



Charging and Remissions Policy

PART A (Trust)

Person responsible for policy: Chief Operating Officer

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Contents

1. Aims of policy
2. Definitions
3. Legislation and guidance
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Where charges cannot be made
6. Where charges can be made
7. Voluntary contributions
8. Remissions
9. Monitoring arrangements

1. Aims of the Policy

The River Learning Trust (RLT) believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits, both curricular and extra-curricular, regardless of their financial means.

The Charging and Remissions Policy aims to set out a robust, clear process to enable RLT Schools to be clear about what types of activities they can charge for and when charges will be made.

The Charging and Remissions Policy is split into two parts: Part A is the Trust's overarching policy that outlines the requirements, as defined in law in line with RLT values, that RLT schools must follow. Part B is unique to each RLT school, which must align to Part A and should set out where:

- voluntary contributions may be requested
- charges will be made
- charges will not be made
- charges may be waived

Schools should review their existing policy and ensure it aligns to Part A, or there is a Part B template provided.

2. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: the cancellation of a charge, which would normally be payable.

3. Legislation and guidance

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. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. This policy complies with RLT's master funding agreement and articles of association and is in line with the government advice ([Charging for school activities](#)) published in May 2018.

No charges can be made unless the governing body of the school has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy. This policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for and explain when charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents need to know how the charge will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the cost (or even get it free). This information should be made available to parents.

Schools cannot and must not make a profit from charging for optional extras. However, schools can charge for the use of community facilities such as out-of hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions, and a profit can also be generated, providing it is spent on the purposes of the school and or on community facilities.

The remissions policy must set out any circumstances in which the school proposes to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with their charging policy. For example, a school may decide to provide an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board: is responsible for approving the Trust's charging and remissions policy. The Trust board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and approves this Part A. Responsibility for approving the local charging and remissions policy (Part B) has been delegated to each school's Local Governing Body. Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to each school's Local Governing Body.

The Local Governing Body: is responsible for approving the local charging and remissions policy (Part B), ensuring it is aligned to the RLT Part A policy, and for monitoring the implementation of the policy in their own school.

Headteachers: are 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 and for notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies. The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

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

5. Where charges cannot be made

5.1 Education

- 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, or

- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or
- Part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) 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; or where a pupil is looked after by a local authority
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination resit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the resit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education 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;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision (in line with 3 The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012)
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information

6.2 Optional extras

RLT schools are able to charge for "optional extras". Each school within the RLT will have an individual policy (Part B) identifying procedures for optional extras. The following are optional extras

6.2.1 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

6.2.2 Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school

6.2.3 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)

6.2.4 Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit

6.2.5 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

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.

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.

Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or appropriate sized groups of pupils to play a musical instrument or to sing and which is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum

or a public examination syllabus for all pupils. Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Damage or lost items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

Activities outside school hours

Residential and non-residential activities (other than those listed in Section 5 above) 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 visits during school hours

The board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time, however pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

When any trip is arranged, parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places. This should recognise that parents may not be able to pay quickly and may have to budget for the trip over a reasonable period of time.

7. Voluntary contributions

Schools are permitted to seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils and to fund activities during school hours that would not otherwise be possible. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

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.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

8. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust agrees 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.

Individual school policies (Part B) set out any other local circumstance(s) in which charges will be waived.

Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of who qualifies for this is available on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by The Chief Operating Officer every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees