



Charging and Remission Policy

Responsibility	Finance & Resources: Delegated to the Head Teacher	
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*Based on 'The Key' Model Charging and Remissions Policy – Version:
'Model_Policy_Charging_and_Remissions_2024'.*

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1. 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 students from taking full advantage of these opportunities

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 to 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.

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 governing board

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

Responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Head Teacher.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Trustees' Finance and Resources Committee.

4.2 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.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Head Teacher 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.

4.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the Head Teacher 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 student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for students to be educated
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when they have 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 student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying students on a residential visit

6. 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 and items for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include, for example:

- Curriculum and enrichment trips and visits, including sports fixtures and competitions
- In-school and external workshops led by non-RTS adults/companies
- Transport to and from trip and visit venues
- Art, design and technology materials and supplies where students intend to keep the finished product

- Year 7 / induction administration items, such as locker allocation, year-group lanyards and identification cards

There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no student 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, it will be cancelled.

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6.1 E-Learning Scheme

The school operates an e-learning scheme through which students have access to a one-to-one device. This scheme underpins RTS's curriculum design, teaching approaches and independent learning model and is therefore planned on the basis that every student has daily access to a suitable device in lessons and at home. The use of personal devices is fully embedded within lessons across the school to support explanation, modelling, practice and feedback; devices also provide a valuable independent learning tool for extended work outside the lesson, including the completion of homework where appropriate. The e-learning scheme is the school's standard model for delivering this one-to-one access in a way that is equitable, sustainable and aligned with safeguarding and network requirements.

6.2 iPad one-to-one device scheme

At the start of Year 7, parents/carers are invited to participate in the school's one-to-one iPad programme. The programme operates on the basis of a three-year agreement for the provision of an iPad, protective case and charger, with the option for students to retain and use the same device for the final two years of Key Stage 4 for an additional contribution. The agreement is provided through an approved computer leasing company and, for the duration of the lease, the devices are not owned by the school. Information about the scheme, including expected contributions, any available subsidies and the process for joining the programme, is issued annually (normally in May/June) to enable parents/carers to make timely arrangements.

RTS's standard expectation is that each student will access an individual iPad through this programme, as one-to-one devices are integral to the school's digital curriculum and day-to-day classroom practice. Where a family's financial circumstances mean they are unable to meet the full cost of participation, the school will work with them to identify an appropriate solution, which may include subsidy through the RTS Hardship Fund, use of Pupil Premium where appropriate, or an alternative arrangement agreed by the Head Teacher. Participation in the leasing arrangements is not a condition of admission or of a student's entitlement to education, and the school will ensure that any student who is not in the programme has appropriate access to a device for learning while at school.

If a student leaves the school in-year, parents/carers must notify the leasing provider to cancel any direct debit arrangements and ensure that the iPad, case and charger are returned to the school so that the device can be securely removed from the RTS system and, where applicable, reallocated or returned in line with the leasing agreement.

7. Activities we charge for

The school will make charges, where permitted by legislation, for the following types of activity:

- Board and lodging on residential visits, up to the actual cost (see remissions in section 8.1)
- Activities outside school hours that are not:
 - Part of the National Curriculum

- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
- Part of religious education
- Extended day services, such as breakfast club, after-school clubs, paid sports clubs or supervised homework sessions, where these are not funded from another source
- Individual or small-group music tuition and hire of musical instruments, where this is not an essential part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus and does not fall within a statutory remission category
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment where the student or their parent/carer wishes the student to own them, including for example:
 - Art, design and technology products that students choose to take home
 - Revision guides or additional study materials ordered through the school
- Public examination fees where:
 - A student has, without good reason, failed to sit an examination for which the school has paid the entry fee, or
 - The examination is not one for which the school normally enters students and is not part of the student's agreed programme of study
- Participation in the one-to-one iPad scheme, where families choose to enter the leasing agreement described in section 6.2
- Repair or replacement of school property or equipment, including digital devices, where loss or damage has occurred through misuse or negligence, as set out in sections 7.1 and 7.2

For regular activities, the level of charge will be set by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Trustees' Finance and Resources Committee, and reviewed annually in the autumn term.

Parents/carers will be notified of the charges for the coming year before they take effect, normally at the start of each academic year or when activities are first offered.

7.1 iPads - repairs and damages

The school leases the iPads. This includes the device, portable keyboard (where relevant), charger and case issued to the student. Where an iPad or associated equipment is lost, damaged or defaced as a result of misuse or negligence, parents/carers may be asked to meet the actual cost of repair or replacement.

