



COTHAM SCHOOL

Charging and Remissions Policy

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	2013	Initial version
2.0	08/2022	Complete rewrite

Approved by Governors: Last approved 2013
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INTRODUCTION

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and the [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.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

This policy where applicable complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Governing Body confirms their belief that this policy is in line with legislation.

The Governing Body believes that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits independent of the parents/ carers' financial means. They also recognise the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits and trips, after school clubs and residential experiences can make towards a students' personal and social education.

The Governors reiterate the equal right of access to the whole curriculum by any student within the Academy. This curriculum will be delivered to all students without charge. At the same time, it is recognised that the curriculum may be enriched by activities and materials which could not be made freely available within the scope of existing resources, and these activities and materials will only be available if sufficient voluntary contributions are available from parents/ carers.

(Throughout this policy, the term "parents/ carers" means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)

Legislation and guidance

GENERAL PRINCIPLE

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

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Finance, Premises and General Purposes Committee.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Finance, Premises and General Purposes Committee.

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

The general principle within the Act is that no charge will be made for:

- education provided during school hours (excluding the mid-day break)
- education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the national curriculum
- education that is a specification for a prescribed public examination for students learning individually or in groups unless the tuition is provided at the request of the students parents/ carers
- admissions applications
- any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education. **(should any materials, instruments, books or equipment which are issued to students, become lost or damaged, parents/ carers will be required to reimburse the school for their replacement costs).**
- for statutory religious education
- examination resit(s) if the student is being prepared for the resit(s) at the school
- transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- transporting registered students to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for students to be educated
- transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school

However there are exceptions where the school can make charges.

EXCEPTIONS

Charges **are** permitted under the Act to meet the costs of the following:

- Board and lodging on residential educational trips
- Non educational trips
- Music tuition and the attendant hiring of musical instruments where the tuition does not form part of the curriculum for a prescribed public examination
- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child owns the finished 'product' (e.g. in art, design, food or technology lessons)
- Entering a student for a public examination which is not prescribed in regulations, and for preparing the student for such an examination out of school hours
- Examination resit(s) if the student is being prepared for the resit(s) at the school **and** the student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for the curriculum specification
- Re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested by the parent or student
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- Voluntary optional extras provided outside of school hours (or mainly outside school hours)
- Damage to property. Parents/ carers will be expected to pay the replacement cost of property which has been damaged by a student through negligence or maliciousness.

When calculating the charges, 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

In all cases where a permitted charge is made, parents/ carers will be told the amount in advance. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students 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 students who do not wish to participate. Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested from parents/ carers for any specific activity which would otherwise not be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/ carers for voluntary contributions include but are not limited to are sports fixtures and activities and some off-site trips.

There is no obligation for parents/ carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/ carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents/ carers will be told the amount in advance. The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However the visit or activity may have to be canceled if insufficient contribution or payments where charging is permitted are received.

OTHER CHARGES

To actively engage in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g. pens, pencils, rulers, calculators. Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents/ carers to provide these items the school actively encourages parents/ carers and students to purchase them. Some optional items of equipment may on occasion be offered for sale by the school e.g. calculators, revision guides etc.

Photocopying and/or printing which is not required by a member of staff may be charged for.

The school will seek payment from parents/ carers for damage to or loss of school property caused wilfully or negligently by their child

REFUNDS Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the students control
- The decision by the school that the student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason, deducting any non-refundable deposit
- In the event that an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (the reimbursement of fees will be made by the examination board to the school)

In other circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

SUPPORT FUND

Where charges are to be made to parents/ carers, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents/ carers on eligible benefits will be considered and remission provided within the limits of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits include:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit but are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- The 'Guaranteed Element' of Pension 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)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit the school will nonetheless consider requests for assistance in the phasing of contributions sympathetically, provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.

Monitoring

The Deputy Director of Finance and Resources monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Director of Finance and Resources annually or sooner if legislation, government guidance or organisational requirements change.

At each annual review, the policy will be approved by the Finance, Premises and General Purposes Committee.