



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

Name of Policy	Charging and Remission Policy
Scope of Policy	This policy applies to all Academies within The Thames Learning Trust
Approved by	Chief Executive
Date of Approval	September 2018
Review period	Three Years
Review Date	September 2021

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

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1. Introduction

At The Thames Learning Trust we believe the children benefit from education visits, journeys, visitors to the school as well as extra-curricular activities in sport and the creative arts.

The Board of Trustees recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, practical activities, visits and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Board of Trustees 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. The Board of Trustees will support all off-site activities in which the Headteacher considers to be of good educational value and complementary to the curriculum.

Any legitimate charges made must not exceed the cost of the activity.

2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be made for activities, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parent/carers. Sections 449-462 of the Education Act sets out the law on charging for school activities. Reference is also made to the DfE document 'Charging for School Activities' October 2014.

3. Voluntary Contributions

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because his/her parent/carers are unwilling or unable to make a contribution. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to fund a visit or activity or the school cannot fund it from some other source then there is the likelihood that it will be cancelled and parents/carers should be advised of this possibility. When making requests for voluntary contributions no parent/carer will be made to feel pressurised into paying as payments are voluntary and not compulsory and no qualifying child will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions.

4. Educational Visits including residential visits

If a visit or activity takes part during school time no charge will be made. However a voluntary contribution will be requested to cover the full cost of providing the visit or activity.

If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or 50% of the visit (including travel) is within school hours, no charge will be made for activities or travel but the actual cost of board and lodging will be charged to parent/carers. Except for those families in receipt of benefits (see 'Exemption of Charges').

See item 3 above which describes that the visit could be under threat of cancellation if insufficient voluntary contributions are not received.

5. Materials, Textbooks and Music Tuition

What Activities are Chargeable?

Government regulations say that schools can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes him/her to own them;

- Music and vocal tuition that is requested by a pupil's parent/carer as set out in 'Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007';
- Residential Visits – Board and lodging costs associated with the visit (See exceptions to charging)
- Optional extras;

6. Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. **Optional extras are:**

Education provided outside of school time that is not:

- a) Part of the national curriculum;
- b) Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
- c) Part of religious education
 - Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
 - Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/ Board of Trustees have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
 - Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In 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, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- 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.

7. Damage and Loss of Property

In cases of wilful or malicious damage to equipment or breakages, or loss of school books or equipment on loan to pupils the Headteacher may decide to make a charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the Head's discretion.

8. After School Clubs

After school clubs organised directly by the school and run by school staff are offered free of charge to children. However, the school may on occasion request a small charge for some clubs i.e. clubs requiring the purchase of equipment or materials where a parent/carer requests the finished product to be brought home with the child. Please refer to '*What Activities are Chargeable*' '*Optional Extras*'

All afterschool clubs organised by external organisers, are chargeable

9. Examination Fees

All pupils' examination fees are paid for by the school. If a department deems it desirable or necessary for pupils to re-sit an examination, these will be paid for either through the central examination budget or departmental budgets after agreement by the Headteacher.

Reimbursement may be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

9.i. Exam Fees/Retakes

Initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Pupils will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The school reserves the right to pass on any retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes where it appropriate to do so.

Pupils must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the school not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

9.ii. An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school;
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it;
- a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Board of Trustees or local authority originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

In all of the above cases the Headteacher is given discretion to waive charges if felt desirable and for the benefit of the pupil.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

10. Transport

Transport to and from home to any activity not provided by, but permitted by, the school, can be charged for (the main example is work experience).

It is not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or visits to museums etc. during school hours.

11. Exemption from Charges

Pupils whose parent/carers who are in receipt of the benefits listed in the bullet points below are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging on residential visits. For all other activities that

take place within school time no charge will be made however a voluntary contribution will be requested.

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (financial year 2013/14);
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.

The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) may be used to fund those pupils eligible for this funding if an educational benefit can be demonstrated.

Discretion is granted to the Headteacher to fund or subsidise school activities where family circumstances warrant such assistance.

See item 3 above which describes that the visit could be under threat of cancellation if insufficient voluntary contributions are not received.

12. Equal Opportunities

The Headteacher will ensure that the School's equal opportunities policies are observed in implementing the policy.