

Three Counties Academy Trust



Charging and Remissions Policy

#F11

Last amended 20th May 2026 (v1.0)

Policy lifespan: 1 years. Next full review 19th May 2027.

Version history

Date	Version	Details	Actioned by	PDF to Websites	Word to Governor Hub
20.05.26	1.0	Creation of document. Formatted to house style and checked against model for updates	MF	✓	✓

Contents:

Version history

Policy abbreviations and acronyms

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Charging for education
5. Optional extras
6. Voluntary contributions
7. Examination fees and resits
8. Music tuition
9. Transport
10. Residential visits
11. Education partly during school hours
12. Damaged or lost items
13. Remissions
14. School trip refunds
15. Income generation
16. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

Monitoring and review

Trust Glossary

Policy Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABM	Academy Business Manager
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
DfE	Department for Education
LA	Local Authority
TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust

NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.

Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and have created this policy to ensure we adhere to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities and meet all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

Each TCAT school will ensure that this policy is published on its website and provides the school community with details of activities for which the school will charge parents, and the circumstances in which they will waive any charge parents would otherwise expect to pay.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance and good practice including, but not limited to, the following:

- [DfE 'Academy trust handbook'](#)
- [Academies Act 2010](#)
- [DfE 'Academy trust governance guide'](#)
- [DfE 'What academies and further education colleges must or should publish online'](#)
- [Education Act 1996](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Charges for Music Tuition \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Prescribed Public Examinations\) \(England\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [DfE 'Charging for school activities'](#)

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- The Trust's Funding Agreement
- Records Management Policy (FI2)
- Debt Recovery Policy (FI4)
- MAT Financial Procedures Policy (FI5)
- Lettings Policy (FI7)
- Freedom of Information Policy (FI10)
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme (FI10(A))
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (FI14)
- Data Protection Policy (FI20)
- Complaints Policy and Procedure (GN9)

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. "SG1". Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school's website. Where there is no policy number indicated but the document begins with "TCAT", then this indicates the document can be located on the TCAT website or be made available from TCAT Central Office.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: the cancellation of a charge, partly or wholly, which would normally be payable

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board and where delegated, Local Governing Bodies are responsible for:

- Reviewing and updating this policy
- The management of TCAT's delegated finances
- Ensuring each TCAT school acts in accordance with this policy at all times
- Ensuring money is spent for the educational benefit of pupils attending each TCAT school, and for the benefit of pupils in other schools
- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the DfE

Headteachers/Heads of School are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is effectively implemented within their school
- Prioritising and allocating financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Informing parents on low incomes and in receipt of specific benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits
- Liaising with parents and staff regarding any charges being applied and making decisions regarding appropriate remissions on a case-by-case basis

The CFO and ABM are responsible for:

- Processing and recording payments for activities, taking into account any remissions applied
- Ensuring that the correct invoices are sent to parents, and that payment is received

4. Charging for education

TCAT will not charge for:

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at school
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at a TCAT school

TCAT may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Certain early years provision
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information

TCAT will make it clear that, in the following circumstances, it will propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to TCAT:

- A valid contribution to recreational activity for Pupil Premium recipients in line with TCAT policy

5. Optional extras

TCAT may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Part of RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations as part of a school timetable
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where TCAT 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. breakfast or out-of-school provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff, including TAs
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

TCAT will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, TCAT will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

TCAT will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

6. Voluntary contributions

TCAT may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, TCAT will make this clear to parents at the outset. TCAT will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and TCAT will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and TCAT cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled, and this will be made clear to parents.

TCAT will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when TCAT requests contributions.

7. Examination fees and resits

TCAT may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it within a school
- The examination is not on the set list, but TCAT arranged for the pupil to take it
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination, including non-attendance without good reason, where TCAT originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee

If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, TCAT will not be charged by the awarding body, and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded.

8. Music tuition

TCAT is aware that instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

There will be no charges applied if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

In our primary settings, charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge for music tuition will be made in respect of pupils who are looked after by a local authority.

9. Transport

TCAT will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from TCAT premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where TCAT has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at a school
- Transport provided for an educational visit

10. Residential visits

TCAT 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits

TCAT may charge for board and lodging. Parents will be exempt from some or all board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

TCAT will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for any exemption.

11. Education partly during school hours

TCAT will follow DfE guidance when determining whether an activity is deemed to take place during school hours or not, as set out below.

In the case of non-residential activities:

- If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it will be deemed to take place during school hours, and no charge will be made
- If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE
- Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day

Where a visit is residential, if the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, it will be deemed to have taken place during school hours and the school will not charge for the activity.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of TCAT. These costs will be borne by TCAT.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

12. Damaged or lost items

TCAT may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. TCAT will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

13. Remissions

TCAT may set aside funding to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact their Headteacher or Head of School who will pass the request to the appropriate staff at TCAT.

