



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>