



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

Name of Policy	Charging and Remissions Policy
Scope of Policy	This policy applies to all Academies within The Thames Learning Trust
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
Date of Approval	July 2025
Review period	Annually
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GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER



THAMES LEARNING TRUST

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This policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions across all schools in The Thames Learning Trust.

Section 8 sets out the activities that all schools in The Thames Learning Trust will charge for.

1. Aims

Our trust aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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

4.1 The board of trustees

The board of trustees has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, local governing body, an individual trustee or Principal.

The board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Audit, Finance and Resources Committee

4.2 Principals

The Principal of each school is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Principal of the relevant school of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The trust will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Principal of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school

- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where Board of Trustees or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- 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

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 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
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- 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

- 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 or board of trustees has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- 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.

6.3 Music tuition

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.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, schools are able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which schools may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- School Trips
- Sporting Activities

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. Activities we charge for

will charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast club
- After school club
- Letting of school facilities

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Director of Finance and reviewed in May each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in June each year.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances schools may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the Director of Finance and/or the Finance, Audit and Resources Committee and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 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
- As of April 5, 2025, both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit have been discontinued in the UK. This means that no new claims can be made, and existing payments have ceased. Individuals

previously receiving these credits are being transitioned to Universal Credit or, in some cases, Pension Credit.

- Despite the discontinuation of Child Tax Credit, the income threshold of £16,190 remains relevant for certain benefits. The criteria for these benefits may differ, so reviewing the specific requirements is essential.
- Universal Credit Income Threshold
- For families applying for Universal Credit on or after 1 April 2018, eligibility for certain benefits, such as free school meals, is subject to an income threshold. Specifically, your household's annual net earned income must be less than £7,400 after tax and not including any benefits you receive. This threshold remains in effect as of 2025.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Director of Finance monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Finance every three years

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Audit, Finance and Resources Committee.