



Harbour

Schools Partnership

A guiding light for education

Charging and Remissions Policy

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NB. ‘Trustees’ means the Directors referred to in the Trust’s Articles of Association.
Introduction

History of most recent policy changes

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
V1	19/11/2025		New THSP policy drafted to replace previous Ventrus and Tarka policies	Trust Merger

Links to other Trust Policies

n/a

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Harbour Schools Partnership believes that education can be enriched for all pupils by offering experiences that enhance or are additional to the basic requirements of the National Curriculum and that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from enrichment activities independent of their parent/carers financial means.
- 1.2 This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of enrichment activities is offered and, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities while not adding additional burdens to the school budget.
- 1.3 This policy aims to ensure that there is clarity over those items that the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge or request for a voluntary contribution.
- 1.4 This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 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.
- 1.5 It is also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.
- 1.6 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2.0 Aims and Principles

2.1 The policy identifies:

- activities for which charges will not be made
- activities for which charges will be made
- activities for which charges may be waived (Remissions)
- activities for which voluntary contributions may be sought

- 2.2 The principles of best value will be applied when planning enrichment activities that incur costs to the school or charges to parents.
- 2.3 Parental Agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.
- 2.4 Participation in optional enrichment activities will be on the basis of parental choice and alternative education will continue to be provided for non-participating pupils at no extra cost where the activity is taking place during school hours.
- 2.5 Trips/activities may be cancelled if insufficient funds are raised by the school.
- 2.6 No child will be excluded from an activity because their parent/carer is unable to pay.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 **Trust:** The Harbour Schools Partnership
- 3.2 **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- 3.3 **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable
- 3.4 For non-residential visits, the school day is defined as the start time of the morning session and the end of the afternoon session as published on the school's website. The mid-day break does not form part of the school day for the purposes of this policy.
- 3.5 For residential visits the regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Trust board will review the body of the policy annually.
- 4.2 The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.

4.3 Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

4.4 Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the policy.

5.0 Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- 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, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6.0 Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them

- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- 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

6.2 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. 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 LA or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education) eg.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, extra-curricular clubs ran by external providers, 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/carers 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 that is to be charged for.

6.3 Music Tuition

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/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

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

6.4 Residential Visits

Residential Visits (50% or more of the visit is during school hours)

We may charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

We may request voluntary contributions towards other costs of residential visits, voluntary contributions are treated differently to charges. (See section 7)

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they meet any of the remissions criteria (see section 9).

Residential Visits (50% or more of the visit is outside of school hours)

The full cost of the visit may be charged.

6.5 Damage to school property

Where it can be proved that a child or group of children have caused damage to school property or resources, a charge will be made to parents in order to replace/mend the damage that has been caused.

There will be no remission available for damage to school property.

6.6 Minibus

The following applies if the school has a permit issued by the LA under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. Only pupils of the school, school staff or parents/carers may be charged for travel in the minibus.

Charges made will cover the cost of running, maintaining and insuring the minibus. However, the service should not make a profit for the school.

A charge for the above cannot be applied for the following:

- 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 they have been prepared for that examination at the school; and
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit

7.0 Voluntary Contributions

7.1 As an exception to the requirements set out in sections 5 and 6 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to support activities which incur costs that cannot be recovered by charges.

7.2 In this instance all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise the voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

- 7.3 If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- 7.4 No child will be excluded from an activity during school hours because parents are unable or won't pay.
- 7.5 If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- 7.6 Academies will use the following wording where voluntary contributions are being requested to support optional or enrichment activities:

We are requesting a voluntary contribution of £ _____ towards the cost of this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be curtailed or cancelled. Unless the activity is cancelled for all pupils, no pupil will be prevented from participating because their parent/carer cannot make a contribution.

8.0 Combination of Charges and Voluntary Contributions

- 8.1 On occasions activities may comprise of elements which are 'charges' and elements which are 'voluntary'. The academy will advise the amount which relates to charges and the amount which relates to voluntary contributions.
- 8.2 Academies will use the following wording where voluntary contributions are being requested:

The charge for this activity is £XXX this relates to the following items:

- *List of items covered by the charge.*

We are also requesting a voluntary contribution of £XXXX towards the cost of providing this activity. If there are insufficient voluntary contributions to meet the cost of providing this activity, the activity may be curtailed or cancelled.

- 8.3 The total contributions made will not exceed the total cost of providing the activity, in the event that the activity costs are lower than anticipated, refunds for the difference will be made taking into account an administration fee of £5.

9.0 Remissions

- 9.1 In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the school and will depend on the activity in question.
- 9.2 Families who meet the eligibility criteria for pupil premium funding may apply for remission of fees.
- 9.3 Families who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship or unusual circumstances may request consideration of remission of fees.

9.4 Remissions for residential visits

Families who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

9.5 Families should make a request for remission of fees to the school office or headteacher. All requests will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

10.0 Refunds

10.1 Some trips will require a non-refundable deposit.

10.2 If a pupil pulls out of the trip through medical grounds, a refund request will be reviewed on an individual basis.

10.3 With any trips, the school needs to be certain that all of the pupils will be able to behave appropriately and follow instruction to ensure they are safe. If, leading up to the trip, they are unable to meet the standards and expectations whilst in school regarding behaviour and attitude, the school may not be able to take them based on risk assessments. If this is the case, or there are concerns, the school will be in touch so the parent/carer is aware that they are at risk. This may lead to the loss of some or all monies paid if the place cannot be filled or further costs are incurred

Appendix 1 – Charging Policy Flowchart

