



**Minerva**  
Learning Trust

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

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## Changes in this edition

[Early Years provision](#): updated to include statement regarding charge for early years provision outside of statutory obligations

[Community Facilities](#): updated to include statement regarding charges for use of community facilities

[Extended Services](#): changed to clarify charging for extended service provision with the option for Headteachers to offer certain services free of charge, subject to funding availability

## 1. Purpose

Minerva Learning Trust is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

## 2. Aims

We are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

Our aim is therefore:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of school visits.

## 3. Links to other documents

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- The Trust's Funding Agreement
- ESFA (2022) 'Academy Trust Handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Trust Complaints Procedures
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Trust Freedom of Information Policy
- The Trust's Scheme of Delegation and Scheme of Financial Delegation
- School Uniform Policy
- Trust Finance Policy

## 4. Admissions

There is no charge for admissions.

## 5. School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged in line with the scale of charges detailed by the school catering contractor as approved by the Sheffield City Council, School Food Service or by the individual school if no contractor is in place. Where a parent fails to pay their child's school meals debt, legal action may be sought.

## 6. Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where pupils have been prepared for the examinations by the school. However, if the pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the school may recover the fee incurred from that pupil's parents. This includes re-sits.

There is no charge for examinations that are not on the set list but have been arranged by the school.

## 7. Activities that take place during school hours

**This does not include the break in the middle of the school day.**

There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music tuition ([11. Music tuition within school hours](#)).

There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

### **We may charge for:**

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras ([8. Activities that take place outside of school hours \(non-residential\)](#))
- music or vocal tuition ([11. Music tuition within school hours](#))

### **We can charge for:**

- Early years provision in line with The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012 (including provision for a pupil below compulsory school age or provision which is not funded through school's funding)
- Community facilities ([The cost of optional extras](#) and Trust published Lettings Policy which can be found on the school website)

## 8. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum, including sports matches against other schools
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

### The cost of optional extras

Charges may be made for optional extras for some activities and will be decided by the headteacher. 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/governing body have 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge ([15. Voluntary contributions](#)).

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

## 9. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site

Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined at [7. Activities that take place during school hours](#).

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined at [5. Activities that take place outside of school hours \(non-residential\)](#).

## 10. Residential activities

### We will not charge for:

- 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, 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 school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours
- residential activities that take place during school hours.

## **We will charge for:**

### **Board and lodging**

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place.

We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost** (see [14. Remissions and concessions](#) for more guidance on remissions).

### **Travel**

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

### **Activities**

The school may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of school hours (see [8. Activities that take place outside of school hours \(non-residential\)](#)).

## **11. Music tuition within school hours**

The Trust's Schools follow government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges **will** be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school **will not** charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

The Trust is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for pupils on free school meals.



There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for children in care. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

## **12. Extended services**

The Trust is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our pupils which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). Extended services enable our schools to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services (such as health, social care or special educational needs services)
- ways of increasing pupil engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

The school will charge for extended service provision however, in some circumstances the school may provide certain extended services at no charge, subject to funding (for example, breakfast club). Parents/carers will be notified where charges apply.

## **13. Damage to property and breakages**

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a pupil the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Any charge will be notified to the parent/carer in advance of issuing the invoice.

## **14. Remissions and concessions**

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive low income support payments, for example, universal credit.

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The headteacher will authorise the remission of charges using the authorisation form for audit purposes ([Appendix 1: Remission Authorisation Form](#))

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

## **15. Voluntary contributions**

The school may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

## **16. Inability or unwillingness to pay**

The Trust is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

## **17. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with DfE Statutory guidance. At every review, it will be approved by the Trust Board.

## **18. Equality Impact Assessment**

The Trust will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in order to ensure that policies, procedures and practices cater for individuals who share protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the organisation are fair to all. If unfairness is highlighted, the assessment will also seek to show how this can be changed and, where it can't be changed, how it can be improved.

The Trust will monitor the impact of the policy to assess whether there is evidence of a detrimental impact on anyone with a protected characteristic as a result of the application of this policy. The assessment will include consideration of adaptations or changes which can be made to address any issues identified.

## Appendix 1: Remission Authorisation Form

Name:
Detail of activity relating to the remission
Funded from:
Authorised (Headteacher):
Date: