



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY (ACADEMIES)

The OHC&AT Board of Trustees has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies across all OHCAT Academies – 9th December 2022.

Jay Mercer
Chair of OHCAT Board

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Charging and Remissions Policy

INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is a 'family' of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), which works together for mutual benefit. OHC&AT is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. This policy applies to all OHCAT Academies in accordance with the charging arrangements for schools as set out in the Education Act 1996 ("the Act").

OHCAT recognises that the Act prohibits charges for school activities that take place within school hours and are part of the school curriculum. This policy reinforces that principle, whilst setting out those school activities for which a charge may be made or a voluntary contribution requested, and those circumstances in which charges may be remitted.

This policy has been written with reference to 'Charging for school activities: Departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders, school staff and local authorities' (DfE, 2018).

POLICY STATEMENT

Educational activities taking place during school hours

'School hours' are defined as those during which the school is in session but excluding the midday break.

During the school day, all activities that are a necessary part of the curriculum (with the exception of musical instrument tuition and swimming) will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport where required.

The school reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by a school:

- *Materials and ingredients*: the cost of materials or ingredients for art and design, food, hospitality and catering, if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the final product.

Voluntary contributions may be requested to enable the school to run extra activities (including trips and visits) which are deemed educationally desirable. The school will make it clear in its communications to parents that these contributions are voluntary, and that no pupil/student will be treated differently according to whether or not his or her parent/carer has contributed. If insufficient funds are collected to cover costs, activities may be cancelled.

Where a non-school or LA organisation arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents/carers give their consent to their child taking part in the activity, such an organisation may make a charge.

Educational activities taking place outside school hours

For all activities outside school hours the charge will be set to cover the cost of such items as:

- Transport/travel
- Board and lodging
- Entrance fees
- Insurance
- Materials required for the activity
- Incidental expenses
- Supervision costs

The charge should not subsidise any other pupil/student participating. Any remission of charges for individual students should be met from the school budget. If sufficient funds are not received to cover the cost of the activity, it may be cancelled.

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from these charges. The list of benefits can be found by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

School meals

Charges are made for school meals unless a pupil/student is entitled to free school meals, in which case the Academy will ensure that parents and carers are given advice on how to apply for free meals.

Examination fees

Charges may be made for examinations in the following circumstances:

- The pupil/student has not regularly attended the lessons for a particular examination subject. The charge is refunded if the pupil/student attends the examination.
- The pupil/student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of the examination (e.g. coursework).
- The pupil/student fails, without good reason, to attend the examination.
- Examination re-sits to improve grades (unless at the recommendation of the school).
- Examination entries where there is a request from the parent for additional subject entries to be made which are not supported by the school.

Photographs

Individual and class photographs taken by the school's appointed photographer or by the school are offered for sale from time to time.

Loss of or damage to school property

Loss of, damage to, or breakage of, school property e.g. books, windows, furniture, scientific equipment etc. will be charged for if caused by carelessness, negligence or a deliberate act. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Principal may decide.

Similarly a charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of property belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school.

Other charges

The school may levy a charge for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing supporting evidence regarding visa applications, passports etc.

Voluntary contributions to the school fund

Parents/carers may be invited to make a financial contribution to the school fund.

The school fund will be used to:

1. acquire educational resources and fixed assets or provide services which would otherwise be unaffordable from the school's mainstream budget, and
2. may be used to support a student participating in an activity outside school hours where that student's parent/carer is not in a position to make the requested contribution.

It will be made clear in all correspondence to parents/carers inviting contributions to the school fund that such contributions are wholly voluntary.

Remission of charges

Any charge may be remitted in whole or in part in response to a request by the parent/carer in writing to the Principal.

Operation

All charges of any nature must be made through the Academy's Finance Department. Receipts will be issued for all monies received.

Staff organising a trip, visit, club or activity will notify parents/carers in advance of any likely costs. This will be done in writing, with a reply mechanism for parents/carers to

accept the proposed costs. The letter will contain details of remission arrangements as set out in this policy.

The organising member of staff, in agreement with the Principal, will set out the arrangements for collection of costs from parents/carers and the internal process for the collection and receipt of monies.

Collection of unpaid or late monies will be the responsibility of the OHCAT Finance Department.

The Academy's Finance Department will keep financial accounts of all trips, visits, clubs or activities.

POLICY REVIEW DETAILS

<i>Version:</i>	1.3
<i>Reviewer:</i>	Laurie Cornwell, Mike Wilson
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
<i>Date this version approved:</i>	9 th December 2022
<i>Due for review:</i>	Autumn 2025

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

OHC&AT Financial Regulations