

Charging & Remissions Policy

Approval Arrangements

All statutory policies in the Trust are ultimately the responsibility of the Trust Board. To enable it to discharge this responsibility appropriately and in collaboration with the constituent schools, the Trust Board will

1. set a full Trust wide policy which applies in the same way to all schools,
2. require individual schools to set a policy (in most cases with Trust-provided guidance) appropriate to the needs and circumstances of an individual school

This is a level 1 policy which was adopted by the **Finance, Audit & Risk Committee**, for implementation in Tenax Schools Trust on the date above and supersedes any previous Charging & Remissions Policy.

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| Approval Body: | Board of Trustees |
| Date Approved: | 24.03.2025 |
| Author: | CFO |
| Next review: | Spring 2026 |
| Review period: | This policy will be reviewed as appropriate, and amended where any clarifications or changes are needed to meet the DfE's guidance for charging for school activities, and at a minimum every 1 year |
| Version: | 2.0 |

1.1 Aims

The vision of the Tenax Schools Trust is to achieve excellence by working together so that all may feel loved and empowered to serve a thriving society. We are committed to education providing life changing transformative opportunities.

The Trust believes that all students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits.

The Trust recognises that legislation provides academies with the discretion to charge for optional extras provided wholly or mainly out of school hours and to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of a school, or in support of any activity organised by a school, whether during or outside school hours.

This policy identifies activities for which:

- Charges will not be made
- Charges will be made
- Charges may be waived

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been based on the DfE's latest guidance for charging for school activities at time of writing (last updated 15 May 2018).

1.2 Education

Schools **cannot** charge for:

- An admission application to any stated funded school
- 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 timetabled curriculum the student is following
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the timetabled curriculum the student is following, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school. However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

Schools **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them
- **optional extras** (see below)
- Individual or small group musical instrument or vocal tuition due to parental request
- certain early years provision
- community facilities

1.3 Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. 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 timetabled curriculum the student is following
 - 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 required to take the pupil to school or other premises provided by the Local Authority or governing body for the pupil’s 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)

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Materials, books instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of accommodation
- Non –teaching staff
- Supply teachers and teaching staff engaged to specifically provide the optional extra
- Cost or proportion of the costs for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- Administration (to include transaction costs for use of online payments)
- Insurance costs

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore 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 students who do not wish to participate.

1.4 Residential Visits

The school will charge for board and lodging and charges which will not exceed the actual cost. Parents will be informed about forthcoming visits and if students are eligible for pupil premium they may be entitled to remission for educational visits.

1.5 Examination Entries

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students where the school has not prepared the student for the examination.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students where the school has prepared the student for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the student should not be

entered and the student's parent/guardian wishes the student to be entered (or student him/herself when over 18 years old).

In these circumstances, if the student subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost.

A charge may be levied for students re-sitting an examination (although charges will not be applied where it is a DFE requirement that the resit takes place and the school receives funding for the entry).

A charge will be levied where a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

The charge levied in these cases will be the cost of the examination entry, plus any applicable centre costs.

1.6 Activities Outside School Hours

No charge will be made for activities outside school hours that are part of the timetabled curriculum or religious education, or that form an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

If a student is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations (the full list of which is to be available from the school), a charge will be levied for tuition and other costs.

For all other activities outside school hours, a charge up to the cost of providing the activity will be levied.

1.7 Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of Trust's property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

1.8 Voluntary Contributions

Where the school cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school may request or invite parents to make a contribution towards the cost of the trip. The Trust recognises there is no obligation on parents to make voluntary contributions. Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request or invitation. However if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be communicated to parents in writing at the outset. If in the event the contributions are not enough to cover the event/trip the school reserves the right to cancel it.

1.9 Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges should be determined annually by the relevant approval body within the school.

1.10 Miscellaneous Charges

The Headteacher may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report. If parents have issues concerning any charges levied this must be communicated in writing to the Headteacher for consideration.

1.11 Refunds

Where a charge has been levied for an educational visit or activity and the student cancels this place, no refund will be repayable to the parent or student if the school or Trust has incurred a cost, e.g. paid this to the travel company. An exception to this is a medical condition preventing the student from attending the educational visit or activity and a full refund will be repayable on presentation of an appropriate medical certificate.

If no cost has been incurred by the school or Trust, a proportion of the funds paid may be returned to the parent or student after the non-refundable deposit has been deducted. A cancellation charge may also be made at the discretion of the school or Trust.

1.12 Additional considerations

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- We have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

2. REMISSIONS POLICY

If the parent/guardian of a student can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits, they will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for educational residential visits. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found [here](#).

2.2 The Headteacher may remit in full or part charges in respect of a student, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

2.3 The Headteacher may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.