

Clarendon Federation



Charging and Remissions Policy 2026-2027

Policy agreed (date):	June 2026
Policy published (including on website) (date):	June 2026
Next review (date):	June 2027

Purpose

- To set out Clarendon Federation's (the "school") policy on charging for school activities, and the remit for remission (full or partial waiver of charges) in line with current UK legislation and DfE guidance.
- To ensure charges are applied fairly, transparently and consistently; that no pupil is denied access to a broad, balanced curriculum because of charges; and that the school's use of voluntary contributions follows legal requirements.
- To support leaders in aligning charging decisions with the school vision ("Always A Little Further"), values (Clarendon Promise) and commitment to inclusion for our community of service and non-service families.

Legislation and statutory guidance

- Education Act 1996 (Sections 449–462) and subsequent regulations.
- DfE guidance: "Charging for school activities" (most recent version), and guidance on music tuition, residential visits, examinations, and school milk/food where applicable.
- Guidance on free school meals and Pupil Premium funding.
- Local authority and maintained school finance regulations.
- Note: This policy reflects legislation as at the date adopted; leaders must ensure updates when statutory guidance changes.

Scope

- Applies to all pupils on roll at Clarendon Federation (Infant and Junior sites), their parents/carers, staff and governors, and third-party providers working on school-organised activities.
- Covers school hours activities, optional extras, residential visits, examinations, materials for practical subjects, instrumental tuition, transport, and insurance where chargeable.

Principles

- Education provided during school hours (including the statutory curriculum, religious education and statutory acts of worship) is free of charge. No charge will be made for admission or for education provided during school hours.
- We may ask for voluntary contributions for activities during school hours; no pupil will be excluded if their parent/carer does not contribute.
- Charges may be made for optional extras, residential visits, music tuition (as permitted by legislation), and certain materials where parents/carers opt to purchase or take home finished products.
- Remissions (full or partial) are available to ensure access for pupils whose families are under financial constraint; we set out criteria and procedures to ensure fairness and confidentiality.

- The school will avoid creating unnecessary bureaucracy and will aim for transparent, manageable processes for staff and families.

Key definitions

- School hours: A normal school day excluding break and lunchtime and inclusive of the statutory curriculum time.
- Optional extra: An activity that is not part of the statutory curriculum or required as essential for examination entry (e.g., certain trips, extended hours clubs, non-compulsory music lessons).
- Voluntary contribution: A payment requested to cover an activity cost; not compulsory.
- Remission: The reduction or cancellation of a charge for qualifying families.

Roles and responsibilities

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Governing Body

- Approve and review the Charging and Remissions Policy (recommended annually).
- Ensure consistency with the school's aims, equality duties and financial regulations.
- Oversee transparency and that the policy is implemented fairly across both Infant and Junior sites.

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Headteacher / Executive Headteacher

- Implement the policy day-to-day and ensure staff are briefed.
- Determine, within policy parameters, eligibility for remissions and exceptions.
- Ensure budgetary decisions related to charging align with the school improvement plan and inclusion priorities (e.g., supporting infant GLD, phonics, reading and writing improvement priorities).
- Maintain records of charges, voluntary contributions, remissions, and refunds.

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School Business Manager / Finance Officer

- Manage invoicing, receipts, appropriate accounting, and reconciliation in line with LA guidance.
- Provide accurate reporting to leadership and governors about income from charges and associated remissions.
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance and audit requirements.

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Staff organising activities (teachers, trip leaders, office staff)

- Explain clearly to parents/carers before any commitment is made what charges will apply, what is voluntary and what constitutes a remitted charge.

- Keep records of communications, consent, payments and remissions.
- Liaise promptly with the Business Manager on budgetary matters and support for families.

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Parents / Carers

- Provide timely consent and payment where applicable.
- Notify the school confidentially if they wish to apply for remissions.

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Pupils

- Participate in activities regardless of whether their family has paid voluntary contributions; pupils are not publicly identified as being in receipt of remissions.

Charging: What the school will charge for

1.

Optional extras (outside curriculum time or non-statutory elements)

- Residential visits that take place mainly out of school hours: charge to cover board, lodging, travel and activities.
- Day trips or activities during school hours that are optional extras: charges where activity is not part of the national curriculum and is optional.
- After-school clubs run by third parties: the third party may charge; where the school runs an extended hours club, costs may be charged to parents/carers.

2.

Board and lodging on residential visits

- Parents/carers will be charged for the cost of board and lodging unless remitted.

