



Part A

Charging and Remissions Policy

PART A

Person responsible for policy: Chief Operating Officer

Revised: March 2021

Review Date: March 2022

1. Aim of Policy

The River Learning Trust 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. This policy aims to set out a robust, clear process in place for charging and remissions, and to enable RLT Schools to be clear about what types of activities they can charge for and when charges will be made.

This policy should be read with each school's individual Part B policy.

The policy identifies activities for which

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

2. 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 our funding agreement and articles of association and is in line with the government advice (Charging for school activities) published in May 2018. The review date for this policy is recorded on the front of this policy.

The Law says:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

3. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

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

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. No charges will be made for

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

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.

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.

7. Charges may be made for

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her 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

Optional extras

Each school within the River Learning Trust will have an individual policy (Part B) identifying procedures for optional extras, including residential trips and activities which can be charged for.

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.

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.

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.

8. Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may also seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to pupils and to fund activities during school hours which 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.

9. 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>

POLICY ON CHARGING & REMISSIONS FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Part B – Sandhills School Charging Policy

Voluntary Contributions

We will ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities during the school day. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. No child will be excluded from an activity because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are received to fund a visit or activity, then it will be cancelled.

School Charging Policy

Sandhills Community Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities, for example After-School Clubs.

It is the policy of Sandhills Community Primary School that charges will (or may) be made as indicated below. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made

| Activity or items which will/or may be charged for | Notes | Charges or Voluntary Contributions |
|--|---|---|
| Materials, books, instruments or equipment where a parent wishes their child to own/hire them | For example, a clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay | Charge – Financial support available as outlined below |
| Music tuition provided by OCC Music Service and other providers, where parents have opted for music tuition beyond that delivered as | The cost or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an | Charged – Financial support available as outlined below |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| part of the school's curriculum | optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of pupils | |
| The board and lodging component of residential trips | The charge will not exceed the actual cost | Charged – Financial support available as outlined below |
| After School Clubs delivered by external providers | A charge is made to cover the direct cost of the activity where fees are payable | Charged – tuition fees are charged either directly by the external provider or collected for payment by the school |
| Workshops, speakers, visiting authors and artists etc, to enhance the curriculum | Such opportunities are typically subsidised from the school budget. The contributions requested will not exceed the actual cost of the event | Voluntary contribution – Financial support available as outlined below |
| Trips and visits to enhance the curriculum and provide first-hand experience | Such opportunities are often subsidised from the school budget, eg, museum visits, historic buildings, etc. The contribution requested will not exceed the actual cost of the event | Voluntary contribution – Financial support available as outlined below |
| Extended Schools – after school and breakfast club | A charge is made for each session in the school run breakfast club and after school club | Charged |

Support Offered to Families who have Difficulty Making a Financial Contribution

In order to remove the financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Governing Body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced cost to families who have difficulty making a financial contribution. Parents are encouraged to speak to the Headteacher to discuss what financial support is available.

Families Qualifying for Charges to be Waived or Help with Charges

If financial support is available in relation to a particular charge, it is indicated in the right-hand column of the table above. Specifically, where children are eligible to Free School Meals, the school receives Pupil Premium funding (criteria for qualification are

below) and will cover in full or part any charge or voluntary contribution:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed limit set by the Government
- Working Tax Credit 'run on' – the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit

Updated criteria and figures at: www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

Additionally, parents may claim help with some costs in the following circumstances:

- If more than one child in a family is going on a trip or visit, and this puts the family under financial pressure.
- If a family is experiencing financial difficulty resulting from unforeseen circumstances. Parents are encouraged to speak to the Headteacher to discuss what financial support is available.

Additional Considerations

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall give parents sufficient notice of activities and visits
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments for residential visits.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

This Policy is reviewed annually by the LGB Resources Committee.

Date of Review: November 2021

Future Review: Autumn 2022