



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

*"Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14*

## CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

### CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

#### Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to help the Headteacher and Governing Body set out a policy on charging and remission for our school activities and school visits.

The Governing Body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Our school 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

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies (including free schools, studio schools and UTCs) are required through their funding agreement to comply with the law on charging for school activities. This guidance has been written to provide at-a-glance information and complements the "Charging for School Activities – Advice for Governing Bodies, School Leaders, School Staff and Local Authorities" (Department for Education, May 2018).

References within this policy to the role of the Governing Body should be taken to refer to the academy trust, in the case of academies.

We will ensure that we inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed in this policy of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

#### Definitions

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

#### Education

We **will not** charge for:

- an admission application;
- 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<sup>1</sup>, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that 'part of the National Curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).

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- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments or vocal tuition if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- 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 Body or Local Authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

We may charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them;
- optional extras (see below); and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances.
- certain early years provision
- community facilities

### Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the Local Authority/Governing Body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit (but the charge must not exceed the actual cost)
- extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

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. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those children who are not on the residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents our Governing Body from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. Therefore, it is much more common practice for us to ask for voluntary contributions rather than charge. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Governing Body or Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

**No child would be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.** If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled. We will make sure that we make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. We will make it clear to parents at the outset what our policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. We would not, for example, send colour coded letters, direct debit or standing order mandates to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds.

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### Residential Visits

We will not charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

We may charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit), with an annual gross income of no more than **£16,190**;
- Pension Guarantee Credit;
- Employment and Support Allowance, income related;
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

In addition, the following pupils will be protected against losing their free school meals:

- Since 1 April 2028, all existing free school meals claimants have continued to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit is rolled out. This applies regardless of any change in household circumstances, including if their earnings rise above the threshold during that time. Protections will remain in place until the end of the 2025/2026 school year.
- From the start of the 2026/2027 school year, the Department for Education will extend

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entitlement to free school meals to include all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit. It is our intention to end transitional protections alongside this change in threshold, with eligibility for all pupils reverting to whether they meet the eligibility criteria, regardless of whether they were previously protected. We will issue further guidance ahead of September 2026.

A pupil is only eligible to receive a free school meal when a claim for the meal has been made on their behalf and their eligibility, or protected status, has been verified by the school where they are enrolled or by the Local Authority.

The Governing Body agreed in November 2025 that moving forward the subsidised cost for families in receipt of the above benefits (e.g. Pupil Premium Grant) will be amended to take effect for residential visits in the 2026/2027 academic year. The changes will be:

- **Rock UK** (Year 6) – A 50% contribution will be required (payable in instalments)
- **Letton Hall** (Year 5) – A 50% contribution will be required (payable in instalments)

The cost for educational visits (non-residential) will remain subsidised at 100% of the total cost.

### Information on Charging and Remissions Policy

Parents/carers are entitled to information about our charging and remissions policy, and so we ensure that this is available upon request during school hours or freely accessible from the school website.

### Monitoring Arrangements

The Finance & Premises Committee monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy was reviewed and updated in 2025 and will be revisited in autumn 2026 in line with advice from the Department for Education.

November 2025

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