- If an iPad is lost or damaged beyond repair, parents/carers may be offered the option to enter into a new leasing agreement for a replacement device.
- If an iPad is damaged and the damage is repairable, the school will arrange a repair and recover the actual cost from parents/carers, unless remission is agreed in cases of hardship
- If a school-issued portable keyboard, charger or case is lost or damaged beyond repair, parents/carers will be charged the actual replacement cost and payment will be collected via ParentPay, with remission available in cases of hardship.

7.2 Loss and damage

Parents/carers may be asked to pay for items of school property, or the property of other people in the school, which their child has lost or damaged through misuse or negligence, including, for example, window breakage and graffiti removal.

Any charge will be limited to the actual cost of repair or replacement and will not include any element of profit.

8. Remissions

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 7 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

8.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents/carers 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
- 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)
- Families who experience an unexpected and significant change in circumstances leading to exceptional financial hardship, where support is agreed in line with the RTS Hardship Fund (see Appendix 1)

9. Monitoring arrangements

The Head Teacher monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy and with current DfE guidance.

This policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher annually, or earlier if there are changes to relevant legislation or DfE guidance.

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

Appendix 1 - Hardship Fund

Purpose

The Richmond upon Thames School's (RTS) Financial Hardship Fund is there to support students whose family circumstances mean that they would not be able to participate in educational trips and other school events.

The Charging and Remissions Policy, found on the school website, details what the school can charge for and what is requested as a voluntary contribution. Families do not need to apply for the RTS Financial Hardship Fund to cover voluntary contributions. Please read this policy before applying and contact the Finance Office (accounts@rts.richmond.sch.uk) if you have any questions.

Practice and procedures

What support can families apply for?

If families are eligible, we always advise applications for Free School Meals (FSM), regardless of whether or not they wish to have a free meal provided. This is because the entitlement to FSM automatically triggers the receipt of an extra £1,050 per annum from the government to spend on that student's education, and so this can be partly used to finance trips and events. More details of this and eligibility criteria are available [here](#). The strategy on how RTS spends the pupil premium grant funding is available [here](#) for your review. Students are not allocated a personal budget. However, families do not need to be in receipt of FSM to qualify for the RTS Financial Hardship Fund.

Subject to available funds, the RTS Financial Hardship Fund may also be used to support contributions towards optional extras, including some non-curriculum trips and participation in the iPad leasing scheme, where this is necessary to prevent hardship.

What is the eligibility for a grant from the (RTS) Financial Hardship Fund?

Because there are only limited funds, we have to make sure that grants reach those most in need of support. The more information that families can provide regarding their circumstances, whether they are long standing or just short term, can help us decide how the funds should be most suitably distributed.

What "evidence" needs to be shown?

Formal evidence is not required for this application. Applicants are required to provide details of the family's circumstances and household income on the Hardship Fund Application Form for the school to make a decision. We might ask for more information if needed. All correspondence and communication is dealt with in the strictest confidence by school staff and Trustees.

When should families apply?

The Finance and Resources Committee will consider applications every term at their committee meeting and the calendar of meetings will be posted on the school website. Families should submit applications as soon as they become aware that they need support. Families must notify the school of any change in circumstances that might affect the continuation of the grant, else grants may be recharged, either in whole or in part.

In the event of an emergency, please contact the Finance Office via accounts@rts.richmond.sch.uk as grants may be awarded in extreme cases outside of the published committee meetings.

Will families automatically get what they apply for?

All grants from the RTS Financial Hardship Fund are discretionary and will be allocated depending on need and funds available. The more information families can supply in the application about what is difficult to pay for and why, the more easily the committee will be able to assess their needs.

How will families know what trips and events might be difficult to pay for?

We publish a list of the trips per year group in advance with a rough indication of cost. Non-educational trips, such as a ski trip will not normally be supported.

Will the grant be paid in cash?

Grants from the RTS Financial Hardship Fund will be recorded directly into the relevant trip, event or school cost centre. This is a book-keeping exercise and no cash exchange will be involved.

What should families do if they don't agree with the committee's decision?

They should write to the Chair of Trustees stating why they think the decision of the committee is incorrect. The Chair of Trustees will then consider the appeal and reconsider the application with the help of two other Trustees who were not previously involved. The outcome of this reconsideration will be notified in writing and is final.

Where can families get further information?

Contact the Finance Office on accounts@rts.richmond.sch.uk

Associated documents

- School Uniform Grant Applications - If you think you may be eligible for support with buying your child's school uniform, please complete the form [here](#)
- Hardship fund application form. This form is available [here](#)