



# Charging and Remissions Policy

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**Review:** October 2026

**Chair of Governors:**

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**Headteacher:**

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## Ethos of The Orchard School

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential.

### Principles of Our Ethos:

1. **Respect for the Individual:** Every pupil deserves respect, dignity, and the opportunity to be heard.
2. **Relationships at the Heart of Learning:** Positive, trusting relationships form the foundation of our work.
3. **Equity and Inclusion:** We ensure all pupils have access to the support they need to succeed.
4. **Therapeutic and Nurturing Approaches:** We integrate trauma-informed strategies to promote resilience.
5. **High Expectations with Compassion:** Balancing aspirations with understanding and personalisation.
6. **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Families, carers, and agencies work together to support pupils.
7. **A Safe and Predictable Environment:** Structure and boundaries foster trust and confidence.
8. **Restorative Practices:** Addressing conflicts through understanding, accountability, and growth.

## Introduction

We want all our pupils to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means. This policy sets out our school approach to charging and remissions, and is informed by Local Authority guidance. In doing this our intention is to ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are able to access all the provisions on offer.

## Mission Statement

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe.

## Purpose

This policy aims to:

1. Provide clear expectations for staff, pupils, families and contractors on charging for school activities and the circumstances in which remission may apply.
2. Ensure that all charging and remissions practices are fair, transparent, lawful and compliant with DfE guidance and local authority requirements.
3. Support access to educational opportunities by setting out when charges will and will not be made.
4. Protect pupils from disadvantage, ensuring no child is excluded from learning experiences due to financial constraints.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All activities and services provided wholly or partly by The Orchard School which may incur a cost.
- All staff responsible for organising, communicating and collecting charges.
- All pupils and their families who may be asked to contribute to costs.

- All contractors and external providers delivering chargeable activities on behalf of the school.

### **1. Admissions**

No charge will be made for admission.

### **2. School meals**

No charge will be made for pupils entitled to free school meals.

We will charge all pupils not entitled to free school meals an amount determined by Caterlink (Local Authority approved Schools catering Service).

### **3. Public examinations**

No charge will be made for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list and the pupil has been prepared at the school.

Where supported by school, we will not charge parents for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at school.

Where supported by school, we will not charge parents the entry fee if the examination is not on the set list, but school has arranged for the pupil to take it

We may charge parents the examination fee if a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of a public examination where the school originally paid the entry fee. This will be decided by the Headteacher.

### **4. Activities for pupils that take place during school hours**

(‘School hours’ are those when school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day)

No charge will be made for curriculum activities provided during school hours

No charge will be made for transport during school hours eg to swimming.

No charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients or materials where parents/guardians have confirmed in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

### **5. Activities for pupils that take place outside school hours (non-residential) No charge will be made for an activity that takes place outside school hours when it is:**

a) a necessary part of the curriculum

b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school

c) part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

### **Optional extras**

We may charge for some other activities that take place outside school hours. The Headteacher will decide which activities we make a charge for. Where we make a charge, the total collected will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise the cost to other pupils by paying more than an amount equal to the total cost of the activity divided by the number of pupils participating.

Costs we can legally recover are as follows:

- a) teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- b) non-teaching staff
- c) any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- d) transport to an activity outside school hours

### **6. Activities that take place partly during school hours either on or off site (non-residential)**

Where most of the time spent on a non-residential activity is within school hours, we must treat the activity as if it is fully within school hours and will apply the same criteria to charging as set out in section 4.

If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity is outside school hours, we must treat the activity as if it happens fully outside school hours and will apply the same criteria to charging as set out in section 5.

### **7. Residentials**

Residentials are classified as being within school hours if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils is at least 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip.

#### **Board and lodging**

We may charge pupils an amount up to the full cost of board and lodging on residentials whether it is classified as taking place within or outside school hours except where pupils are legally entitled to remission. In such cases no charge will be made for board and lodging.

#### **Travel**

If the residential is classified as being within school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs.

Where the residential is classified as being outside school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs.

### **Activities on residential**

If the residential is classified as being within school hours no charge can legally be made for the educational activities provided.

If the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge may be made for the educational activities provided (see section 5).

### **8. Music tuition within school hours**

No charge will be made for instrumental tuition the school elects to provide within school hours.

We may charge for all other instrumental and vocal tuition requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors within school hours, whether offered to an individual or group of pupils. Charges will be determined by the Headteacher and the governing body and may vary depending on size of group, length of lesson and type of instrument.

### **9. Damage to property and breakages**

We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to damage or breakage of property through any act other than accidental belonging to the school or to a third party where the school has been charged. This will be determined by the Headteacher but will not exceed the actual costs of the damage.

### **10. Remissions and concessions**

We may choose to subsidise, in full or part, charges for certain activities and pupils, as determined by the Governing Body, advised by the Headteacher. The circumstances in which concessions are applied will be reviewed regularly.

### **11. Voluntary contributions**

We may in certain circumstances invite parents to make a voluntary contribution towards activities that are exempt from charging.

Where we do ask for voluntary contributions, we will make it clear that children of parents who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. No pupil will be excluded from the activity if their parents do not contribute.

If an activity cannot go ahead without sufficient voluntary contributions, this will be explained to parents when the contribution is requested. If the activity must be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies received will be returned to parents.

### **12. School Uniform**

All pupils are expected to wear the school uniform.

School uniform is available to buy at the school using cash or cheque and must be paid for at the time of purchase. No pupil will be denied entry into The School if School uniform is not purchased in advance of joining the school roll. All parents may apply to the Headteacher to receive free school uniform. These applications will be considered by the Headteacher, without prejudice.