14. School trip refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that TCAT or the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than TCAT or the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the TCAT's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at TCAT's discretion as to whether a refund is given. TCAT will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether TCAT will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, TCAT will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the TCAT's discretion as to whether a refund is given. TCAT will take into account whether TCAT will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at TCAT's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. TCAT will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at TCAT's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. TCAT will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

TCAT will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the TCAT Complaints Policy and Procedure.

15. Income generation

In line with the Academy trust Handbook, TCAT will set fees for chargeable services at full cost and reserves the right to apply an additional rate of return when in a commercial environment.

16. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

TCAT's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme will set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

Monitoring and review

Lifespan of Policy: 1 Year

At any point this policy is updated or fully reviewed, it will be updated on the main TCAT website and will automatically update on all TCAT school websites simultaneously.

Where an annual check or other check results in minor changes, the Version History will be reviewed and updated with a change in the number following the decimal point, for example, v1.1 ⇒ v1.2. Where the policy is reviewed in full, then the number before the decimal point will change and reset, for example v1.4 ⇒ v2.0.

Any changes made by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board Appointed Trustee will be passed to the Trust Board for ratification and subsequently be notified to Clerks to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers/Heads of School.

The next scheduled full review date for this policy is 19th May 2027.

Date approved by the Board Appointed Trustee: 20th May 2026.

To be approved by Finance Audit and Risk Committee at the first meeting after 20th May 2026.

To be ratified and recorded in the minutes at the first Trust Board Meeting after 20th May 2026.

Trust Glossary

AA	Admissions Authority	H&S	Health and Safety
AAI	Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen)	HoS	Head of School
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials	HSE	Health and Safety Executive
AHT	Assistant Headteacher	ICO	Information Commissioners Office
AIR	Attendance Intervention Reviews	IDSR	Inspection Data Summary Report
APDR	Assess Plan Do Review Cycle	IHP	Individual Healthcare Plan
APIs	Application Programming Interfaces	IRMS	Information and Records Management Society
ASC	Autistic Spectrum Condition	IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
ASP	Analyse School Performance	KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
ATH	Academy Trust Handbook	KS1/2/3/4	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	LAC	Looked After Child
BAT	Board Appointed Trustee	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	LGB	Local Governing Body
BFR	Budget Forecast Return	LLC	Low-Level Concerns
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	LSA	Learning Support Assistants
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
CIF	Condition Improvement Fund	MAT	Multi-Academy Trust

CIN	Child in Need	MFA	Multi-Factor Authentication
CLA	Children Looked After	MFL	Modern Foreign Language
CMIE	Child Missing in Education	NCSC	National Cyber Security Centre
COO	Chief Operating Officer	NoV	Note of Visit
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health	NPQ	National Professional Qualifications
CP	Child Protection	PA	Persistent Absence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	PAN	Published Admission Number
CPOMS	Child Protection Online Management System	PECR	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
CSCS	Children's Social Care Services	PEP	Personal Education Plan
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
CTIRU	Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit	PEx	Permanent Exclusion
CWD	Children with Disabilities	PP	Pupil Premium
CYPMHS	Children and Young People's Mental Health Services	PPG	Pupil Premium Grant
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
DfE	Department for Education	PTFA	Parent, Teacher and Friends Association
DHT	Deputy Headteacher	QA	Quality Assurance

DSE	Display Screen Equipment	RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	RHE	Relationships and Health Education
DPO	Data Protection Officer	RPA	Risk Protection Arrangement
EAL	English as an Additional Language	RSHE	Relationships, Sex and Health Education
ECT	Early Career Teacher	SA	Severely Absent
EDIB	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging	SALT	Speech and Language Therapist
EHA	Early Help Assessment	SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
EHCNA	Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment	SBM	School Business Manager
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	SCC	Standard Contractual Clause
EHE	Elective Home Education	SCITT	School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant	SCR	Single Central Record
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	SDP	School Development Plan
EVC	Educational Visit Coordinator	SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
EWOSSO	Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer	SEF	Self-Evaluation Form
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage	SEMH	Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
FBV	Fundamental British Values	SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
FFT	Fischer Family Trust	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SIP	School Improvement Partner
FGMPO	FGM Protection Order	SLA	Service Level Agreement
FOI	Freedom of Information	SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
FSM	Free School Meals	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
FTS	Find a Tender Service	SPOC	Single Point of Contact
GAG	General Annual Grant	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	TA	Teaching Assistant
GIAS	Get Information about Schools	TAC	Team Around the Child
HASH	Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads	TCAT	Three Counties Academy Trust
HBA	Honour Based Abuse	TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
HR	Human Resources	VSH	Virtual School Headteacher