

Athena Learning Trust Primary Cluster

Charging and Remissions Policy

Review

Reviewed on: February 2024

Reviewed by: Board

Review Period: 3 years

Policy Statement

This policy sets out when parents of children at a school within the Trust will be asked to pay for school activities, when they will be asked to make a voluntary contribution to costs and when they will not be asked to pay or contribute.

This policy also sets out when costs will be waived for children from low income households, which can be found in the 'remissions' section.

Circumstances where no charge will be made

Education in school:

- Admission to a school within the Trust for children of compulsory school age
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of school materials, books, instruments or other equipment) that is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Instrumental or vocal tuition if:
 - o The teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
 - o The teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme
 - o The pupil is looked after by the local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

Education out of school:

- Education provided outside school hours that is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education

Examinations:

- Prescribed public examinations or re-sits if the pupil has been prepared for the exam by 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 trustees or local authority have arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he/she has been prepared for that examination at the school



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- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit that is part of the national curriculum

Trips:

- Education provided on a visit that takes place during school hours, which is part of the national curriculum
- Education provided on a visit that takes place outside of school hours and 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 religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Other areas:

- School meals for children who are entitled to free school meals, up to the daily limit

Circumstances where a charge may be made

The school may charge for the following at its discretion at an amount up to cost:

Education in school:

- Any school materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them or the finished product, for example ingredients, art work and calculators
- Music and vocal tuition when the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. This will include tuition provided during school hours and both individually and in groups
- Education that is provided outside of school time that is not:
 - o Part of the national curriculum
 - o Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or
 - o Part of religious education

For example, extended day services such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, holiday clubs and supervised homework sessions

- Nursery provision managed by the school will be charged to parents for each child's hours outside of their funded entitlement, and must be paid for in advance

Examinations:

- The exam fee for a registered pupil who has not been prepared for the examination at the school
- The exam fee for a pupil who has been prepared for the examination at the school but who has failed, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus.

This could include but is not limited to, non-attendance of exams

Property:

- The cost of repair or replacement of school property that has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student, parent or visitor
- The cost of repair or replacement of third-party property that has been damaged by a student, parent or visitor and for which the school has been charged

Transport:

- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/Trustees have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)

Trips:

- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit, unless the pupil is currently in receipt of free school meals, in which case the parent will be asked to pay a contribution to board and lodging, generally 50%.
- The overall trip cost for trips which are an optional extra for students and that are not part of the national curriculum

Other areas:

- School meals for pupils who are not entitled to free school meals
- Community facilities, for example, letting the school hall to a local club. This is covered separately in the Lettings Policy

Refunds, cancellations and payments of optional extra activities

The school operate a strict 'payment in advance' policy and does not provide credit to parents or any party. Failure to meet the payment instalment dates set out in relation to an optional extra may result in the pupil being removed from the activity.

Poor behaviour leading up to the optional extra activity may also result in the pupil being removed from the activity. The definition of 'poor behaviour' will be as decided by the Principal.

Removal from the activity due to failure to meet the payment instalment dates or due to poor behaviour will result in the parent being liable for the costs incurred by the school for their child's place. The costs incurred will be as decided by the Finance Manager.

All initial deposits are non-refundable.

If a pupil is unable to attend an optional extra activity at the last minute through illness, a refund may be given less the costs incurred by the school. If the costs incurred outweigh the amount paid, then it may be possible for the parent to claim via insurance. There will be an excess deducted from all insurance claims. All initial deposits remain non-refundable regardless.

If a pupil/parent/carer withdraws from the optional extra activity for any other reason, then no refund will be given and the parent will be liable for the costs incurred by the school for their child's place. The costs incurred will be as decided by the Finance Manager.

If the amount paid by the parent exceeds the final cost of the optional extra activity by more than £10 per student, as decided by the Finance Manager, then a refund may be offered to parents.

If a balance of more than £10 remains on a school lunch account at the time of a student leaving education at a school, a refund may be requested by the parent/carer from the Finance Department.

The refund must be requested in writing within one school term of the student leaving. Balances remaining after this date or for less than £10 are non-refundable.

If a payment is due to be made to the parent/carer for less than £10 (outside of the exceptions above), this will be paid into the student's lunch account. Payments due for more than £10 can be requested via electronic payment or to be paid onto the student's lunch account.

Calculating the cost of optional extras:

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any school 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, this includes 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

The charge made to individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate.

If a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge will be made for supply teachers to cover those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Education partly during school hours

A charge may be made for an activity that takes place outside of school hours and is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.



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No charge will be made for residential activities taking place largely during school time, which meet the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, if the activity is to do with the national curriculum or religious education. No charge will be made for the cost of travel for activities taking place during school hours. Voluntary contributions may be requested.

If more than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls outside of school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside of school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

For the purposes of this calculation, the school day is divided into two sessions and a 'half day' means any period of time before or after the midday lunch break hour.

Voluntary contributions

From time to time the school may ask for voluntary, no-obligation contributions from parents to help fund an activity in or out of school time. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, parents will be made aware of this.

The school can ask for voluntary contributions towards any activity which takes place during school hours, for school equipment and towards school funds generally.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the activity, or the school cannot fund it from another source, then it will be cancelled.

Remissions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents and carers of children who receive free school meals.

Applications for the remission of charges should be made in confidence to the school.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils. This will be determined by the Principal.