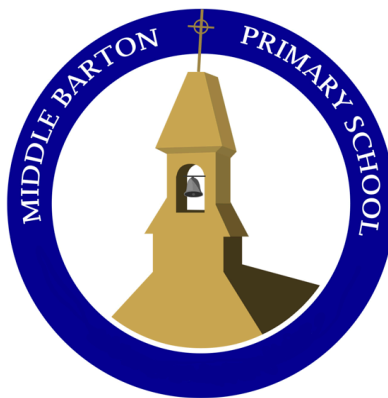


Charging and Remissions Policy

PART B:



Approved by: Local Governing Body

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1. Aims of 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 help parents understand when charges can and cannot be applied, and the arrangements in place to manage this process.

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, outlining what can and cannot be charged for. Part A is published on RLT's website. 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

2. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

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

Free School Meals: The government scheme to support families who are entitled to certain benefits. See the government's website for the current eligibility criteria: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

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 funding agreement and articles of association and is in line with the government advice ([Charging for school activities](#)) published in May 2018.

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

5.2 Optional extras

All schools are able to charge for "optional extras", which are:

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 some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in section 7 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher, and will depend on the activity in question.

7.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents 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)

Insert details of any other circumstances in which your school will remit (wholly or partly) any charge that would otherwise be payable. For example:

In addition to this, there may be circumstances that are not included in the categories above for which the Headteacher/Governing Body may deem to be a special case for consideration. Families not in receipt of the benefits listed in Category A above, but who nonetheless feel unwilling or unable to pay due to financial constraints may also apply for financial support. Parents in this category should discuss their concerns about charges with the Headteacher/Head of Year. Decisions about remission will be made on a case by case basis. Examples of families in this category would include those families with more than two children incurring simultaneous charges for school activities.

9. Activities & Items we charge for

Activity which will be charged for	How are charges calculated?	When will charges be required to be paid?	Who qualifies for help with the cost?
E.g. School Trip (Day trip within school hours)	E.g. Voluntary charge only. Cost to parents include the cost of the activity, travel, insurance and administrative fees	E.g. Parents will be notified as soon as possible and will be required to pay before the trip goes ahead unless there is an agreement with the Headteacher.	E.g. Children in receipt of Pupil Premium will qualify for a subsidised rate.
E.g. Swimming lessons	E.g. Voluntary charge only, to cover transport costs	E.g. Parents will be notified as soon as possible and will be required to pay before the trip goes ahead unless there is an agreement with the Headteacher.	E.g. Children in receipt of Pupil Premium will have all fees covered.
E.g. Breakfast and after school clubs	E.g. Flat charge of £6.00/£5.50 (sibling) for Breakfast club and £14.00/£13.00(sibli	E.g. Parents must book and pay in advance. Children can attend on the day without notice	E.g. Children in receipt of FSM qualify for “free”/ subsidised wrap-around care.

Activity which will be charged for	How are charges calculated?	When will charges be required to be paid?	Who qualifies for help with the cost?
	ng) for After School Club This covers the cost of staff and food (prices subject to increase from September 2024 inline with proposed support staff payrise	and parents will be billed for any additional provision used. Charges for late collection will be charged at £5.00 per 15 minutes.	
E.g Residential Trip	E.g. Costs relate to the board and lodging costs, optional activities as well as travel, insurance and administration fees	Parents will be made aware of the trip sufficiently in advance	E.g. pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see remissions policy below) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.
E.g. School Lunches	E.G. Charges for 'paid for' school meals are set by our catering partner, in agreement with the school. Details of the menu and pricing can be found on SchoolGrid		E.g. Pupil's who qualify for Free School Meals can order without charge on the booking system (SchoolGrid)
E.g. Music tuition	Charges are based on all of 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 optional extra for an individual student or	Parents will be billed directly by the music service / provider	Children who qualify for FSM/ Pupil Premium support will be able to apply for financial support if required.

Activity which will be charged for	How are charges calculated?	When will charges be required to be paid?	Who qualifies for help with the cost?
	appropriate groups pupils		

10. Payment arrangements

The school runs a policy of being cashless and therefore all payments need to be made using our online portal (Parent Pay), the details of which are provided to new starters. BACs payments and Childcare Vouchers are also accepted. For more information, please contact the school office.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager and Headteacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager and Headteacher every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the local governing body.