3.

Materials and ingredients

- For practical subjects (e.g., art, DT) where parents/carers wish to keep finished products, the school may ask for a charge to cover materials. Where the product is required as part of a subject and retained by the school, no charge will normally be made.

4.

Music tuition

- Charges may be made for parental requests for individual or small-group instrumental tuition not provided as part of the National Curriculum. Remission / subsidisation may apply for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) or other support criteria.

5.

Examination fees

- No charge for entry where the pupil has been prepared for the examination by the school and the entry is on the school's recommendation. Charges may be made for re-sit entries where not required by the school.

6.

Transport

- Transport costs for residential visits and activities not part of the statutory curriculum may be charged. No charge for transport during school hours where it is part of a statutory provision unless law allows.

7.

Materials and hire for equipment

- Charges may be levied where third-party providers or external hirers use school facilities, following the school lettings policy and local authority guidance.

8.

Insurance

- Charges may include a contribution to cover insurance for a trip or activity where appropriate.

Voluntary contributions

- When voluntary contributions are requested (e.g., for a visit during school hours), parents/carers will be informed:
 - That contribution is voluntary.
 - That if insufficient funds are raised the activity may be cancelled.
 - That no pupil will be treated differently based on whether their family contributes or not.
- Records of contributions will be kept and reported in line with financial procedures.

Remissions and concessions

- Remission is available to ensure that charges do not prevent any pupil from participating.
- Eligibility for full remissions:
 - Pupils whose parents/carers are receiving any of the following (or other means-tested benefits as set out in statutory guidance): Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit and income below a specified threshold), Universal Credit (as per guidance).
 - Pupils who are looked-after children or those with an EHCP where appropriate support is required and the governing body agrees.
 - Families in exceptional circumstances, at the Headteacher's discretion and where the resources allow.
- Partial remissions:
 - The Headteacher and Business Manager may agree partial remissions in cases of financial difficulty to maintain access.

- Process:
 - Parents/carers must apply in writing (or confidentially via the school office) for remissions, providing evidence as required.
 - Decisions will be made promptly, discreetly and documented.
 - Remissions information will be treated confidentially; staff should not disclose individuals receiving remissions.

Charging for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium / FSM

- The school will consider subsidising charges for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium or FSM where participation is educationally beneficial.
- Governors will review the budgetary impact and set a transparent approach to any such subsidies.

Refunds, cancellations and financial contingency

- If an activity is cancelled by the school, a full refund of monies paid will be offered. Where a third party cancels, the school will seek to recover costs and will pass on refunds where possible.
- If a pupil withdraws from an optional activity after it is paid for, refunds will be at the school's discretion based on non-recoverable costs and clear communication in advance about refund deadlines.
- For residential visits, parents/carers should be aware that deposits may be non-refundable if the place is given up unless the school can re-sell the place.
- The school may offer flexible payment plans to support parents/carers to meet costs.

Charging for letting of school premises and third-party hires

- Lettings are governed by a separate lettings policy and charging schedule. Charges for use of premises will be set to cover costs and generate revenue in line with LA guidance.
- The school will apply fair terms, including insurance and safeguarding compliance, with appropriate agreements and risk assessments.

Exemptions and special circumstances

- No charge will be made for:
 - Education during school hours.
 - Education provided for pupils who are looked-after by a local authority.
 - Provision of materials for religious education, statutory national curriculum or support for SEND where required by the EHCP.
- The school will ensure reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND where charging or remissions might otherwise create barriers.

Communication and transparency

- The school will publish a summary of charging arrangements on the school website (including typical costs for commonly requested activities) and provide parents/carers full details when activities are organised.
- All communications will make clear what is optional and what is a statutory entitlement.
- The school office will provide confidential advice about remissions and payment plans.

Record keeping and accounting

- All income from charges and remissions will be recorded and reconciled by the Finance Officer in line with LA and DfE accounting rules.
- Records of remissions, including rationale and approvals, will be kept confidentially and audited as part of financial reviews.
- Governors will receive annual reports summarising income and the level of remissions/school-subsidised support.

Safeguarding, equality and confidentiality

- The policy will be applied consistently, with sensitivity to the school community (including the large proportion of service families) and the need for confidentiality for families receiving remissions.
- No pupil will be publicly identified as having not paid or as receiving remissions.
- The school will monitor equality impacts and ensure that charges do not discriminate or create barriers for protected groups.

