“Achieving The Best For All”

Charging and Remission Policy

Name of Headteacher:	**Tom Johnston**
Date Policy approved and adopted:	**May 2026**
Date Due for review:	**May 2027**

Equality at Merdon Junior School

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. (See Initial Equality Impact Assessment)

Charging and Remissions Policy

Aims
Our school 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 and will not be made
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

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 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

Definitions

- **Charge**: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission**: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board
The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

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

Headteacher
The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff
Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

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

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

Where charges cannot be made
Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

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/carer
- 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

Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

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, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

Where charges can be made

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

Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

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 LA or governing board 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/carers 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 that is to be charged for.

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/carer.

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

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

Voluntary contributions
As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities that would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

The cost of educational visits

Visiting speakers/theatre companies

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers 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.

Activities we charge for

The school will charge for the following activities:

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge is made a term in advance for parents who wish their children to receive small group instrumental tuition. To secure a child's place, these fees must be paid two weeks before the beginning of each term. The **full annual fee** is payable irrespective of the child ceasing lessons during the year.

Residential Visits

Parents are charged the full cost for all residential visits, including on site residential visits, except for parents who receive:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or,
- Child Tax Credit (but **not** Working Tax Credit) and have an annual taxable income that makes families eligible for free school meals (If families receive Working Tax Credit, they are not eligible for free school meals)

In these cases, parents will be charged for the board and lodgings and the school will pay for the transport and tuition fees.

In the case of financial hardship the Headteacher has the discretion to discuss splitting costs and the timescale of payment with the parent so the child does not miss out on activities.

All contributions must be received **prior** to the visit.

School Performances

When school performances incur additional production costs, a small charge may be made.

Loss or Deliberate Damage of School Equipment

Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the replacement cost of school equipment which is either lost or deliberately damaged, where the cost of collecting the reimbursement is financially viable for the school.

The School's Behaviour Policy will be adhered to in the case of deliberate damage to school equipment.

School Lunches

The expectation is that lunches will be booked and paid for in advance. The school has the right to refuse provision of school meals if payment that is in arrears exceeds £20 at any point in time. Parents are reminded that free school meals are available; details of which are on the HCC website.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the governing board and reviewed in May each year. Parents/carers will be informed of the charges for the coming year in July each year.

Sports Clubs

Activities taking place before or after school e.g. Sport activities provided by external sports providers. The charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. The governing board have agreed where that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in certain circumstances. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

Category A Parents in receipt of:

• Income Support

• Income-based Jobseekers Allowance

• 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 HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules

• Guaranteed State pension

Parents may claim help with some costs in some other circumstances, depending on external funding, or fundraising, as well as the main school budget.

Category B

• Parents of multiple children in the same cohort

• Parents of children identified as within a 'vulnerable group'.

Remissions for residential visits

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits may 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
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Monitoring arrangements

The headteacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the finance committee every year.

Evaluation and Review

Date of Ratification	May 2026
Date for Next Review	May 2027
Comments: Formatting changes to be in line with other policies	