



# Charging and Remissions Policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	Local School Committee	Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	September 2025	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	March 2027	

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This policy reflects the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, particularly: **Article 3** – The best interests of the child must be a top priority.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information for parents and carers about when Milton Mount may make charges, when we request voluntary contributions, and how we provide financial support to ensure no pupil is disadvantaged.

## Voluntary Contributions

Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it is free.

We cannot levy a compulsory charge for transport, admission, swimming lessons, or visits to museums and similar activities during school hours and payment is not a condition of participation.

However, we may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of an activity or trip.

- Contributions are entirely voluntary.
- Pupils of parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be excluded or treated differently.
- Where insufficient voluntary contributions are received to make the activity possible, and there is no other way to fund the shortfall, the activity may be cancelled.

All letters to parents about contributions will make it clear that they are voluntary. If any parent has financial difficulty, they are encouraged to speak with the Headteacher in confidence so that support can be considered.

## Charging

Charges may be made in the following circumstances:

### 1. Education during school hours

- No charge is made for education provided during school hours, or for materials, books or equipment required for that education.

## 2. Education outside school hours

- No charge is made for education outside school hours if it forms part of the National Curriculum, a public examination syllabus for which the school has prepared the pupil, or religious education.
- Charges may be made for activities which are optional extras (see below).

## 3. Optional extras

Where an activity is not part of the National Curriculum, a public examination syllabus or RE, and takes place outside school hours, it is considered an **optional extra**. The school may charge for:

- Travel costs
- Board and lodging
- Materials, books, instruments or equipment
- Non-teaching staff costs
- Teaching staff costs when engaged specifically for the optional activity

Charges will not exceed the actual cost of provision.

## 4. Residential Visits

- If 50% or more of the time on a residential visit (including travel) is during school hours, education and travel costs cannot be charged. However, a charge may be made for board and lodging.
- If the majority of the visit is outside school hours, the full cost (board, lodging, travel and staffing) may be charged as an optional extra.

## 5. Music Tuition

- No charge is made where music tuition is part of the National Curriculum, part of a public examination syllabus, religious education, or the Key Stage 2 whole-class instrumental/vocal programme.
- Charges may be made for individual or group music tuition requested by parents, provided it is not part of the above provision.
- No charge will be made for pupils who are looked-after children (in care).

## 6. Transport

- No charge is made for transport where the school is required to provide it (e.g. travel between school sites, to activities arranged during school hours, or to meet examination requirements).

## Remissions (Financial Assistance)

Parents/carers in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to remission of charges for board and lodging on residential visits taking place in school hours, or where the visit is part of the curriculum or a public examination syllabus.

This includes parents in receipt of:

- Universal Credit (with annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by HMRC)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided not entitled to Working Tax Credit and annual income does not exceed the HMRC-set threshold)

- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

Parents who may be eligible for assistance are encouraged to contact the School Business Manager in confidence.

## **Refund Policy**

- Where an activity is cancelled by the school, any contributions made will be refunded in full.
- If a pupil is unable to attend an activity, the school will make every reasonable effort to secure a refund from the provider. Where costs cannot be recovered, the school reserves the right to retain all or part of the payment.
- Parents are encouraged to consider their own contingency arrangements or insurance if they wish to guarantee reimbursement.
- Where a pupil is excluded from school or withdrawn by parents/carers, refunds will not normally be given.

## **Damage to School Property**

Parents may be asked to pay for the cost of repair or replacement where school property is damaged or lost due to their child's wilful or negligent behaviour, as covered in the Behaviour Policy.

## **Monitoring and Review**

- This policy is reviewed every three years by the School Committee or sooner if statutory guidance changes.
- The policy is published on the school website and is available in paper form on request.