Connect Alliance Trust

Excellence - Collaboration - Respect

Charging and Remissions Policy

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Version Control Table

Version	Date	Author	Rationale/Summary of changes	Ratified
V1.0	01/09/20	Tina Smith	New document	Oct20
V1.1	28/09/21	Tina Smith	No change	14/12/21
V1.2	21/09/22	Tina Smith	Changes made to legal framework and wording changed for damaged or lost items	13/12/22
V1.3	12/09/23	Tina Smith	Updated section 1 - legal framework Added section 13 – Income generation	12/12/23
V1.4	10/09/24	Tina Smith	Updated section 1 - legal framework	10/12/24
V1.5	22/09/25	Tina Smith	Updated trust name and legal framework	07/10/25
V1.6	03/09/26	Tina Smith	Updated legal framework	

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Statement of intent

Connect Alliance Trust is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- Children Act 1989
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2025) 'Academy trust governance guide'
- The Trust's Funding Agreement
- DfE (2026) 'Academy trust handbook 2026'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Financial Procedures Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. Charging for education

2.1. We will not charge parents for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours.
- 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, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.

2.2. We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Certain early years provision
- Use of community facilities

3. Optional extras

3.1. We may charge parents 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
  - RE
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

3.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Employment of non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- Teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument

3.3. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils.

3.4. The school will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

3.5. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

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

3.7. 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.

3.8. 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.

4. Examination fees

4.1. There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school.

4.2. There is no charge for examinations that are not on the set list but have been arranged by the school.

5. Voluntary contributions

5.1. The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

5.2. 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. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

5.3. The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

6. Music tuition

6.1. Music tuition is the only 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.

6.2. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

7. Transport

7.1. The school will not charge for:

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

8. Residential visits

8.1. The school 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.

8.2. The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

8.3. Parents may be exempt/partially exempt from 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 State 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)

9. Activities that take place partly during school hours

9.1. Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 2. Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

9.2. Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

10. Damaged or lost items

10.1. The school may charge for the cost of replacing items broken, 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. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

11. Remissions

11.1. The school has set aside a small fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is 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.

11.2. 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)

11.3. To request assistance, parents should contact the SBM of the school via email.

12. School trip refunds

12.1. 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.

12.2. In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.

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

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

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

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

12.7. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

13. Income generation

In line with the DfE's 'Academy trust handbook'. The trust 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.