

Viking Academy Trust



Charging and Remission Policy

The VIKING ACADEMY TRUST 'Charging and Remission Policy' has been written following guidance from The Academies Trust Handbook

Approved by the Trust: Term 2 2017

This is a statutory policy which is reviewed annually

Last review date: Term 6 2025

Signed:

Chair of Trustees

Charging and Remission Policy

The Viking Academy Trust

Empowering children through education: One Childhood One Chance

Schools in the Viking Academy Trust (VAT)

Chilton Primary School
Ramsgate Arts Primary School
Upton Junior School

This ‘**Charging and Remission Policy**’ is for all of the aforementioned schools.

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1. Aims

All our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents’ financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The Viking Academy Trust 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 be made



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 449-462 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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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 Trust Board

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but has delegated this to the FAR committee (Finance Audit & Risk)

The Trust Board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In the Viking Academy Trust, monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the FAR Committee

4.2 The Executive Headteacher (CEO)

The Executive Headteacher (CEO) has delegated responsibility of this policy to the Chief Financial & Operations Officer (CFOO). The CFOO is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently across the Trust.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

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

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

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Executive Headteacher/DoE/CFOO of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out **what the Trust 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 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
 - 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

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Trust Board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school

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 pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

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

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as '**optional extras**'. In these cases, the Trust 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 local authority/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, Viking Holiday Club 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 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 which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

The school 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.

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

6.4 Residential visits

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

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the Viking Academy Trust is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Where the Trust deems it appropriate, parents are asked if they would like to make an annual 'Voluntary Fund contribution' to their child's school in support of enrichment activities undertaken across the year e.g. a pantomime. A sibling discount is made available for families with more than one child attending the school.

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

8. Activities this Trust charges for:

See below for summary of activities the Trust will charge for:

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Trust Board and reviewed in September each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in the Parent Handbook /School Website & updated annually.

Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as 'optional extras'. Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	How the Charge is Calculated /Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges will/may be made for music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing, where the tuition is an optional extra for an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils	Remission for category A
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of Residential trips	Calculated based on cost of invoice. The charge will not exceed the actual cost	Remission for category A / B /C (see below)
Day Visits / Trips	Calculated based on cost of invoice.	Remission for category A / B /C (see below)

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	How the Charge is Calculated /Notes	Remitted or help available
	Requests for voluntary contributions will be made	
Theatre Groups, Education Groups and Guest Speakers to the school	Calculated based on cost of invoice. Requests for voluntary contributions will/may be made	Remission for category A / B /C (see below)
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where a parent wishes their child to own them;	Eg. A clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay. Charge will not exceed cost	Remission for category A / B (see below)
A contribution to help the school cover the cost of ingredients in cooking activities	Eg Bread or Sandwich making Charge will not exceed cost	Remission for category A / B (see below)
Childcare by attendance at the school Breakfast Club and / or After School Club	Calculated based on cost of staffing (incl. on-costs and sickness cover); provision of the food; resources specific to the Breakfast Club; administration; heating and lighting and other such expenses.	Remission for category A (see below)
School uniform including PE & Swimming Kit	Purchased by families via third party supplier.	Remission for category A (see below)
Replacement Lanyards /Badges	Calculated based on the cost supplied	
Lost or Damaged School owned Equipment – pens, books, reading books, library books	Calculated based on the cost supplied Books: A £5 cost as book prices vary.	

Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	How the Charge is Calculated /Notes	Remitted or help available
School dinners provided by Independent Catering	Calculated based on Independent published charge Families in receipt of FSM are not charged. Families with children in years Reception to Year 2 inclusive are not charged under the UiFSM funding	
After-school clubs – outside providers	Calculated based on cost of staffing; resources; administration;	Remission A (see below)
Wilful Damage to the property or equipment	Calculated based on cost of replacement or repair	

It is the policy of the Viking Academy Trust that charges will (or may) be made as indicated above. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made.

9. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust Board has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived/reduced. Decisions as to reduction / removal of charges are made prior to information shared with parents and will take into consideration a number of factors including: total cost of trip, time of year, family circumstance.

9.1. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges.

If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right-hand column of the table above. Families are to contact the Head of School / Chair of Governors to request financial assistance as detailed in Charging & Remissions Policy.

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 the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run – on eligibility
- Universal Credit
- Further qualification
- Children for whom the school receives Pupil Premium funding

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in the following circumstances:

Category B

- Families not in receipt of the benefits listed in Category A above, but who nonetheless feel unwilling or unable to pay due to financial constraints. Parents in this category should discuss their concerns about charges with the Head of School. Decisions about remission will be made on a case by case basis.
- Examples of families in this category would include those families with more than two children incurring simultaneous charges for school activities.

Category C

- *Circumstances that are not included in the categories above for which the Trust Board may deem to be a special case for consideration.*

10. Additional considerations

The Trust Board 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.
- Remissions are applied to ensure equity of opportunity and DfE grants will be allocated in support of this eg Pupil Premium, PES grants

Apply for Free School Meals - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

11. Monitoring arrangements

All charges for income of any nature must be made through the Viking Finance Department. Likewise, all monies received for such income must be directed to the Viking Finance Department.

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

This policy will be reviewed by the CFOO annually.

The policy will be approved by FAR committee.

12. Debt Recovery

Viking Finance Department will manage this under the direction of the CFOO.