

New Generation Schools Trust 



# Charging & Remissions Policy

Date approved:	Autumn 2024
Approved by:	Local Governing Body
Review date:	Autumn 2025

## **Purpose**

- To ensure students are treated fairly in line with the Education Act 1996 and the School Admissions Code.
- To facilitate access by the children at Hope Community School to the range of school activities and school visits, within and outside of school hours.

## **Education**

Hope Community School **does not** charge for:

- Admissions applications.
- Education provided during school hours (including supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) with the exception of basic equipment as stated in the Home School Agreement.

Hope Community School **can** charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the student's parent wishes them to own them;
- Optional extras (see next section); and
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (currently not available).
- Personal music instruments – such as Recorders

## **Optional Extras**

Contributions **may** be asked 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:

- part of the National Curriculum
- transport that is not required to take the child to school or to other premises where the school has arranged for the child to be provided with education
- board and lodging for a child on a residential visit.
- Part of religious education
- Extended day services offered to pupils (breakfast club, afterschool club, homework club, etc)

In 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, this includes 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 cost of buildings and accommodation

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

In situations where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those children who do not wish to participate. Therefore, Hope Community School will not charge for supply

teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying children on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

- If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, Hope Community School Council or the Principal will make this clear to parents at the outset, including stipulating to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make any contribution.
- Voluntary contributions may cover activities on trips and visits and transportation costs to and from trips and visits.
- Hope Community School will not exclude a child from an activity simply because her/his parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their daughter/son will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Hope Community School does not operate on a "first come, first serve" basis. If the total cost of a visit supersedes the voluntary contributions collected, a decision will be made by the Principal, in liaison with the Finance Manager, as to whether the School Voluntary Fund can fund the cost difference.
- The policy for allocating places should be made clear to parents/carers by the visit organiser at the outset.
- When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will under no circumstances be made to feel pressurised into paying, as it is voluntary and not compulsory.
- Direct debit or standing order mandates will not be sent to parents/carers when requesting for contributions.

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents and carers to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary, if we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions it may not be possible for the visit to go ahead.

If a visit goes ahead, it may include children whose parents or carers have not made any contribution. We do not treat these children differently to others.

If a parent or carer wishes their child to take part in a school visit event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we will allow the child to participate fully in the visit or activity.

Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents and carers have a right to know how each visit is funded and the school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school which may require voluntary contributions from Parents and Carers. This list is not exclusive but may include:

- Educational visits
- Sporting activities
- After school clubs
- Outdoor adventure activities
- Visits to or by theatre company

If we are unable to raise sufficient funding through voluntary contributions, the visit or event may have to be cancelled and that aspect of the curriculum would have to be covered in other ways.

### **Residential**

Schools **cannot** 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.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming residential visit, it should be made clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit;
  - 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 Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £18,725 (financial year 2023/24);
  - the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
  - an income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.
- \* Universal Credit has replaced child tax credits, income support and income based jobseekers allowance for most people. Before you make a claim, you should check if you can get these benefits. You might need to claim Universal Credit instead.*

### **Damaged items**

If damage occurs to school equipment or resources taken home, families should inform the class teacher and if damage occurs to equipment within the school environment the Principal will inform the parent/carer. In both instances the suggestion of a contribution may be made.

Where School property has been wilfully damaged by a pupil or parent the School may charge those responsible for some or all of 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 of the cost to those responsible.

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

**Charging for additional copies of data**

The school may charge a family a reasonable fee if they request further copies of data provided following an initial request. The fee will be based on the administrative costs of providing further copies.

**Remissions**

Circumstances in which Hope Community School proposes to remit, wholly or partly, any charges which would otherwise be payable in accordance with the above Charging Policy, will be approached and assessed strictly on a case-by- case basis.

Considerations will be made in line with the relevant legislative framework, ensuring fairness to all students.

The objectives within the School Development Plan, budgetary constraints and other relevant circumstances will impact on remissions.