



PLUMPTON SCHOOL

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Approved by ¹			
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Position:			
Signed:			
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KAHSC v11 – Rev September 2024

¹ The Governing Body is free to delegate the approval of this Policy to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head teacher

² The Governing Body are free to determine the review frequency of this Policy

Review Sheet

Each entry in the table below summarises the changes to this Policy made since the last review (if any).

Version Number	KAHSC Version Description	Date of Revision/Review
1	Original	January 2012
2	Reformatted only	February 2014
3	Updated to reflect DfE publication ' <i>Charging for school activities: Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities</i> ', October 2014. New section for boarding schools, clarification on communication with parents and addition on Children Looked After and music tuition.	March 2015
4	Clarifications: S4 - enrichment activities that do not fulfil the definition of 'education'. S5 – what majority means, and that travel time counts. S6 – determining if a residential is an Optional Extra with examples & additional sources of funding e.g., trusts. S7 – participation is determined by payment.	April 2015
5	Introduction updated to reflect that many more schools have community facilities, and this policy does not apply to charges for them and to reflect that "first pay, first served" access to trips is discrimination against low-income families.	February 2016
6	Introduction updated to define remission and give examples; S9 – clarification that secondary schools must include a school milk scheme section if any pupils are up to and including the age of 18 <i>and</i> are entitled to free school meals.	April 2017
7	Updated to reflect DfE updated guidance (May 2018)	June 2018
8	Reviewed: No Legal or policy changes. What schools do or must do has not changed. Updated with a new section on school meals: a major policy clarification following acceptance by the DfE that school meals should be part of every school's charging and remissions policy because the government provides remission though UIFSM and FSM, governors have discretionary powers, and debt recovery must be managed. One minor clarification about school milk.	September 2020
9	Updated the review table page and replaced the FAQs with a link to the DfE document. No other changes or updates.	November 2022
10	No legal changes but significant updates to include new sections on responsibilities and nursery fee principles. No highlighting due to major reorganisation to cut content and improve clarity. Right click on the contents page to update fields after removing inapplicable sections.	September 2023
11	No legal changes. Updated to include suggested debt write-off amounts (in line with Westmorland & Furness Council limits – check your LA restrictions where relevant). New text on school meals debt that reflects the growing the use of online cashless catering and includes how persistent debts are recovered.	September 2024

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1. Policy scope

Sections 449 to 462 of the [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) and [The Education \(School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies\) \(Information\) \(England\) Regulations 1999 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) set out the law on charging and remissions for school activities in England and require schools to have a Policy on charging.

[The Education \(Charges for Early Years Provision\) Regulations 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) sets out when charges can be made for some early years provision.

This Policy is based on the law and Department for Education (DfE) guidance [Charging for school activities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Section 21 of the [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) gives schools the power to provide community facilities or services for the (charitable) benefit of pupils or their families, or people who live or work locally. This Policy does not apply to charges we make for community facilities which are handled separately under hire agreements.

This Policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises e.g., a community club that hires our hall to meet in and charges its members to attend.

1.1 Aims

This Policy aims to ensure that:

- All pupils have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of their family's financial means.
- This school is transparent about the activities or items that can be charged for and when charges will be made, or remissions offered.
- We recognise our responsibility not to place undue pressure on family finances for example, by giving good notice about charges and by not offering activities on a 'first to pay, first served' basis.

1.2 Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for clearly defined items or activities.

Half-day school session: any period of 12 hours ending at noon or midnight (p9, DfE, 'Charging for school activities', 2018).

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

School hours: the hours when school is in session and which do not include the lunch break

Associated policies and procedures

The following policies and procedures may impact the implementation of this Policy:

- Educational Visits Procedures
- Equality Policy
- Hire Procedures

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Governing Body/Trust Board

The Governing Body/Trust Board has overall responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions Policy.

The Governing Body/Trust Board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this Policy.

2.2 The Head teacher

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy and that it is being applied consistently.

2.3 Staff

The Charging and Remissions Policy and how to implement it is included in the induction of new staff and the senior leadership team will provide updates or refresh training as necessary.

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the Policy consistently.
- Notifying the Head teacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the Policy applies.

2.4 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to notify staff or the Head teacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions Policy.

3. When no charges will be made

3.1 Education

There will be no charge for:

- Admission or applications for admission
- Education provided wholly or mostly 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 this school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at this school, or religious education. This includes the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

3.2 Educational visits

There will be no charge for:

- Supply staff to cover for those staff who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

4. Voluntary contributions

When charges do not apply, parents and carers may be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of some of the educational opportunities that we offer such as:

- On site enrichment activities, educational visits and the associated transportation and other costs
- Specialist equipment
- General school funds to improve opportunities.

All requests to parents and carers for voluntary contributions will make it clear that the contributions are voluntary and that there is no obligation to pay. Pupils whose parents or carers do not contribute will not be treated differently or excluded.

However, the Governing Body reserves the right, to cancel activities if not enough voluntary contributions are received.

5. When charges will be made

This school may recover the full costs of some items and activities, but charges will not exceed the actual cost for

- Music and vocal tuition
- School meals
- School milk scheme
- Before and/or after school care
- Certain early years provision.

Reasons for and the procedures for handling these charges are described in more detail below.

5.1 Optional extras

There are charges for

- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, lunchtime and after-school clubs)

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. Families on a low income who are unable to pay such charges should speak to Mrs Penny about remission, in complete confidence.

5.2 Music tuition

A charge will be made for vocal and musical instrument tuition for either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size when it is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

National charging guidance will be followed, and no charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

5.3 School meals

School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £2.90 per day or free of charge to the pupils of families entitled to free school meals.

