



Hertford St Andrew C of E School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by:

Date:

Last reviewed on:

September 2026

Next review due by:

September 2028, or sooner if there are statutory changes

Context

The law states that education provided during school hours must be free. This definition includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours. No student may be left out of any activity because their parents/carers cannot or will not contribute.

A 'charge' is a fee payable for specifically defined activities and a 'remission' is the cancellation of a charge that would normally be payable.

Our Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, day trips and residential experiences can make towards the children's personal and social education. Our Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children of the school and as additional optional activities.

Therefore the Governors wish to ensure that all children have access to all areas of the life of the school regardless of the parents'/carers ability to pay and have therefore determined their policy and remission of fees in accordance with the requirements of the DfE.

This policy is based on:

- Education Act 1996
- DfE guidance on Charging for School Activities
- Schemes for Financing Schools
- Equality Act 2010

Aims of the Policy

The school aims to:

- Maintain transparent processes for charging and remissions.
- Clearly explain which activities require payment or voluntary contributions.
- Minimise financial barriers to participation.
- Manage debts responsibly and protect school budgets

Charging Principles

In line with statutory requirements, the school cannot charge for:

- Education provided wholly or mainly during school hours.
- Materials, books, equipment, or transport provided during school hours.
- Activities that form part of the National Curriculum.
- Examination entries where the pupil has been prepared at school.
- Educational visits during school hours.

Charges may be applied for:

- Board and lodging costs on residential visits.
- Activities outside school hours not part of the curriculum.
- Extended school services (after-school club).
- Optional extras (e.g., theatre trips, extracurricular workshops).
- Materials or equipment where parents wish the child to own the item (e.g., design & technology projects)

Communication of Charges:

Where a charge applies, the school will provide written communication including:

- Amount payable
- Payment deadline
- Remission eligibility
- Payment method options

School meals

Charges apply for school meals unless a pupil is eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Outstanding school meal debts are handled in accordance with the school's Debt Recovery Procedures

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount, in accordance with Herts Catering charging. This is subject to change by Herts Catering and the latest costs can be acquired by contacting the school.

Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations or assessments that are part of the curriculum.

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 National Curriculum
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

We may charge for other activities.

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

Where most of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined for all school hours activities.

Travelling time is included in time spent on the activity if the travel itself occurs during school hours.

In cases where most 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.

Residential activities

Our school will not charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- 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.

Our school 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.

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.

There are no travel charges for transporting pupils:

- in connection with educational visits in school hours
- to other premises where the Governing Body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- to public examinations that the school have prepared children for

Music tuition within school hours

Charges may apply for individual or small-group instrumental tuition requested by parents, except where statutory exemptions apply (e.g., looked-after children).

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.

Refunds

Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made in writing to the headteacher. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a pupil is withdrawn from an activity by the school because of a pupil's breach of the school's behaviour policy.

Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all 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 the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher and dependent on the situation.

Remissions and concessions

The school will consider the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Universal Credit (with income thresholds)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Remission may also be considered for:

- Families facing temporary financial hardship.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals, focused and extended.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will authorise the remission of charges. Evidence of eligibility may be required. Decisions will be made fairly and in full confidence.

Voluntary contributions

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution for certain activities.

- Non-payment will not exclude pupils from participating.
- If insufficient contributions are received, the activity may need to be cancelled.

Hertford St Andrew 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.

Debt Management Procedures

Effective debt management ensures the school budget can be used for pupil learning and not subsidising unpaid fees.

Principles

- Debts must be managed sensitively, fairly, and confidentially.
- Early communication with families will always be prioritised.
- Persistent or high-value debts cannot be ignored, as they impact the school's financial position.

Monitoring of Debts

The school will monitor outstanding balances for:

- School meals
- Clubs and wraparound care
- Trips and activities
- Early Years provision (if applicable)

Our first approach is supportive. School and the Governing Body will work with families to find a fair and manageable way to clear debt. Where external providers are involved (eg payments made through Arbor), access to chargeable activities may be temporarily paused.

Acceptable Credit Period

Parents are expected to clear payments within 14 days unless otherwise stated.

Write-Off of Irrecoverable Debts

The Governing Body may approve write-off in line with financial regulations, after all recovery processes have been attempted.