus for a prescribed public exam that the school is preparing the pupil for or part of religious education (this includes the cost of related books, instruments, equipment or activities).
- Exam fees (if the pupil has not been prepared for the exam by the school).

- Board and lodging on a residential visit.
- Transport provided in connection with an optional extra /residential visit.
- Extended day services e.g. breakfast clubs, after school clubs.

The cost charged will not exceed the cost of providing the optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The Trust will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost (see 2.13).

2.6 Visits during the school day

A voluntary contribution will be requested to cover the cost of educational visits and other activities.

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will not be discriminated against, however, where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable consideration will be given to cancellation.

2.7 Residential visits

Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal school time and/or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the curriculum, examination course or part of religious education, the trip can be classified as 'an optional extra'.

Any charge in respect of an optional extra requires parental agreement and willingness to meet the charges.

Where more than half of the time away from home is classed as part of the normal school day a charge will be raised to cover the cost of board and lodgings. A voluntary contribution will also be sought to cover the cost of staffing/transport and materials where appropriate.

Where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable consideration will be given to cancellation.

Parents who are in receipt of any of the allowances listed on [Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

have the right to claim free board and lodgings by completing a 'hardship application form' which can be found on the school website or requested from school reception.

2.8 Extended services

The Trust is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our pupils which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). Extended services enable our schools to provide:

- High-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day.
- Ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to support or to more specialist services.
- Ways of increasing pupil engagement.
- Ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

We may provide certain extended services at no charge, for example, breakfast club. It should be noted that the Trust will keep this under review and notify parents/carers if a charge is to be applied.

2.9 Musical Instrument tuition

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations allows for charges to be raised for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupils' parents.

Charges may not exceed the cost of provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. Tapton School Academy Trust will raise the appropriate level of charge for musical/vocal instrument tuition with the exception of Children Looked After and pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding.

2.10 Musical Instrument hire

Musical instruments are available for hire to students at an annual charge.

Instruments loaned to students as part of the Pathways Programme may be loaned at nil cost, however, should the instrument be taken off the school site and is subsequently lost or damaged the parent signs a letter to agree to pay £20 towards the cost of replacement.

2.11 Breakages

The financial cost relating to breakages/damage/fines are recoverable from parents and can be pursued as a civil debt. A charge will also apply for loss or damage to Academy property which is placed under the responsibility of the student and may be taken off the premises.

2.12 Lettings/Use of Facilities

Under no circumstances will lettings be subsidised from resources provided for students' education.

Facilities will only be let where they are not needed for purposes of education during that time.

The charge is negotiated between the school and the prospective tenant using the Trust Proforma Hire Agreement. This will include the cost of hire of a space and any related facilities used.

All hirers will need to demonstrate that they have adequate insurance to compensate the school for any damage they cause and a copy of the insurance certificate should be obtained and retained during the let. Where there is a doubt the school can consult its' insurer.

Where the school is a PFI school, opportunities are limited to 7am – 6pm. During this time a charge can be made to cover the use of the premises, administration, wear and tear and general disturbance. The Headteacher and the PFI landlord should be made aware of the letting, the latter being responsible for the provision of fixed facilities (washrooms etc), health and safety and cleanliness.

2.13 Remission of Parent/Student charges

The Trust will consider the remission of charges to parents or carers who find themselves in financial difficulties and who are in receipt of low income support payments such as those allowances aligned with free school meal eligibility criteria (e.g. universal credit).

The parent / career may apply to the school for financial support towards the cost of charges and this will be considered by the headteacher. This will be dealt with confidentially.



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