Implementation strategies

- Timetable and responsibilities
 - Business Manager to maintain a charging schedule for common activities (e.g., typical trips, residentials, music tuition).
 - Staff planning visits to obtain costings in advance and liaise with Business Manager to set charges.
 - Office staff to manage collection, communications and confidential remissions applications.
- Communication
 - Clear letters to parents/carers at the start of each activity explaining payment, voluntary nature and remissions.
 - Publish summary on the school website and include reminders in newsletters when relevant.
- Affordable access

- Offer payment plans and consider subsidising costs from school funds where appropriate to support school priorities (e.g., enabling Early Years enhancement provision participation, supporting phonics/reading trips).
- Use Pupil Premium allocation strategically to support targeted pupils' participation in enrichment activities.
- Training
 - Regular briefings for staff and governors on the policy, remissions process, record-keeping and confidentiality expectations.
- Monitoring
 - Termly review of outstanding payments, remissions granted and financial impact on the school budget.

Policy review and governance

- The Governing Body (or delegated Finance Committee) will review this policy annually (or sooner if legislation changes).
- Key review questions for governors and leadership:
 - Are our charging and remissions arrangements compliant with current legislation and DfE guidance?
 - Are charges transparent and communicated effectively to parents/carers?
 - Is our remissions approach equitable, confidential and accessible to those who need it?
 - Do we use Pupil Premium and other funding to reduce barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils?
 - Are staff clear about their responsibilities in administering charges and remissions?
 - What is the financial impact of remissions on the school budget and are there alternative funding sources?
- The school will also review the policy in response to local authority guidance, DfE updates, or changes in the school's context (e.g., variations in proportion of service families, SEND cohort or funding changes).

Frequently asked questions and decision prompts (for leaders to personalise)

- Who is responsible for approving charges for each trip or activity? (Headteacher, Business Manager, Governing Body)
- How will we publicise charges and remissions to families so they understand voluntary contributions versus mandatory charges?
- What evidence is required to support a remission application and how will confidentiality be maintained?
- Will we adopt an automatic remission for pupils in receipt of FSM or Pupil Premium for all activities, or only subsidise certain activities?

- How much contingency will the school set aside in its budget to subsidise activities for disadvantaged pupils?
- What is our process for handling non-payment and at what point will we consider withdrawing a pupil from an optional extra?
- How will we ensure consistency across the Infant and Junior site in charging and remissions decisions?
- How frequently will we report to governors on charging income and remissions granted?
- How will we manage refunds and non-recoverable costs for trips cancelled by external providers?
- What training do staff need to manage charging and remissions sensitively (especially given high service family mobility)?

Related procedures and documents

- Lettings policy and hire agreements
- Financial procedures and income collection guidance
- Data protection policy (confidentiality of remission applications)
- EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) procedures and risk assessments
- Early Years funding and free entitlement guidance
- Pupil Premium strategy and allocation records

Equalities statement

- Clarendon Federation values inclusion. We will apply this policy fairly without discrimination and make reasonable adjustments to support pupils with SEND and those from service families or facing financial hardship.

Audit and compliance

- The Finance Officer will ensure records are auditable and available for external review. The Governing Body will monitor compliance and ensure any risks are managed.

Local context and alignment

- Clarendon Federation is mindful of its unique context: a high proportion of service children, an above-average SEND cohort, diverse ethnic background and a commitment to improving early years and reading/writing outcomes. Our remission and subsidy decisions will prioritise ensuring equitable access to curriculum enrichment and targeted support to meet our school improvement priorities.

Key questions for leaders to personalise this policy (summary)

- Who decides the final charging schedule and what is the approval route?

- Which activities will always be free and which may attract voluntary contributions?
- What exact evidence will the school require for remissions and who will see it?
- How will the policy be communicated to new families, including transient service families?
- How will the school balance budgetary pressures with its commitment to inclusion?
- What cap, if any, will be placed on school-subsidised places for residential or extra-curricular activities?
- When and how often will this policy be reviewed and by whom?

Publication

- A summary of charging and remissions arrangements will be published on the school website and shared with families on admission and prior to activities.

Contact

- For queries about this policy or to apply for remissions, contact: School Office, Clarendon Federation [insert contact details]. All requests will be handled confidentially.

Final note

- School Policy Tracker (<https://schoolpolicytracker.co.uk>) provides a cost-efficient, efficient way to manage your complete policy review schedule which means you'll never have an out-of-date policy again.

Approval

- This policy was approved by the Governing Body on: June 2026.
- Next review date: June 2027.