



Charging & Remissions Policy

(01/09/24 – 31/08/25)

Date Approved by The Board of Trustees	11/07/24
Effective period	01/09/24 – 31/08/25
Reviewer	S McGowan/N Jones
Date of Review	July 2024
Next Review Due	July 2025

Introduction HMFA (Academy Trust) Board of Trustees recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, out of school trips, residential and experiences of other environments, can make towards students' all-round educational experience and their personal and social development. (Throughout this policy, the term "parents" means all those having parental responsibility for a student.)

1. Admissions

There is no charge for admissions.

2. School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or universal infant free school meals. Payable pupil meals will be charged a set amount decided by the Academy Trust and paid directly to the meal provider.

3. Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school.

4. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)

There is no charge for activities during school hours except for music tuition (**section 8**)

There is no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities

Depending on the activity, voluntary contributions to the school can be made (**section 13**)

We may charge for:

- materials, books, instruments or equipment that the parent wishes their child to keep or own (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras (**section 5**)
- music or vocal tuition (**section 8**)

5. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the National Curriculum, *including sports matches against other schools*
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

Optional extras

The school will charge for optional extras. Optional extras are, but not limited to:

- education provided outside of school time that is **not**:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - 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 that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body 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 (e.g. wrap around care;- breakfast clubs/after school clubs and holiday club).

The cost of optional extras

The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. Parents will be advised accordingly.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge (**section 12**).

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- the costs of buildings and accommodation.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to inform parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

6. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site

Where most of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 4**.

Travelling time is included in time spent on the activity if the travel itself occurs during school hours.

In cases where most of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 5**.

7. Residential activities

Our school will not charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- residential activities that take place during school hours.

Our school will charge for:

Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. *We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not.* The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost** (see **section 11** for more guidance on remissions).

Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities

The school may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of school hours (see **section 5**).

8. Music tuition within school hours

HMFA follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s). Music and Vocal tuition; payments will normally be made directly to the peripatetic music teacher through a private arrangement between the parent/carer and teacher.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

HMFA is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours **may** be remitted for some pupils in receipt of free school meals/hardship/refugee basis.

There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for a student who is looked after by a local authority. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

9a. After School Activities

HMFA provides a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities, these enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes, e.g. by providing access to study support, parenting support or to more specialist services (such as health, social care or special educational needs services)
- ways of increasing pupil engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

The total charge will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise others.

9b. Wrap Around Care

HMFA Schools provide wrap around care which may include Breakfast Club, After School Club and Holiday Club, each of which are chargeable.

10. Refunds

Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made in writing to the CEO / Deputy CEO. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a pupil is withdrawn from an activity by the school because of a pupil's breach of the school's behaviour policy.

As per 10.8 of HMFA Financial Regulations - If after completion of a trip or journey a surplus exists, the money will be applied as follows: a) If the surplus is greater than 5% of the contribution per head, subject to a minimum of £10, then a refund of the full amount of the surplus will be offered to parents. b) If the surplus is less than 5% of the contribution per head or less than £10, the surplus will be placed in the academy fund.

11. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and dependent on the situation.

12. Remissions and concessions

The school will consider if requested the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the CEO / Deputy CEO

Schools may set aside a small fund to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. Parent Teachers Associations' may also support school activities through fundraising. School funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a need's basis.

If the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding, voluntary contributions or school budget, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of eligible benefits as listed above may be considered for concession towards payment for board and lodging for residential trips. Requests for assistance should be made in writing to the school.

Individual schools may determine an allocation of Pupil Premium funding to support remissions for parents in receipt of Eligible Benefits, which will be determined by the CEO / Deputy CEO. Any such remissions will be included in the statutory Pupil Premium report on each school's websites.

13. Voluntary contributions

HMFA may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education. In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to contribute.

14. Inability or unwillingness to pay

HMFA is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

15. Complaints

Complaints about the implementation of this policy or any decisions taken in line with the policy will be considered as part of the school's complaints procedures.