Families can find out how to [Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) or they can apply directly to their home Local Authority at [Citizen Portal - Sign in \(cumberland.gov.uk\)](https://cumberland.gov.uk), [Citizen Portal - Sign in \(westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk\)](https://westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk). Families needing help to do this can ask at the school office.

To enable our school meals service to be planned efficiently, we need advance notice of a pupil's requirements and ask for 7 days to start or stop receiving a school meal.

Payment for school meals is required in advance.

To prevent arrears accumulating, protect the school budget and to support families with planning and budgeting, we use the cashless catering service School Hub which can take school meal bookings and payments online directly from families. Parents and carers can only order meals online if payments on School Hub are up to date upto three weeks in advance

When a school meals debt has arisen, if the account becomes in arrears of above £6 (two meals), a packed lunch must be brought in for the child until the amount outstanding is cleared.

We are committed to working together to find suitable payment plans for parents and carers in financial difficulties, and anyone experiencing this should speak to the Head teacher in the strictest confidence. We may be able to signpost families to extra government or community support in the immediate or short term.

Where no attempt is made to clear a school meals debt, we will take appropriate debt recovery action in accordance with our normal financial procedures (see section 7 for more information).

5.4 School milk scheme

Under [The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) all schools must make lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk available to drink at least **once** a day during school hours or the lunch break at a fair cost or free of charge to all pupils who are entitled.

Up to one third of a pint of milk is available to all children free of charge, regardless of their family circumstances whilst they are in Class 1.

Once they are in Year 1 or above, a small charge will be made towards the cost of continuing to provide this single portion of milk to those parents and carers who want their children to continue receiving it.

For more information about our milk scheme and the current charges, please ask at the school office.

5.5 Before and/or after school care

Charges will be made for childcare services offered to pupils before school and after school when they are run by this school.

5.6 Certain early years provision

Government funding covering the cost of delivering 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare for children aged 3-4 years and for some 2-year-olds does not include the cost of meals, snacks, consumables such as nappies or sunscreen, additional hours or additional services such as trips or outings for which there will be charges.

Additional hours and services will be charged at the current hourly rate where hours are not fully funded as Early Education defined by the local authority. This includes the lunchtime period between sessions.

For our current session times and rates please ask at the school office. Charges for additional services such as trips will be agreed in advance with families.

The free entitlements will be delivered consistently so that all children accessing any of the free entitlements will receive the same quality and access to provision, regardless of whether they opt to pay for additional hours and/or services.

We will not charge a deposit to secure a child's free place and there is no requirement to pay a registration fee as a condition of taking up a child's free place. We will also not charge 'top up fees' to recoup the difference between the amount received from the Local Authority and the current hourly rate.

5.7 Damage to property and breakages

The school will attempt to recover some, or all the costs incurred repairing wilful or culpably negligent damage or breakage of school property or property belonging to a third party where the school has been charged. The actual amount will be determined by the Head teacher.

6. Calculating charges and remission

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to school and/or charges to parents and carers.

When charges are made for activities, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't. Support for cases of hardship will come through applicable funding such as pupil premium money.

In some circumstances, school may not charge for items or activities set out in section 5 of this Policy. This waiving of charges is called remission. It will be at the discretion of the Governing Body/Trust Board and will depend on the reasons for the charges and the circumstances of the recipients.

Pupils who are looked after by a local authority or whose parents or carers are receiving specified benefits are entitled to full remission of some charges outlined in Section 5. This entitlement is subject to change

but usually equates to pupils being eligible for free school meals. To find out which benefits are specified and eligible for full remission, see information on how to [Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk).

Charges for other 'chargeable activities' may also be fully or partly remitted. Where appropriate governors can approve the use of the delegated budget and other funding streams such as Pupil Premium to allow 'chargeable activities' to be fully or partly remitted

Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents and carers are informed of charges for individual activities.

6.1 Non-residential activities

Where the majority of time spent on a non-residential activity is *within* normal school hours, the charging regime will be as if it happens *fully within* school hours and no charge will be made. The majority of time is defined as 50% or more. Parents or carers may still be asked for a voluntary contribution.

Where the majority of the time spent on a non-residential activity is *outside* of normal school hours, the charging regime will be as if it happens *fully outside* school hours i.e., the activity becomes an 'Optional Extra' and charges will be made unless 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 this school, or part of religious education. The majority of time is defined, in this case, as more than 50%.

Travel time is included when considering the time spent on an activity only when it occurs during school time (see definitions).

6.2 Residential activities

Parents and carers will be charged board and lodging for a pupil to attend a residential visit unless remission is granted.

To cover any other costs associated with a residential visit e.g., transport, activity tuition, for which charges cannot be made, they will be asked to make a voluntary contribution.

If not enough voluntary contributions are received to cover the costs of a residential, governors reserve the right to cancel it.

7. Debt recovery

Our financial management Policy requires all services provided by us to be paid for in advance so it is expected no significant debts will accrue. In the event that debts are accrued, the Governing Body has authorised all reasonable measures to be taken to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. In doing so they will observe the relevant financial regulations and any other legal requirements.

Staff whose role it is, will follow school procedures to secure the collection of all debts.

A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it. Only debts below that allowed for in the annual funding letter issued by the Secretary of State may be written off. The recovery of any sums above this amount will be referred first to the Governors/Trustees and then to the Secretary of State for approval. If any debtor has a number of debts that together exceed the write-off limit, then these will be treated as a total amount.

Unless a decision to write-off a debt is demonstrably a reasonable course of action authorisation is in place to initiate legal or other action to recover debts.

A formal record of any debts written off will be maintained and retained for 7 years.

8. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

To ensure we achieve the aims of this Policy, the finance committee will monitor its impact.